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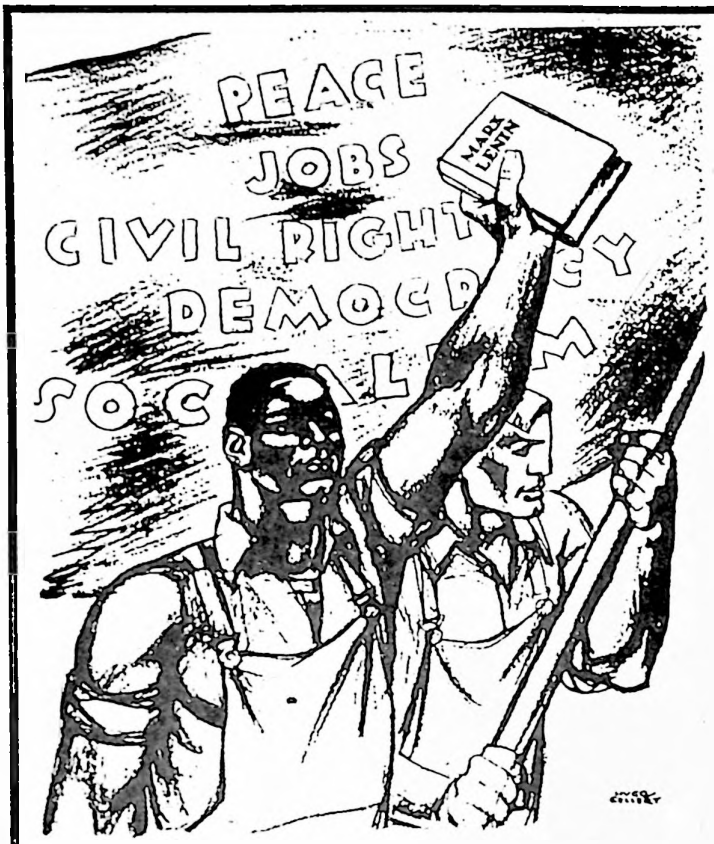

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From Anti-Slavery to the Anti-Monopoly Strategy

HENRY WINSTON

"The contributions of Henry Winston [1911-1986] extend through five decades of the struggles of the U.S. working class, the militant actions of the African-American community for equality and justice and the movement of the U.S. people for political and social progress against the forces of monopoly reaction and military aggression." Thus, wrote Gus Hall, speaking for the Central Committeee of the CPUSA, in announcing the passing of the Party's National Chairman on December 12, 1986.

This article, reprinted from "Political Affairs" of January 1972, demonstrates the enduring quality of Comrade Winston's contributions.

NOW, OVER A HUNDRED YEARS AFTER THE Emancipation Proclamation of January 1863, racism and oppression are more than ever essential to the ruling class, as U.S. state monopoly capitalism enters a new and more acute phase of the crisis and decline of capitalism. U.S. imperialism, facing a world in which the forces of socialism and class and national liberation are on the ascendancy, and in which foreign imperialist powers are challenging its domination, certainly can't do today what the slave power was unable to do over 100 years ago—solve its problems through aggression and expansion.

The monopolists are equally unable to solve their problems at home, where they are not only imposing a wage freeze, but are also attempting to impose a far more repressive racist freeze on Black liberation struggles than that of the McCarthy period.

By perpetuating and intensifying racism, monopoly aims to stop the advance of the Black liberation movement, to destroy organized labor and suppress every struggle of the oppressed and exploited.

Monopoly capital, within today's context, aims to repeat the kind of assault on the people's rights that led to the betrayal of Reconstruction. Reaction of that period, through racism and violence, prepared the way for the Supreme Court to void the Civil Rights Act of 1875, whose passage had been won by the supporters of Reconstruction to solidify the gains they had made. Reaction's aim then was to push the country into a long era of segregation and semi-slavery.

Today, state monopoly capitalism seeks to wipe out every trace of the struggles of the recent Civil Rights Decade. The increasing political repression, the attempted frame-up of Angela Davis and other political prisoners, Nixon's racist nominations to the Supreme Court, are all part of monopoly's attempt to obliterate every advance made through Black and white struggle since Reconstruction was destroyed.

The betrayal of Reconstruction, it should be remembered, was the signal for a three-sided attack against the masses. The Old Slave Codes were replaced by the new Black Codes, and the former chattel slaves were forced into semi-slavery, segregation and racist oppression. At the same time, the escalation of the military plunder and massacre of the Indians was entering a climactic stage. And simultaneously, the courts that upheld the betrayal of Emancipation were declaring that workers, Black and white, did not have the right to organize. In other words, the courts had not only revived Chief Justice Roger B. Taney's pre-Civil War doctrine that the Black man "had no rights which the white man was bound to respect." They had also extended this into another phase of repression—that labor, whatever its color, had no rights that capital was bound to respect.

In 1875, when the robber barons were joining with the former slave owners to prepare for the 1877 betrayal of Reconstruction, Judge Holden Owen, presiding over the trial of striking Pennsylvania miners, declared: "Any agreement, combination or confederation to increase the price of any vendible commodity, merchandise

anything else is a conspiracy under the laws of the U.S." Of course, this doctrine—like Nixon's wage-"price" freeze—was applied only to labor, never to the capitalists' profits.

Because of the perpetuation of racism and the resulting division between the triply-oppressed Black workers and the exploited white workers, it took more than 60 years of struggle against the bosses' government-supported violence to win the right to organize. Today, the rights of labor are once again under grave attack, and labor's fate, as in the past, is inseparably bound up with that of the Black liberation movement.

The crisis of poverty and unemployment Black Americans now face is, save for the almost total genocidal elimination of American Indians, without precedent for any segment of this country's population.

"The unemployment rate among Black workers in the ghetto now exceeds the general rate of unemployment of the entire nation during the depression of the 1930's," reported Herbert Hill, NAACP Labor Secretary, at the organization's 1971 National Convention. He stated,

> The rate of unemployment of Black workers in 25 major centers of urban non-white population concentration is now between 25 percent and 40 percent, and the unemployment rate for Black youth will be in excess of 50 percent by the middle of this summer. In 1933, the national unemployment rate was 24.9 per cent, the highest officially recorded unemployment in the history of the United States.

Hill also pointed out that tens of thousands of Black workers are classified as employed but never have an income that could lift them above the poverty level.

Yet, stark as this statistical report is, it cannot possibly convey the disaster of racism, poverty and oppression affecting every aspect of the lives of Black Americans today. The end of the decade of civil rights struggles left the Black masses with a feeling of vast frustration; not only had their condition failed to improve, it had worsened.

This frustration was simultaneously experienced by many militant young fighters, Black and white, whose despair turned to disillusion with the preceding years of struggle. They were unable to differentiate the gains of the Civil Rights Decade—in terms of unity, militant mass action and consciousness—from the deepening crisis. They did not realize that under capitalism the most important fruit of struggle is the people's advance in unity and consciousness. In their frustration, they attacked the civil rights struggle itself, instead of seeing that it had created a bridge to the period ahead.

THE TWO-SIDED PRESSURE

Thus, even before the hunger and frustration of Black masses led to the spontaneous outbursts in Watts, Detroit and Newark, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. encountered attacks not only from reaction, but from segments of militant youth under the influence of sectarianism and pseudo-revolutionism.

While the open attacks from the latter were a relatively new development, King had long experienced pressure from the establishment liberals, the NAACP, the Urban League and others, to limit mass struggle and to rely on the courts and "friends" within the two major parties. In this period—as the war in Vietnam continued and domestic conditions worsened—this pressure from the right increased, and was particularly aimed at preventing King from linking the Black liberation movement with the anti-war struggle.

At the same time, the frustrations of radical youth were intensified by the escalation of the Vietnam War in 1965—immediately after the new Civil Rights Act was passed. Many Black and white radicals, including Carmichael, Cleaver, Newton, Forman and Hayden, began to step up their attacks on the civil rights struggle. *They placed themselves in opposition to King, who was determined not to abandon, but to strengthen the forces of the Civil Rights Decade, to deepen and broaden them into a realignment that could carry the struggle against poverty and racist oppression to a new level.*

If King was not without error in coping with pressure from the right, and later with that of the pseudo-radicals, his overall record was one of firm adherence to militant non-violent mass struggle. The maturing of his leadership, his recognition of the decisive role of the working class, his evolvement toward an anti-imperialist position, all of his steady and remarkable growth reflected his rejection of both the opportunist pressures to limit mass struggle and the super-revolutionary pressures to substitute the rhetoric

of violence for the power of mass struggle.

King has been dead more than five years, but the attacks on his strategy and objectives continue from the right and the pseudo-left. In fact, while Nixon is bent on destroying the advances of the Civil Rights Decade, it is ironic that the new "revolutionists" are so certain there is nothing worth saving from it! But Nixon recognizes—and fears—what the super-militants refuse to see—the Civil Rights Decade created the pre-conditions for the much higher level of struggle needed in the period ahead.

FOR A NEW BEGINNING

When King was assassinated in the spring of 1968, he was leading the strike of the predominantly Black sanitation workers of Memphis. His commitment to this courageous working-class struggle was a vibrant indication that, in pressing for a new beginning in the strategy against racist oppression, poverty and war, he had come to a *full* realization of the meaning of his first major strugge, the Montgomery, Alabama bus boycott. This landmark battle was sparked by Mrs. Rosa Lee Parks, a Black *working-class* woman, and carried on with courage and tenacity by, primarily, Black working-class men and women. In the course of a decade of leadership of the liberation struggle, King came to understand that it was workers, more than any other stratum, who possess these qualities.

King recognized that since these special qualities of workers had brought about the historic turning point in Montgomery, leading to the nationwide involvement of many other sections of the population, including Black and white youth in the struggle for equal rights, the new stage—the struggle for jobs, for an end to poverty, racism and war—demanded a new strategy based on the working class, Black and white.

Although King's views were not identical with the Marxist conception of the role of the working class—which sees this class not only as the main social force but as the leader in the anti-monopoly struggle—he had come steadily closer to this outlook. *Moreover, it is especially meaningful that King moved in this direction at the time when Marcuse and others, with the assistance of the mass media, were making their greatest headway in promoting the idea among radical youth that the Marxist concept of the working class was outdated.*

THE MEANING OF THE PERIOD

Another ironic contradiction in the role of many of the new radicals emerged at the end of the Civil Rights Decade: As they lost sight of the historic significance of that period, and more and more heaped abuse on it and its preeminent leader, they became the inadvertent helpmates of the ruling class, whose conscious aim it was and is to distort the meaning of that period to the masses.

It should not be forgotten that for many long decades the ruling class hid the true history of Reconstruction from the people of this country. Now, at a time when the Black liberation movement has forced at least the beginnings of attention to the Reconstruction era, it would indeed be strange if the rhetoric of the pseudo-revolutionaries helped the monopolists conceal the true meaning, the heroism and achievements of the Civil Rights Decade. This must not be allowed to happen.

It is important to understand the meaning of this period, and the vital leadership role in it of Martin Luther King, who came to an awareness of the revolutionary relationship between the fight for rights, for security, for peace and the liberation struggle. Despite their "revolutionary" rhetoric, this is something the pseudo-radicals have failed to comprehend. In rejecting this central meaning of the civil rights struggle, these radicals caricatured the Marxist principles they so often proclaimed.

As Lenin persistently emphasized, the fight for democracy is at the heart of the class struggle. He continually warned against the ideas of those who ignored the connection between the struggle for democracy, national liberation and socialism. In "A Caricature of Marxism," he wrote:

> *All* democracy consists in the proclamation and realization of rights which under capitalism are realizable only to a very small degree and only relatively. But without the proclamation of these rights, without a struggle to introduce them now, immediately, without training the masses in the spirit of this struggle, socialism is *impossible*. (Collected Works, Vol. 23, p.74.)

Lenin also emphasized that Marxists must:

> . . . know that democracy does *not* abolish class op-

pression. It only makes the class struggle more direct, wider, more open and pronounced, and that is what we need. . . The more democratic the system of government, the clearer will the workers see that the root evil is capitalism, not lack of rights. (Ibid., p.73.)

KING AND DOUGLASS

Martin Luther King's sectarian opponents proclaimed their Marxism, but their policies and practice were contrary to its principles. On the other hand, King's philosophy was that of moral suasion, but in practice he came to rely more and more on the liberating force of mass struggle as the foundation for Black freedom and social advance for all the oppressed and exploited.

Though not a Marxist, King was steadily moving toward a strategy that tended to coincide with the Marxist-Leninist concept of an anti-monopoly policy, one involving the Black and white sectors of the working class, the Black liberation movement, the Puerto Rican and Chicano masses, and all others opposed to war and poverty. This strategy continues in today's terms—when the working-class is the leading force—the strategy developed by Frederick Douglass during the Abolitionist period, when he struggled to form a broad coalition of Abolitionists and other strata to break the slaveowners' control of Congress and the Federal Government.

Just as it is impossible to understand the Civil Rights Decade without understanding the role of Martin Luther King, it is impossible to grasp the meaning of the anti-slavery struggle without understanding the role of Frederick Douglass, the great genius and architect of the anti-slavery strategy.

Like King, Douglass matured in struggle against sectarian, separatist and accommodationist tendencies within the movement of his time. As one example, his writings show that throughout the crucial decade of the 1850s, he resisted the separatist alternative of emigrationism which would have weakened the anti-slavery front. Douglass saw that emigrationism, a forerunner of Pan-Africanism, objectively meant accommodation to the slave power.

And, as early as 1848, Douglass began to oppose the sectarianism of William Lloyd Garrison and other anti-slavery forces who were against both electoral action and any coalition with those whose objectives stopped short of abolition.

In this connection, Douglass himself had at first feared that the Free Soil movement, which opposed the extension of slavery but did not demand its abolition, might divert from the anti-slavery struggle. However, he came to understand the objective role of this movement within the anti-slavery strategy and called upon the Abolitionists to support it:

> We may stand off . . . and in this way play into the hands of our enemies . . . [or] remain silent and speechless, and let things take their course. . . In neither of these ways can we go. (*The North Star,* August 18, 1848.)

While calling for a common front of the Abolitionists with the Free Soilers and others opposed to the extension of slavery, Douglass at the same time relentlessly advanced the Abolitionists' independent goal of an end to slavery. He wrote:

> Free Soilism is lame, halt and blind, while it battles against the spread of slavery, and admits its right to exist anywhere. If it has the right to exist, it has the right to grow and spread. . . The only way to put an end to the aggressions of slavery is to put an end to slavery itself. (*Frederick Douglass' Paper,* August 24, 1855.)

Douglass never relaxed in his drive for the development of the strategy which eventually led to a political realignment, one from which the Republican Party headed by Lincoln emerged to challenge the two major parties of the period. At the time this realignment was in the process of formation, he wrote:

> We rejoice in this demonstration . . . to bury party affinities and predelictions, and also the political leaders who have hitherto controlled them; to unite in one grand phalanx and go forth, and whip the enemy. (Ibid., July 27, 1855.)

DOUGLASS AND MARX

In 1846, two years before writing the *Communist Manifesto,* the young Karl Marx had already revealed his deep understanding of the struggle against slavery in the U.S. His thinking closely paralleled the direction Frederick Douglass was taking, and this remarkable parallelism in the liberation strategy of these two giants of world his-

tory continued throughout every phase of the anti-slavery struggle.

Marx, too, saw the Free Soil movement as an objective force against slavery, and opposed the sectarianism of those who resisted coalition with it. At the same time, he warned against the utopian views of some of the Free Soilers. For example, writing of Herman Kriege, editor of the *Volkkstribun* in New York, Marx said:

> [H]e continues to chant his paean: And so the old dreams of the Europeans would at last come true. A place would be prepared for them on this side of the ocean which they would only have to take and to fructify with the labour of their hands, so as to be able proudly to declare to all the tyrants of the world, "This is *my* cabin, which you have not built; this is *my* hearth whose glow fills your hearts with envy.
>
> He [Kriege] might have added, This is *my* dunghill, which I, my wife, my children, my manservant, and my cattle have produced. And who are the Europeans whose "dreams" would thus come true? Not the communist workers, but bankrupt shopkeepers and handicraftsmen, or ruined cottars, who yearn for the good fortune of once again becoming petty bourgeois and peasants in America. And what is the "dream" that is to be fulfilled by means of these 1,400,000 acres? No other than that all men be converted into private owners, a dream which is unrealizable and as communistic as the dream to convert all men into emperors, kings and popes. (Quoted in: Lenin *Collected Works,* Vol. 8, Progress, 1965, 327.)

Thus Marx's aim, like Douglass', was to develop a strategy that would bring together a coalition to stop the spread of slavery as the *precondition* for its abolition.

At the same time, Marx's polemic against Kriege has profound significance for the struggle against white chauvinism: it demonstrated his irreconcilable opposition to every form of accommodation to the influence of racism. Marx was battling against the seepage of racist poison into the Abolitionist movement, in this case in the form of the illusion that Western land could be won for the white masses—while the Indians were driven off this same land and the Blacks remained enslaved.

While the Free Soil movement aimed at keeping the Western land from the slave power, Marx saw that it could not halt the eventual takeover of this land and economy by the rising capitalist class. He attacked the petty-bourgeois illusions of the Free Soilers because they carried the seed of the racist division which would weaken the strategy for the most democratic outcome in the struggle against the slave power. And any weakening of this strategy would jeopardize the fight for Black liberation, further the plunder and genocide of the Indians, and profoundly disfigure the struggle for unity of the Black and white working class, whose mission it would be to lead in the battle for the abolition of wage slavery after the abolition of chattel slavery.

RACIST 'DISFIGUREMENT' OF THE CLASS STRUGGLE

In addition, Marx saw that the greater the democratic gains of the masses, the less would the future struggles of labor with a black skin and labor with a white skin be distorted by the divisive ideology of racism. And later, applying Marxism to the imperialist stage of capitalism, Lenin placed the struggle for democracy, in the way Marx viewed it, at the center of the struggle for the socialist revolution. Racism, on the other hand, results in what Marx many times describes as the "disfigurement" of the class struggle—diverting it away from the class enemy into division and fragmentation of the exploited and oppressed.

That is why Lenin tirelessly emphasized that the struggle for democracy is indivisibly bound up with the struggle against racism, and class and national oppression. Lenin saw this struggle as the key to advancing the unity of the workers of the oppressor nation with the workers and the people of any oppressed nation or nationality.

In an article that appeared in the *The New York Daily Tribune* in 1861, Marx forewarned that the United States would continue to suffer from racist disfigurement if the abolition of slavery was in any way compromised:

> The progressive abuse of the Union by the slave power, working through its alliance with the Northern Democratic Party is, so to say, the general formula of United States history since the beginning of this century. The successive compromise measures mark the successive degrees of encroachment by which the Union became more and more transformed into the slave of the slaveowner. (Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The Civil War in the United States,* International Publishers, New York, 1971, p.6.)

Confirmation of Marx's analysis can be found in the "successive compromises" which

led to the betrayal of Reconstruction and, finally, the transformation of the Union into the slave of state monopoly capitalism.

The history of this country has been warped and distorted, first by slavery, then by the survivals of slavery and the ceaseless propagation of racist ideology. And from this history it can be clearly seen that the class interests of white workers, as in the struggle against the super-monopolies today, can only be advanced in unity with Black workers and as an integral part of the fight to end the oppression of Black people.

In writing of Marx's simultaneous support of the land reform movement and opposition to those who saw that movement as a means of realizing their petty-bourgeois dreams instead of a way to struggle against class and racist oppression and exploitation, Lenin said:

> While mercilessly ridiculing the absurd ideological trappings of the movement, Marx strives in a sober, materialist manner to determine its *real* historical content, the consequences that must inevitably flow from it because of objective conditions, regardless of the will and the consciousness, the dreams and theories, of the various individuals. Marx, therefore, does not condemn, but fully approves communist support of the movement. (Ibid., 328.)

At the same time, Marx saw that even an uncompromising struggle against all vestiges of slavery, against the plunder and murder of the Indians, and to gain land for Black and white toilers, could not change the nature of commodity production that would inevitably lead to the takeover of the land and the economy by the rising capitalist class, Lenin wrote:

> With remarkable penetration, Marx, who was then only the *future* economist, points to the role of exchange and commodity production. The peasants, he says, will exchange the produce of the land, if not the land itself, and that says everything! The question is dealt with in a way that is largely applicable to the Russian peasant movement and its petty-bourgois ideologists. . . Marx, however, does not simply repudiate this petty-bourgeois movement, he does not dogmatically ignore it, he does not fear to soil his hands by contact with the movement of the revolutionary petty-bourgeois democrats—a fear that is characteristic of many of the doctrinaires. (Ibid., 327,328.)

While Douglass was the champion of Black and white unity within the Abolitionist movement, as well as the architect of the strategy to bring about a national political realignment, he also advocated the self-organization of Black people.

By 1849, Douglass was already calling for such a group, to be named the National League of Colored People. He had even suggested a constitution for it, with a preamble that stated:

> [W]e have long deplored the distracted and divided state of the oppressed, and the manifold evils resulting therefrom, and desiring as we do to see an union formed which shall enable us better to grapple with the various systems of injustice and wrong by which we are environed, and to regain our plundered rights, we do solemnly agree to unite in accordance with the following. (*The North Star,* August 10, 1849.)

DOUGLASS AND BLACK POWER

Douglass was certain that in their struggle for liberation, and as part of the struggles of all oppressed and exploited, Black people would achieve self-union. "We shall never despair of our people, and union will yet be affected—our ranks cannot always be divided," he wrote in *The North Star* (November 19, 1849).

It is clear that Douglass was the original advocate of "Black power" and that his concept had nothing in common with disruptive sloganizing. Douglass rejected all tendencies that viewed Black power in a separatist way. "It is evident," wrote Douglass, "that white and black must fall or flourish together." (*The North Star,* November 16, 1849.)

Douglass not only opposed separatist concepts of Black power, he also polemicized against those who feared that the press would falsely portray Black self-union as anti-white. This group included a prominent Black friend who wrote to *The North Star,* saying, "I believe that the motto, 'Union of the oppressed for the sake of freedom,' will be interpreted by the pro-slavery press, to mean an union of the black against the white." Douglass, continuing in his insistence that there was no contradiction between the self-union of the oppressed Blacks and unity with white opponents of the slaveowners, responded by stating that, "It seems worse than timidity for us to hesitate to adopt measures for our improvement and elevation, from fear of misinterpretation."

For Douglass, self-union of the oppressed

Black people—as the starting point of Black power—was fully consistent with *unity* with white Abolitionists and *coalition* with other white strata in order to advance liberation. He saw that Abolition could not be achieved if Blacks pursued a separatist policy.

Douglass saw that all struggle, including that for self-organization, was a process. It would be self-defeating, he realized, for Black people to reject the strategy of coalition until some vague future date when they had achieved complete internal organization.

Douglass did not waver in his conviction despite bitter attacks by Garrison and other sectarians in the Abolitionist movement who opposed a coalition strategy against the slave power. The passive acceptance of their views, he was convinced, would lead to the perpetuation of slavery for an indeterminate length of time.

Douglass also realized that refusal to enter into coalition with forces that did not, at that stage of the struggle, accept the goal of abolition would contradict and undermine an anti-slavery strategy. Had Douglass advocated the anti-coalition concept of Black power advanced today by Carmichael, Forman, Boggs and others, the coalition of forces that led to the defeat of the slave power would not have been achieved.

In today's struggle against the genocidal economic and social aggressions of state monopoly capitalism, those so-called radicals advocate the type of "Black power" strategy that Douglass so relentlessly opposed—a separatist concept that would dissipate instead of strengthen Black power, and would result in the perpetuation of *unequal* power of the oppressed and exploited in the battle against the racist ruling class.

According to Stokely Carmichael,

> The major mistake made by the exponents of the coalition theory is that they advocate alliances with groups which have never had as their central goal the necessity for the total revamping of society. At bottom, these groups accept the American system and want only—if at all—to make peripheral, marginal reforms in it. Such reforms are inadequate to rid society of racism." (Stokely Carmichael and Charles Hamilton, *Black Power, the Politics of Liberation in America,* Random House, New York, 1967, pp.60-61.)

Carmichael is vague about what he means by the "total revamping of society." The only way that can be accomplished is by establishing socialism, which he opposes. Carmichael also states that "reforms are inadequate to rid society of racism." Of course this is true, since only the abolition of capitalism and its replacement by socialism can totally abolish racism. The majority of Black as well as white masses, however, are not ready to wait for socialism as the solution to their exploitaton and oppression today. They continue to search for answers to the problems imposed by their common exploiter and oppressor, state monopoly capitalism.

Despite this fact, Carmichael calls upon Black people to reject the struggle for reforms in favor of the "total revamping" of society. In the same breath, he advocates interracial disunity pending the achievement of complete Black self-unity.

But this self-unity will come about only as a part of the revolutionary process in which the struggle for the racial and class unity of the oppressed and exploited is an aim and result of every battle against the racist oppressor. Those who do not understand the role of coalition in the people's fight to improve their condition fail to see the relationship between reforms and revolution.

Long ago, Douglass answered those who persist in the illusion that the destiny of oppressed Black people is separate and unrelated to the destiny of exploited whites. "We deem it a settled point," wrote Douglass, "that the destiny of the colored man is bound up with the white people of this country . . . and the question ought to be . . . what principle should dictate policy." *(The North Star,* November 16, 1849.)

DOUGLASS AND ROBESON

In our time, the towering figure of Paul Robeson has personified the link between two significant periods, from the betrayal of Reconstruction to the era of Black liberation begun with Martin Luther King and the Civil Rights Decade.

Frederick Douglass had himself been a slave and Robeson is the son of a slave. Like Douglass in his time, Robeson has devoted his life to the cause of Black liberation. And, like Douglass, he recognizes that Black liberation cannot be achieved via a separatist path, but through Black power in alliance with the oppressed and exploited of all colors. Robeson has always seen Black independence and Black-white alliance as

related, indispensable components of the liberation struggle.

The principles that should "dictate policy," Robeson has declared, are the following:

> Dedication to the Negro people's welfare is one side of the coin; the other side is independence. Effective Negro leadership must rely upon and be responsive to no other control than the will of the people. We have allies—important allies—among our white fellow citizens, and we must seek to draw them close to us and to gain many more. But the Negro people's movement must be led by Negroes, not only in terms of title and position but in reality. (Paul Robeson, *Here I Stand,* Othello Associates, New York, 1958, p.111.)

Robeson struggled for self-union of his people at home, and for solidarity with the oppressed and their allies at home and abroad. Whereas Douglass travelled widely in Europe to win suport for the anti-slavery cause, Robeson travelled even more extensively, rallying support for Black liberation and championing liberation from imperialism everywhere.

That Robeson's travels were more extensive than Douglass' was of course made possible by the October Revolution, which replaced the czar and serfdom with socialism, opening the way for the end of racism and oppression in a major part of the globe, and becoming the most decisive support for the oppressed and exploited throughout the world.

Wherever he went, Robeson earned the hatred of the U.S. imperialists—and never more than in Paris in 1949, when he declared:

> It is unthinkable that American Negroes could go to war on behalf of those who have oppressed them for generations, against the Soviet Union which in one generation has raised our people to full dignity.

When Robeson asserted that Black men would never fight against the country of socialism—the Soviet Union, the chief supporter and champion of liberation from imperialism, oppression and racism—he was expressing what is at the heart of today's Black resistance to fighting a war to oppress others.

In Douglass' time, the strategy to break the slave power's control of Congress and the Federal Government was the precondition for the abolition of slavery. Today the precondition for opening the path to the abolition of wage slavery and racist oppression through socialism is the strategy to defeat the threat of fascism and to break the monopolists' domination of Congress and the Federal Government.

George Dimitrov stated,

> Whoever does not fight the reactionary measures of the bourgeoisie and the growth of fascism [in its] preparatory stages *is not in a position to prevent the growth of fascism, but on the contrary, facilitates that victory."* (*(United Front Against Fascism,* New Century Publishers, New York, 1950, p.9.)

Anti-coalition views are nothing less than opposition to a united front against the "reactionary measures" with which monopoly prepares for its imposition of fascism.

However, regardless of the disruptive nature of the views of such Black radicals, it must be recognized that the main obstacle to Black and white unity against the common enemy is the influence of racism on white workers. And it is the primary responsibility of white revolutionaries to lead the fight against racist ideology and to mobilize white workers in the struggle against racism and in support of Black liberation as indispensable to the advance of their class interests.

FOR A STRATEGIC BREAKTHROUGH

The aim of monopoly is to force a reversal of every aspect of bourgeois democracy, limited as it is, in order to open the way for fascism. The aim of the anti-monopoly program, as advocated by the Communist Party, is to bring about a *strategic* breakthrough to a deeper and wider degree of democracy, one that would powerfully accelerate the revolutionary process, opening the way to Black liberation and socialism.

Once this anti-monopoly strategy succeeds in breaking the control of state monopoly capital over Congress and the government, the forces exist, internally and internationally—in contrast to the anti-slavery period—that can prevent the betrayal of the struggle. There is such a perspective, and this is so, first of all, because the forces of class and national liberation, headed by the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries, have changed the world balance of power. □

Gorbachev at the UN
A Truly Epochal Address

JIM WEST

IN HIS HISTORIC ADDRESS TO THE UNITED Nations, Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev unequivocally expressed the interests of social progress for the human race. His was the voice of the world's vast working class. The banners he unfurled on December 7th were inscribed with the words "For Human Preservation, For Human Rights!"

In its time, the rising capitalist class had expressed the interests of mankind when it raised the banners of "liberty, equality, fraternity." That mobilized the working masses of town and country who carried the bourgeois-democratic revolution to victory. Today the humanistic goals of all who labor, so eloquently expressed by the Soviet President, include: non-violent relations among nations; an end to hunger, poverty, illiteracy, an end to the nuclear threat and militarism; democratize and humanize the entire world order; preserve a liveable environment. That is why, as CPUSA Chairman, Gus Hall, said: "In his history-making speech Gorbachev appealed to the deepest human instincts and values now held by the great majority of the world's people.[1]

It is no wonder that the speech evoked enthusiastic approval across the length and breadth of the United States and around the world.

The powerful logic, warm appeal and precise proposals of the Soviet leader broke through the cold war walls of ice and their impacted frozen thought patterns.

The New York Times wrote,

> Perhaps not since Woodrow Wilson presented his Fourteen Points in 1918 or since President Franklin Roosevelt and Winston Churchill promulgated the Atlantic Charter in 1944, has a world figure demonstrated the vision Mikhail Gorbachev displayed yesterday at the United Nations. . .
>
> The Soviet leader called for the basic restructuring of international politics—for the rule of law, not force; for multilateralism, not unilateralism; and for economic as well as political freedom . . . He promised to lead the way unilaterally, by reducing Soviet military forces and converting defense industries to peaceful uses.[2]

Time magazine declared:

> The Soviet leader . . . remains the most commanding presence on the world stage. . . The key question about Gorbachev used to be whether he was sincere. . . That question no longer seems relevant.[3]

Stanley Hoffman, Chairman of the Center for European Studies at Harvard University wrote,

> What the United States needs to do now is to move on to negotiated reductions in both nuclear and conventional armaments. A deal with the USSR in cutting strategic nuclear weapons seems feasible, but it depends in large part, on the United States giving up the delusion of perfect defenses that it still pursues in the SDI (Star Wars) program.[4]

Ralph Earl II, former director of the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency and Elliot L. Richardson, former Secretary of Defense, in response to Gorbachev's speech, urged immediate steps for establishing a corridor in Central Europe in which "provocative, offensive weapons are removed as a confidence-building measure.[5]

Only a few months before Gorbachev's speeech, George Kennan had written, "The Soviets dropped the cold war mentality. Now it's up to us to do the same thing."[6] The speech clearly helped that process. Now U.S. capitalists can even see their self-interests tied to ending the cold war.

The *U.S. News and World Report* writes:

> The continuation of the cold war will benefit mostly the Japanese and Europeans. . . He (Gorbachev) opens up the tantalizing prospect that we, too, might turn our primary attention to our own domestic problems.[7]

The prospect of ending the cold war is also

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evident in the view expressed by African-American columnist, Carl Rowan: "[T]he main thing that matters to millions is that it was Gorbachev who took the initiative toward ending the cold war confrontation that has become an absurdity."[8]

This thought is seconded by *The Nation* which editorialized, "The real enemy isn't the Red Menace, but the common enemies of disaster, disease, pollution and hunger."[9]

Nevertheless. it would be premature to celebrate the demise of the cold war. As Gorbachev noted, the trend to disarmament, while given a powerful impetus,

> . . .has not yet become irreversible. . . The willingness to give up confrontation in favor of dialogue and cooperation is strongly felt . . . but is still far from a permanent feature in the practise of international relations.

Ben Wattenberg, ultra-right ideologue, for example, is prepared to announce the end of the cold war only when the Soviet Union becomes a "free country," by which he means a return to capitalism.[10]

Gorbachev's speech effectively exposed the militarism behind cold warism. Illuminating this is the change which came over Dmitri Simes in just one month's time.

In advance of Gorbachev's arrival in New York, Simes warned, "If he [Gorbachev] tries to put Bush on the defensive, it will be perceived as an unfriendly act."[11]

A few weeks after Gorbachev' speech, Simes was still belligerent, sniffing in other directions to vent his militarist spleen:

> Paradoxically, the Soviet-American rapprochement makes military power more useful as a United States foreign policy instrument. . . Removing the constant concern about Soviet counteraction permits Washington a greater reliance on military force in a crisis.[12]

Thus, Simes affirmed U.S. militarism as a principle in rejecting Gorbachev's proposition that "the use or threat of force no longer can or must be an instrument of foreign policy.

Simes was writing, but others were acting.As the Soviet President was preparing to come to the United States to promote the demilitarization of international relations, Washington launched a secret military spy satellite and the unveiled the Stealth attack bomber.

Gorbachev called for the transition from an economy of armaments to an economy of disarmament and backed up his call with the announcement of plans to be drawn up in 1989 for converting two or three Soviet defense plants to civilian production.

Sharon Parker, Chair of Women for a Meaningful Summit, commented, "I have heard no other national leader who has put that in a major address to the world."[13] But the response of m George Reddy of the Center for Strategic and International Studies was that the call for conversion could "jeopardize the viability of the industrial and technological base of the nation's defense. . . It is beyond the reach of many corporations if they hope to stay in business.[14]

Reddy is really concerned with the survival of the merchant-of-death profiteers rather than the survival of the planet.

If there are any who think that the struggle for peace for peace has been won let them consider the fact that not one U.S. overseas military base has been shut down. For example, the 40,000 U.S. troops in South Korea. armed with nuclear weapons, remain a threat to against socialism in North Korea, China and the USSR. That is why, for the people of our country, there is a special responsibility to heed Gorbachev's words that only the first steps have been taken toward a nuclear-weapon-free and non-violent world.Indeed, much remains to be done to wage and win peace, to preserve our planet and make it liveable and environmentally safe.

The Soviet President's speech presents a challenge to match the USSR's peace actions with U.S. deeds.

There is an urgent need to:

- Speed the conclusion of a treaty to reduce strategic nuclear weapons by 50 percent, preserve the ABM treaty and scrap SDI; for a nuclear-weapon-free world by the year 2000;
- End all nuclear weapons' tests; establish nuclear-weapon free zones;
- Remove all nuclear weapons from foreign soil and bring our troops home;
- Give full support to the United Nations;
- Vigorously work for deep reductions in conventional arms and outlaw all chemical and biological weapons;
- Support an international conference to establish a peace settlement in the Middle East as called for in U.N. Resolution 242.

- End all aid to the contras in Central America and Afghanistan;
- Repeal the Jackson-Vanik amendment; expand East-West trade, culture and scientific exchanges;
- Join the Soviet Union and other countries in establishing, under the United Nations, an agency to monitor and secure the integrity of the environment;
- Establish a national conversion authority of labor, management and public representatives to draw up plans for demilitarizing the economy in favor of production for low-cost housing, health care facilities, schools and renovating the nation's infrastructure;
- Build and promote the cohesive action of all peace, labor, minority, environmental, religious and community movements.

Gorbachev at the UN spoke for the de-ideologization of relations among nations. It was a call to end psychological warfare with its inflammatory rhetoric and misleading propaganda. He proposed, instead, a rivalry of deeds for peace, for global survival and a better life. In our country, where powerful militarist and reactionary interests control politics, the economy and the media, the renunciation of psychological (dirty) warfare and acceptance of fair ideological competition based on deeds for the common good, requires the rejection of the falsehoods, distortions and outright lies which have sustained the anti-Sovietism of the cold war.

It has become all the more urgent to step up not only the united struggles indicated above, but also the battle of ideas against the reactionaries, cold war warriors and the extremists of right and "left." This especially includes persistent effort to bring forth the truth about the Soviet Union, the other socialist countries and scientific socialism; and now, first of all, about perestroika and glasnost.

Misinformation and distortions about what is happening in the Soviet Union sow illusions that, when not materialized, can mislead people into accepting a new lease on life for anti-Sovietism an recreate the danger of war in intensified form.

In the interest of peace, to safeguard the cherished, humanistic goals of the Gorbachev UN speech, it is necessary to nail every lie and set the record straight. Let us take a few examples.

Robert G. Kaiser, assistant managing editor of the *Washington Post,* writes about "the diminished role of the Communist Party" as a result of perestroika and glasnost which, according to him, are also "committing mayhem against Marxism-Leninism." Others claim that the revolutionary reforms in the USSR "prove the failure of Communism and Marxism-Leninism."[15]

From the extreme right there comes the charge that perestroika and glasnost are nothing but "political razzle-dazzle in the international arena to make up for domestic problems . . . but the novelty is wearing off."[16].

From the pseudo-left come such pomposities as co-existence is illusory, socialist democracy in one country is economically and politically impossible, and Gorbachev's policies are nothing but latter-day Browderism and Dubcekism.

Far from playing a diminished role, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union is being restored to the political, ideological, philosophical and organizational position that V.I. Lenin projected. This reverses the command-administrative role that had come to dominate it. Further, the line of demarcation between the Party and the state, which Lenin demanded be strictly observed, is being clearly defined, with the power and rights of the Soviets enhanced, and the Party freed to play its vital vanguard role.

Far from proving the failure of Marxism-Leninism, perestroika and glasnost testify to the viability of this liberating science which is capable of correcting practise and of continued progressive development..

As for the "failure of Communism" this piece of political illiteracy is as meaningless as talking about the "failure of the twenty-first century." Neither exists as yet. While individual Marxist-Leninists can be fallible, the science of Marxism-Leninism remains infallible. It is alive, growing and developiing, as demonstrated by its revolutionary policies of perestroika and glasnost under Gorbachev's leadershiip.

The voices from the pseudo-left wilderness prattle the petrified dogmas of Trotskyism ("permanent revolution," "impossibility of building socialism in one country," etc.). They have even less relation to reality today than when 70 years ago.

Attempts to liken perestroika and glasnost to Browderism and Dubcekism reflect either lack of concrete knowledge or self-serving, subjective atttempts to justify past erroneous positions.

Browder's policies were non-class, non-struggle formulas for capitulation to capitalism. Dubcek presided over maneuvers and manipulations which would have led to the restoration of capitalism.

Perestroika and glasnost are aimed, as Gorbachev has said, at "more democracy, more socialism." They call for a strengthened Communist Partty, not a Browder-like liquidation of the Party. That they require a struggle is evident from the resistance the encounter at home and influential circles abroad.

It is no secret that the die-hard anti-Sovieteers seek to take advantage of glasnost to foment nationalism and centrifugal tendencies and movements within the socialist community of nations, to break up their cohesion. The anti-Communist centers of the capitalist world seek to intervene in the discussions of perestroika and glasnost that take place in the world Communist movement and in the general public. For example, the canard has been spread around the world that the Communist Party, USA is opposed to perestroika, glasnost and new thinking.

The uninformed and those who have deliberately shut their eyes and minds to the existence and policies of the CPUSA, are easy prey for such misleading propaganda.

With sorrow, one reads in *The Nation* a letter from Howard Fast (Dec. 19, 1988) in which he blithely asserts that the CPUSA shares in denouncing Gorbachev! For an author famed for his historical novels, he has gone far in disregard of reality and facts.

The Communist Party, USA has recognized the need for perestroika and glasnost from the beginning. It has constructively criticized statements by some Soviet authors that it considered to be detrimental to the aims of perestroika and glasnost. These were an expression of its support and concern for the success of the Leninist aim of more democracy, more socialism in the Soviet Union.

We are aware of the difficulties and problems confronting the CPSU and the Soviet people in their struggle to overcome the legacy of stagnation and its roots in the bureaucratic, commandist methods of administration.

We have great confidence in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Soviet people, which lifted themselves by their own bootstraps out of backwardness to the level of a world power; which displayed unparallelled heroism as the decisive force in the defeat of Nazism; which, without help from the capitalist world, rebuilt the country after the enormous devastation of World War II; which conquered the heights of space exploration; and which has the strength and courage to reveal and overcome the negative phenomena that grew up, weed-like, around all their magnificent achievements. Such a Party, such a people, with such a world leader as Mikhail Gorbachev, ensures the triumph of perestroika and glasnost. □

Notes

1. "A New World Order: The Meaning of Gorbachev's U.S. Message to the World," *ThePeople's Daily World*, Dec. 15, 1988.
2. *The New York Times*, editorial, Dec. 8, 1988.
3. *Time*, Dec. 19, 1988.
4. *The New York Review of Books, Dec. 22, 1988.*
5. *The New York Times*, Dec. 8, 1988.
6. "The Cold War is Outdated," *New Perspective Quarterly*, Summer, 1988.
7. *U.S. News & World Report*, editorial, Dec. 26, 1988.
8. *The Newark Star-Ledger*, Dec. 11, 1988.
9. *The Nation*, Jan. 2, 1989.
10. *The Newark Star-Ledger*, Dec. 16, 1988.
11. *U.S. News & World Report*, Nov. 28, 1988.
12. *The New York Times, Dec. 27, 1988.*
13. *ThePeople's Daily World*, Dec. 9, 1988.
14. *The New York Times*, Dec. 20, 1988.
15. "The USSR in Decline," *Foreign Affairs*, Winter 1988/1989.
16. *U.S. News & World Report*, Nov. 28, 1988.

CORRECTIONS ■ In the article by Howard L. Parsons, "Creative Interaction in the Struggle for Peace," *Political Affairs*, January 1989: p. 22, col.2, 2nd line from bottom ▪ 1 to read 4; p. 23, col. 1, line 18 to read ▪ more power and more temptation to overcome; page 24, col. 2, 20th line from bottom to read ▪ the astrophysical world, no center can be; p. 26, col 2, line 18 ▪ delete superscript 10 and corresponding Note on p. 27; p.27, col 1, line 5, new sentence to read ▪ The solidarity of diverse groups in motion toward realizing their human rights—that is the needed path of creative interaction; p. 27, col. 1 ▪ the last two sentences are a separate paragraph without quotation marks.

Democratic Demands and Class Conscious Forces

TIMOTHY V JOHNSON

THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE STRUGGLE FOR DEMOCRACY to the struggle for socialism remains one of the key tasks in transposing revolutionary theory to practice.

As James E. Jackson noted,

> The question of the relationship between reform and revolution [democracy and socialism] is not to be perceived of as a philosophical equation to juggle with. Rather, it is a practical task to master, to understand, to address ourselves to. [1]

Of this relationship, Lenin noted,

> It would be a radical mistake to think that the struggle for democracy was capable of diverting the proletariat from the socialist revolution or of hiding, overshadowing it, etc. . . . The proletariat cannot prepare for its victory over the bourgeoisie without an all-round, consistent and revolutionary struggle for democracy. [2]

This notion—of the democratic struggle preparing the proletariat for the socialist revolution—is more clearly understood when taken with Lenin's concept of the hegemony of the working class in the revolutionary process.

As restated by the English Marxist, John Hoffman, this concept notes that,

> The proletariat cannot win leadership and hence carry the revolution through its different stages to decisive victory unless it is a vanguard fighter for democracy, against the grievances and oppression suffered by society as a whole, unless it unites all those against whom a particular form of class rule is aimed. [3]

Thus, if those who would lead the working class cannot lead the general democratic movement, they cannot hope to lead a socialist revolution. One comes out of the other. For communists and progressives, this is a key point.

It has generally been understood on the left that the working class will come to realize the necessity of socialism through its participation in struggles to win its class demands within the capitalist system, i.e., through the democratic struggle.

Just as important is the realization that no finite, or infinite, number of democratic struggles will automatically lead the working class to this realization. It is only if these struggles are led by the class conscious forces that the working class will come to this realization.

This is precisely the topic of much of Lenin's famous polemic, *What Is To Be Done?*

Here, Lenin points out, quoting from a document of the Austrian Social-Democratic Party,

> Thus, socialist consciousness is something introduced into the proletarian class struggle from without and not something that arose within it spontaneously. . . . The task of Social Democracy is to imbue the proletariat with the consciousness of its position and the consciousness of its task. There would be no need for this if consciousness arose of itself from the class struggle. [4]

As this point is often misunderstood, it should be noted that Lenin goes on to say that this does not mean that workers play no role in the generation of socialist ideology. They do. However, they play that role "not as workers, but as socialist theoreticians." [5]

One cannot underestimate the role of the participation of class conscious forces in the democratic struggle. This role has often been understood in the economic struggle. In the fight of workers to win a particular grievance, strike or contract the issue is clear—one either sides with the workers or with the bosses.

But in "non-economic" struggles the issues are not always as clear. Often this is because of the all-class nature of many non-economic struggles.

For example, the struggle for peace and disarmament. The struggle for a world free of nuclear weapons is obviously in the interest of the working class. Indeed, the working class can only fulfill its historic mission if the world continues to exist.

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Yet, the continued existence of the world is not only in the interest of the working class. All of humanity has a stake in this fight. Consequently, that struggle has an all-class character. Even elements of the monopoly bourgeoisie will join in this fight. And, although their motivation differs from the working class, the objectives are identical.

The all-class character of the peace movement and other democratic struggles does not lessen their importance. In fact, it increases it. For the task of communists is to lead every democratic struggle. As Lenin stated,

> He is no Social-Democrat [Communist] who forgets his obligation to be ahead of all in raising, accentuating, and solving every general democratic question. [6]

In a related point Hoffman writes,

> One can say the question of peace and women's liberation, ecology and ethnic rights—all these represent not simply general democratic but also class questions the working class must champion. Indeed, unless the . . . working class joins the general democratic struggle vigorously and with a sense of purpose, the democratic potential of the country's broad social movements is sure to be constricted by separatist, elitist and divisive tendencies which the involvement of other classes and strata in these movements necessarily brings. [7]
>
> The working class can only establish socialism if it succesfully represents the interests of humanity as a whole, and this is only possible when the struggle against capitalist exploitation is coherently linked to the struggles and grievances of other social strata and classes. [8]

This notion of the importance of the role of the working class in leading all of society, and by definition, all of the democratic struggles in society, has come under increasing attention in the world movement.

The Soviet Marxist, Vadim Zagladin, writing of this concept and its relation to current Soviet foreign policy, notes,

> We had to rehabilitate many of the neglected, dogmatically misjudged or even deliberately ignored ideas of the Marxist classics. This applied above all to the humanistic essence of socialism and its politics, the universal essence of communism. This applied of course to the true essence of the historic mission of the working class which, in fighting against exploitation and oppression, is fighting for the emancipation of all mankind.
>
> Forgotten and sometimes deliberately ignored was the remarkable, the pivotal idea of Marx and Lenin about the intimate connection between the interests of the proletariat and the interests of mankind, about the universal humanitarian aspect of the historic mission of the working class . . . the class the meaning of whose existence lies in eliminating all classes (including itself) and bringing freedom to the human race. [9]

The question of the role of the working class in non-economic struggles assumes a heightened level of importance in the era of monopoly capitalism. The rise of monopoly capitalism engenders its opposite—a rise in non-monopoly, or anti-monopoly, movements.

THE ANTI-DEMOCRATIC NATURE of monopoly capitalism spawns a plethora of movements whose interests, objectively, are aligned against monopoly. This can be seen in the increasing sharpness of housing struggles, the birth of movements to save the ecology, etc.

Most Communists parties in advanced capitalist countries realized that, with the onset of monopoly capitalism, a new dynamic was thrown into the class struggle. The potential of drawing all of the anti-monopoly forces into one powerful force was seen as a possible transitory form to socialism. If these disparate trends could be united around a common program of struggle, it would be possible to curb the powers of monopoly and create the stage for even more thoroughgoing changes in society.

Commenting on the relation of the anti-monopoly movement and socialism, Gus Hall wrote,

> Anti-monopoly movements do not call for the abolition of the capitalist system, but objectively they are anti-capitalist because they weaken the position and power of the capitalist class and give broad-based support to the issues and struggles of the working class. The movements against monopoly are not in and of themselves for socialism. But objectively they clear the path toward socialism. [10]

Elaborating on this concept, James E. Jackson wrote,

> All unfinished . . . democratic tasks . . . are carried over for solution as aspects and features of the struggle against state monopoly capitalism. They take on new

significance. They become vital, integral aspects of the struggle for socialism. Therefore, in our time, all democratic struggles, all particular struggles on partial issues, can be paths to the main highway that leads to the socialist revolution. [11]

But the anti-monopoly movement, a movement to expand and strengthen democracy, will not move automatically toward socialism. For that motion to occur it is necessary for communists to play a leading role.

All-class democratic movements are not only mass movments around particular issues, they also include electoral struggles.

IN THE 1988 ELECTION the campaign of Rev. Jesse Jackson was just such a movement. Rev. Jackson ran a campaign whose intent was to turn the Democratic Party into a party that serves the interests of workers, women, the nationally oppressed, etc.

In order to galvanize that constituency, Jackson enunciated a program that included a workers' bill of rights, strengthened affirmative action programs, cutting the military budget to fund human needs and other issues that spoke directly to the constituency he was attempting to move.

Ron Daniels, an operative of Jackson's campaign wrote that,

> Jesse Jackson kept critical issues on the table. These are issues of importance to Black and Third World people—drugs, housing, health care, education, jobs, peace, justice. [12]

Enumerating Jackson's legislative proposals, Daniels added,

> The Jackson Action Agenda inside the Democratic Party calls for a major effort to liberalize voter registration laws to make it easier for potential voters to register and remain on the books . . . Other components of the Jackson agenda include D.C. statehood, minority and women set-aside programs for business and support for the Dellums's Bill for tougher sanctions against South Africa. Needless to say, expanded aid for housing, health care, education, jobs and a sane foreign policy will continue to be integral to Jackson's effort to restore sanity to the Democratic Party. [13]

Summing up Jackson's campaign, James Steele commented,

> [Jackson] was the most consistent of all the candidates in reflecting the interests of the working class and the people.
>
> Jackson took his campaign to plant gates and union halls, to the grassroots neighborhoods of the urban centers, to family farmers facing foreclosure, to peace demonstrations . . . The response this generated is the real story of the 1988 elections. [14]

Jackson's campaign was an attempt to expand democracy. The social base of the campaign was the Afro-American community. This is reflected in the fact that he received over 90 percent of the Afro-American vote.

But the campaign extended far beyond that community. Sections of the labor movement, the women's movement and the peace movement were also represented. It should come as no surprise that these constituencies would be part of the Jackson campaign. His campaign spoke directly to the issues that were of concern these groups.

However, some on the left distanced themselves from Jackson's campaign. One of their most commonly stated reasons was that it took place within the confines of the Democratic Party—and not as an independent formation. This attitude illustrates the lack of understanding of the importance of the democratic movement.

The rationale for this attitude—that the Democratic Party is a party of monopoly capital and cannot be reformed—may well be true. But that is beside the point.

The reality is that most anti-monopoly forces are in the Democratic Party and will stay there until they learn, through their own experiences, that it is necessary to form a third party.

None on the left can afford to stand on the sidelines, removed from these struggles but ready to proclaim, "We told you so," when that party is formed. For when that day comes, those in the struggle will not look to the sidelines to provide leadership—they will have developed their own, and only those who have gone through the arduous fight to democratize the system will qualify for a seat at the table.

As they say in the New York Lotto, "You have to play to win." In the class struggle, one must be involved in the democratic struggles of the working class in order to lead in winning the final goal—socialism.

This point is more easily understood in the context of the economic struggle. When workers

at a particular plant or industry are on strike for a "fair" contract, the left has no hesitation about its involvement. There is very seldom any discussion of the fact that it is impossible for workers to ever receive a "fair" contract under capitalism, because the logic of the system demands exploitation. Instead, it is recognized that the economic fight to improve the terrain of struggle and increase the living standard of workers, is an important one.

Similarly with electoral struggles. It makes no difference whether the Democratic Party can be reformed or, as Daniels says, "brought to sanity," the main point is the democratic struggle within that party and the forces who are involved in that struggle.

Much of the left has long concluded that the Democratic Party cannot be transformed into a people's party. As one of the two parties of monopoly capital it is owned, lock, stock and barrel by the monopolies.

Although, as the concessions given to the Jackson campaign have shown, some significant changes can be made in rules and procedures that increase the leverage of working people and progressives, this is a far cry from a total transformation.

However, the trade union movement, the African-American community, the peace movement and other forces of progress have yet to come to this conclusion. Undoubtedly they will, but it will be through their own experiences in the process of the struggle for democracy.

None of the above reasoning should negate the role and importance of independent campaigns. As the campaigns of Bernard Sanders in Vermont and Louis Godena in Massachusetts showed, these have an important role to play in building the progressive movement and expanding democracy. However, it is problematic when one poses independent campaigns to negate work in the Democratic Party.

The Jackson campaign was built on, and contributed to, a broad left and anti-monopoly sentiment in this country. The question for the left and progressive movement is, will we attempt to swim in this current?

In the 1988 elections, Jackson carried the ball for the working class, enunciating their issues and making them the issues of all humanity. Those who abstained from that struggle, under whatever guise of political "purity," demonstrated their lack of understanding of the revolutionary process.

The lack of understanding of the democratic struggle shows through as a particular weakness in relation to the struggle to end national oppression.

The struggle for the complete equality of the African-American people is, by definition, an all-class movement. Although African-Americans are overwhlemingly of the working class, there is a small petit-bourgeois and bourgeois sector, who play a role that is bigger than their numbers.

But the issues of equality, taken individually, are democratic questions. Theoretically, the resolutions of the individual demands for equality do not demand the ending of the capitalist system. As Lenin stated, "It is a fundamental theoretical mistake to speak of . . . one of the demands of democracy as being 'infeasible'." [15] He continued, "all the demands of democracy in general, are infeasible under imperialism." [16]

Although Lenin was writing in reference to self-determination, his point is that any particular democratic demand, i.e., one that does not by definition require the negation of the capitalist system, is possible under capitalism. But does this mean that full equality is possible under capitalism? No. Because all the democratic demands, taken together, are not possible under capitalism.

But people don't struggle for equality in general. They struggle around specific demands. Therefore, there is virtual unanimity over all of the issues of equality in the Afro-American community.

If one looks at the positions and programs of the key organizations in the struggle for equality, no matter what strata or class they represent in the African-American community, one finds this unanimity.

Thus, the problems of inequality, in general, can only be resolved under socialism. However, it is incorrect to speak of the solution of any particular demand as being impossible. And on the concrete issues—wiping out all manifestations of inequality and racism—there is unity.

Because of the all-class nature of this struggle, there is often an underestimation of its importance. Often what is only seen is the economic questions. And it is thought that these are the "real questions" affecting workers. But this is a narrow approach.

Most surveys of the African-American community show that the three main concerns are jobs, crime and drugs. The lack of jobs, because it is an economic question, is addressed (and correctly so). Yet the left has no program for the solution to crime or the drug problem. But the other issues, which are not economic questions, are rarely addressed at all.

There are great potentials to build the left in the African-American community. After eight years of Reaganism the material conditions of that community are steadily being eroded. An entire generation of youth are in danger of becoming what Henry Winston termed, "social pariahs." Joblessness and homelessness are at an all-time high.

The over 90 percent vote that the African-American community gave to Jesse Jackson in the Democratic primaries demonstrates that the thought patterns in this community veer to the left. African-Americans, almost unanimously, turned out and voted for an anti-monopoly program of jobs, health care, housing, peace and justice.

James E. Jackson once noted that African-Americans are willing to knock on any door in order to achieve equality. However, he added, they will peer in and closely scrutinize the room before crossing the threshold.

That door is open to the left, but the left will never have a significant presence in the African-American community until it begins to address broader questions and demonstrates that it can, as Lenin said, "solve every general democratic question." □

Notes

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Yonkers Battles to End Segregated Housing

BILL DENNISON

FOR A MONTH DURING THE SUMMER OF 1988 the city of Yonkers, New York faced escalating and potentially bankrupting fines for refusing to build 1,000 units of affordable housing as part of a court ordered housing desegregation plan. The story of how this crisis developed in a city that, like so many others, desperately needs affordable housing, is an important one.

It is a story about the nation's growing housing crisis and the impact it is having on every neighborhood across the country. It is also a story about how racism has added to this crisis, making housing more expensive and harder to find for everyone.

YONKERS, POPULATION 195,000, is the largest city in the metropolitan area surrounding New York City. It is located just north of the Bronx in Westchester County.

While Westchester County has some high income residential areas, most of its residents, including those who live in Yonkers, are working class. The median income of Yonkers residents in 1987 was about $25,000, compared to $36,000 in the county as a whole. Afro-Americans and Latinos make up 18.8 percent of Yonkers' population.

Yonkers has 6,800 units of low income and subsidized housing. The residents of Yonkers' public housing are overwhelmingly working people. The majority are employed full time and some are paying as much as $800 to $1,000 per month in rent. Nevertheless, the waiting list for public housing in Yonkers has several thousands of names on it, a measure of the housing shortage in the city.

Some 65 percent of Yonkers residents are tenants and the remaining 35 percent are home owners. Tenants in privately owned apartment buildings on both the east and west sides have faced escalating rents and a massive shift of units from rentals to condominiums and co-ops.

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A two bedroom apartment in Yonkers rents at $1,000 a month and a one bedroom condominium can cost $80,000. Currently, the average home in Yonkers sells for more than $200,000. That there is a housing crisis is not surprising. Yonkers accounts for about one half of the officially estimated 4,400 homeless in Westchester County, many of whom are sheltered in various motels around the county. Among the homeless, according to the County Department of Social Services, are 1,657 children.

HOUSING IN YONKERS IS SHARPLY SEGREGATED and it has compounded the city's housing crisis. For four decades, the city's political leaders not only allowed segregation to continue, they conspired to keep it in place.

Between 1949 and 1982, 36 subsidized housing projects were developed in Yonkers. Of these, 34 were built in a relatively small area in the southwest section of the city.

Southwest Yonkers contains 97.7 percent of the city's 6,800 units of susidized housing. While the southwest section of Yonkers contains 37.5 percent of the city's total population, 80.7 percent of its Black and Latino citizens live here.

Since 1949 organized opposition to federally subsidized housing has come from property owner organizations and "taxpayer associations" on Yonkers' east side. Each housing proposal met fierce and organized opposition. City leadership acquiesced and in several cases helped organize the opposition.

The result was always and predictably the same—after countless delays, public housing was placed in the southwest corner of the city. Because of these delays and opposition, the city lost funds for subsidized family housing and for senior citizen housing.

In 1975 and again in 1979, city leadership, overrode the advice of city planners that east side sites be chosen for senior citizen housing. The fear was that this housing would be as much as 20 percent Black and Latino. During the mid and

late 1970's the city gave up Section 8 housing funds rather than allow Black and Latino families access to the city's east side. Section 8 funds are basically grants to working families who have been priced out of housing. For no other reason than the fact that these Section 8 grants would enable Black and Latino families to find housing on the city's east side, in Jan 1976, the city council voted to reject Federal funds for 100 Section 8 certificates, 50 for families and 50 for senior citizens. At the time there were more than 800 families on the list waiting for section 8 assistance.

As a result of what was a consistent 40 year policy of segregation, on December 1, 1980, the U.S. Justice Department filed suit against the city and its school system. In June of 1981, the Yonkers Chapter of the NAACP joined the law suit.

There was an overwhelming amount of evidence, some of it mentioned above, to show that the segregation of the city's housing was intentional and flagrant. Five wards in a small area in the southwest corner of the city are more than 50 percent African-American and Latino. Three other adjoining wards are between 20 and 50 percent minority.

Except for one other small area, all of the remaining wards in the city were more than 94 percent white. And that one other area, Runyon Heights, only reinforced the charges that the city's housing was sharply segregated.

Runyon Heights is a small residential section of mainly single family homes and it is almost totally African-American. The several block area is located in about the center of Yonkers, away from the predominantly Black southwest section and is the site of the only family public housing project built outside of the southwest section of the city.

Runyon Heights however, is completely blocked off from the communities that surround it. One side is bounded by an abandoned railroad right of way. On the other side, a fenced-in strip of land purchased by a nearby homeowners' association, separates it from other predominantly white residential sections. There is one entrance to Runyon Heights and all other roads are dead ends.

Real estate interests have vigorously maintained this segregation. African-Americans looking to buy homes are invariably shown only houses in Runyon Heights and no other section of the city.

AS PART OF A LANDMARK DECISION in November of 1985, Federal Judge Leonard B. Sand found the city guilty of segregating both its schools and its housing. Sand found a 40 year pattern of segregation that was both purposeful and flagrant.

What made the decision particularly important is that it tied together the segregation of the city's school system with the city's segregated housing patterns. The schools were segregated, said the court, because the city had purposely pursued a policy of segregating its housing. A solution, therefore, would not only require steps to balance the racial composition of the schools, it would also require longer term solutions that would end the city's housing segregation.

In May of 1986 Judge Sand ordered the city to desegregate its public schools and to begin arrangements for the construction of low and moderate income housing units on the east side of the city.

After some initial opposition, Yonkers proceeded with the school desegregation plan. Through busing and the use of magnet schools, it was in large measure sucessfully accomplished when schools opened in September of 1986.

The school desegregation effort has run smoothly for the past two years. In fact, and in contrast to surrounding school districts, Scholastic Apptitude Test scores in Yonkers have actually gone up since the school integration plan was implemented.

The housing desegregation effort could have gone just as smooothly. However, with so much at stake for large property owners, real estate interests and the banks, it was not to be. Organized opposition to the housing, built on ignorance and economic fears, quickly developed just it had in the past 40 years.

THE OPPOSITION TO HOUSING IN YONKERS called itself the "Save Yonkers Federation" (SYF). Funded by property owners, landlords and real estate interests, and backed by the county Conservative and Republican Parties, it attracted a following, primarily among home owners.

As in the past, the SYF sought to exploit the real concerns and fears of small homeowners, mainly working families who have much of their life's work tied up in their homes. Those opposing the housing lied about the nature of the housing to be built, distorted its impact and made wide use of racist notions about the people who

would occupy the housing.

Their campaign against affordable housing in Yonkers during the next two years would cost the city of Yonkers and its taxpayers more than $20 million in attorneys' fees and court costs for what was a series of futile court appeals. It would also thrust the city into the national and international headlines as a symbol of racism and intransigence.

The Yonkers housing issue also became a focus for far-right fringe groups. The ultra-right Washington Legal Foundation, for a while the home of rejected Supreme Court nominee Robert Bork, provided legal assistance to the SYF. In the ensuing months, the Ku Klux Klan and related fascist organizations were to target several communities in the city with leaflets and newspapers.

In 1987, opponents of affordable desegregated housing focused on the city elections held that November. Opposition to the court decision became the litmus test for candidates. In an atmosphere polluted with misinformation and racism, a city council was elected, pledged to defy the construction of low and moderate income housing in the city. This majority included a new mayor, Nicholas Wasicsko.

Within weeks of the election, Judge Sand threatened the city with contempt unless it proceeded with the housing desegregation. At about the same time, a Federal appeals court handed down a unanimous decision upholding the housing desegregation order.

IN WHAT WAS TO BE A RARE MOMENT of rational behavior for a majority of the new council, on January 27th, 1988, they adopted a housing desegregation plan in compliance with the the remedy order. The vote was 5 to 2 with the new mayor joining the majority.

The plan included an agreement to end appeals of the court's decision and to accept the construction of 1,000 units of subsidized housing. This included 200 units of low income housing to be built in 7 sites scattered on the east side of the city and 800 units of moderately priced housing also to be built on the predominantly white east side of the city. The 800 units were to mixed in with another 3,200 units of housing to be sold or rented at market rates.

Of the 800 units of moderately priced housing, 100 are to made affordable to families earning no more than 50 percent of the median income in the New York metropolitan area ($16,200), 300 units for those with income less than 80 percent of the median ($25,920), another 300 units affordable to those who make the median income ($32,400), and 100 units for those earning no more than 120 percent of this median ($38,880).

The assisted housing can be either rented or sold. If it is sold, the adopted plan limits the cost of a mortgage and taxes to no more than 28 percent of a household's income. If it is rented the plan mandates that rent and utilities be limited to 30 percent of household income.

Of these 800 units at least 480 were to be two bedroom and 240 three bedroom. They are to be made available on a first come first served basis with current Yonkers residents and city employees getting first priority.

In all, the plan called for the construction of 4,200 housing units in the city. It was a tremendously important development in a city with such an acute housing shortage. In addition, Federal funds were to be made available for the construction of the low income housing units. The 800 units were to be subsidized through tax and zoning incentives for developers.

Many cities would have welcomed such a development. Not only did it satisfy the court, it also would benefit the increasing numbers of residents, both African-American and white, hard pressed to find affordable homes.

Acceptance of the plan by the city council incensed city property owners and landlords. They stepped up their campaign of threats and intimidation against any one who spoke up in favor of the housing.

The SYF was now regularly mobilizing about 200 supporters to city council meetings. They became a screaming and cursing mob that within weeks had a majority of the City Council repudiating the January settlement. Although Sand would not release the council from the agreement, they defied him and their past commitment by voting to appeal the case to the Supreme Court.

There was virtually no prospect of success. On April 12, 1988 the city filed its appeal. Two months later the Supreme Court, as expected, rejected the city's request to review the case. The guilty verdicts against the city and its school system, along with the housing remedy order,

therefore stood.

Sand then threatened the city with contempt and fines unless the council reaffirmed the January agreemeent. By this time, the council majority was relishing their moment in the national media spotlight. This pathetic group of amateur politicians played to the screaming and cursing crowd that packed the council meetings.

Despite being hooted and screamed at and despite physical threats against them, a number of Yonkers citizens, both African-American and white spoke up in favor of the housing at council meetings. Two of the council members from the West side of the city continued to vote in support of the housing plan. And, to his credit, so also did the mayor. The council became split 4 to 3 on nearly every vote involving the housing.

The SYF and its mob tactics dominated the headlines in both the local and national media. The primary newspaper in the city made the SYF activities its front page story day after day. The SYF statements and those of the four opposition council members became regular headlines.

The opposion campaign against public housing focused on the deteriorating high rise public housing units in the southwest part of the city. "This," it was said to residents, "will be built in your neighborhood and it will bring with it crime and drugs." Crime and drugs became the racists' code words.

Yonkers' public housing, built as high rise tenements, packed into small geographical areas was in many ways, programmed to fail. The city services provided for the southwest section of Yonkers are minimal compared to other sections of the city and county. Funds for repair and maintenance of the public housing have not been allocated. In the last decade some of the city's largest manufacturers have closed and there are few, if any, decent paying jobs nearby.

That the community has become rundown and plagued by crime and drugs is not surprising. Also not surprising is the fact that it is the residents who have been blamed for the problem. It is another example of blaming the victim. In the case of Yonkers, the residents of its public housing are the victims of a 40 year policy of segregation and neglect.

IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO DENY that racism played a primary role in creating an atmosphere of hostility to the construction of affordable housing in Yonkers. If the city's public housing was primarily occupied by whites and if it were predominantly whites who would move into the new public housing, it is safe to say that the opposition would have been minimal.

The past 8 years of the Reagan Administration, its active promotion of newly packaged racist ideas and its efforts to give racism a new legitimacy has had an impact. Its arguments against affirmative action based on "reverse discrimination" have been so widely disseminated and so often repeated that they have achieved some acceptance even in the face of the widening gap between African-American and white.

Both private and government studies show that during the last decade, while the average income of all families has declined, the average for African-American families has dropped more sharply. While poverty and unemployment rates for all have risen, the rise has been higher for African-Americans.

The facts show that African-Americans have not advanced at the expense of whites, as some argue with the phoney phrase, "reverse discrimination." In fact they have fallen farther back because of real discrimination.

The argument has taken root that there is now an "under class" consisting primarily of African-Americans and African-American youth. Efforts have been made to portray these youths as sociopaths and criminals who prey on whites. Such was the racist thinking, for example, of a Bernhard Goetz who shot four African-American youths in a New York City subway because they "looked like" they were menacing.

There has been a massive campaign to identify African-Americans with crime and drugs, so massive in fact that it became a part of the George Bush presidential campaign. His use of the "parole" advertisements featuring an African-American criminal and a white victim was a blatantly racist appeal.

Hidden is the fact that African-Americans have been particularly victimized by the Reagan administration, locked out of decent jobs, education and housing. Also ignored are the cuts in social services, including housing, that have made life all but unbearable for millions of poor children, African-American and white.

As expected, a disproportionate share of Westchester's 1,500 or more homeless school age youngsters are African-Americans. With their

families they are being housed in motel rooms 50 or 60 miles from the communites where they had previously lived. These children have been refused admittance to schools near these motels and, instead, must ride buses 90 minutes or more to attend schools that will admit them.

The growth of homelessness and the housing crisis generally is directly related to racism. It is impossible to separate the two.

It is also impossible to separate the campaign against housing in Yonkers from the rise of racist incidents in Westchester County during the last year, including a rash of torched African-Americans homes. In the last 14 months, three homes of Afro-American families have been burned down by arsonists.

Despite these fires and despite several incidents of racially motivated violence in the county, white elected officials in Westchester have been mum. In contrast, many of them have been outspoken against the court ordered housing desegregation plan and several actively joined the campaign against it.

Mention must also be made of the role of John Cardinal O'Connor, archbishop of the diocese of New York. There was initial agreement that a piece of church property in Yonkers would be one of the sites used for the scattered site housing. However as the opposition grew louder, particularly among a few of his parishioners, O'Connor withdrew the property and, in a full page ad in the local paper, vowed to fight efforts to use the property for the low income housing.

It was truly a sad day for the dozen or more area priests who had been arguing and organizing for the much needed housing and attempting to defuse the opposition. It was also a sad day for the church, which had often and eloquently spoken up for the poor.

O'Connor's role and the actions and silence of local and state political leaders, including Governor Mario Cuomo, encouraged the racists.

IN THE 1988 ELECTION CAMPAIGN, only one white candidate for public office in the area, Michael Zagarell, *Political Affairs'* editor, running as an Independent-Progressive candidate for the Congressional seat that encompasses much of Yonkers, spoke forcefully in favor of the housing.

At a Yonkers city council meeting he urged compliance with the law, pointing out,

> The only solution to homelessness and rocketing rents is a massive program of government sponsored housing construction. The law correctly provides that these funds cannot be used if the housing they provide promotes segregation. Consequently our nation will solve its housing problems with Black and white united or it won't solve them at all.

Although denying that racism had anything to do with their opposition to the housing, it became the single most powerful component of the appeal of the SYF and its allied council members. There has been however, plenty of evidence to show that the majority of Yonkers residents reject their arguments.

SEVERAL GROUPS EMERGED IN YONKERS to urge compliance with the law and to argue for the desegregated housing. They more accurately reflect the thinking of the majority of Yonkers residents.

One group, Citizens and Neighbors Organized to Preserve Yonkers (CANOPY) was primarily made up of homeowners from the east side of the city. While opposing the housing, it took the position that, once the courts had spoken and appeals were exhausted, the law should be obeyed.

While their long support for the court appeals allowed the SYF to dominate the agenda, CANOPY brought some moderation to the debate and helped focus attention on how to make the housing succeed. They urged an equitable distribution of the housing and sought ways to make the housing fit into their middle income communities.

Another organization that had been active around housing issues for several years also got involved in the desegregation issue. It called itself YIELD, an acronym for Yonkers Interfaith Education and Leadership Development. It is a church sponsored organization mainly based on the west side of the city.

YIELD initially opposed the court-ordered remedy plan because it took the focus away from needed investments on the city's west side. However, it finally came to support the plan and added an important constituency to the forces arguing for compliance with the court order.

YIELD has been fighting the city council's use of tax dollars to support the construction of luxury co-ops and condominiums in West Yonkers neighborhoods.

A third group that became active around the

housing controversy was a coalition of organizations and individuals that called itself the Fair Housing Council of Yonkers. It is a multi-racial organization that includes residents from both sides of the city, homeowners and tenants. Among the organizations participating in the FHCY are the Clergy of Yonkers, the League of Women Voters, the NAACP, the Black Women's Political Caucus of Westchester and the Spanish Community Progress Foundation, along with individual citizens.

The FHCY supported the construction of the affordable housing and urged compliance with the remedy order from the beginning. Early in 1988, the FHCY conducted a petition campaign in support of the housing. It also sponsored a series of ads in the local newspaper that sought to bring the truth about the housing to city residents and alleviate some of the fear being generated by opponents.

With the city facing bankrupting fines for defiance of the court order, the FHCY spearheaded the organization of a press conference that brought together a broad array of Yonkers organizations, labor, religious and community groups, including CANOPY and YIELD, all of whom urged the city to drop its opposition to the housing and to comply with the remedy order.

Organized labor was represented at the press conference by leaders from the Westchester Central Labor Council, the Yonkers Federation of Teachers, and the area's hospital workers union, Local 1199. They took a forthright position in favor of the housing. In addition, the district council of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union signed onto a joint statment urging compliance. The Service Employees International Union local, which represents many of the city's workers, also condemned the city council's continuing defiance of the law.

The SEIU members were threatened with layoff if the contempt and fines continued. They also took note of the fact that given their wages, most of their members qualified for the 800 units of assisted housing.

The breadth of support for compliance truly isolated the opposition. The fact that the union movement in the city spoke so clearly for ending the pointless fight against the housing, was an important development.

While the hard core opponents of the housing continued to shout and scream at council meetings, no longer could they in any way claim to speak for the city and the majority of its residents. In fact, as reason began to prevail and as more accurate information about the housing became disseminated, it became clear that the SYF, despite the enormous publicity it received, was a minority.

Even in August, at the height of the fervor created around the housing order, never more than half of the city's residents expressed the kind of defiance so widely reported by the media. At that time a poll conducted by the Gannett Westchester newspapers showed that barely half, 50.9 percent, agreed with the city council's actions.

A few weeks later, after fines threatened to shut the city down, a poll by the same newspapers found that 58.5 percent now favored complying with the housing order and only 30.3 percent did not.

The 35 percent of Yonkers residents who are homeowners were the most influenced by the disinformation campaign and by the appeals to racial fears made by the housing opponents.

EVEN BEFORE THE LATEST SURGE in housing prices, for working class families the purchase of a house represented a tremendous effort and sacrifice. Their homes are, by far, their largest single investment.

The average cost of a single family home in Westchester County rose from $137,475 in 1980 to $340,635 in 1987. That's a 150 percent increase in just 7 years. While the rise in Yonkers was not quite as dramatic, by 1988 the average home in the city was selling for over $200,000.

For young families in particular, housing is an acute problem. Many are forced to live doubled up with parents or in small cramped apartments. Because of the shortage of housing and the surge in prices, those who grew up in the city cannot afford to live in it. Most city workers, those who haul the garbage, clean the streets, teach in the city's schools and run the city offices, likewise cannot afford to live in their city.

Older retired couples who may have a home, now cannot afford to sell because finding comparable affordable housing is next to impossible. Taxes and enormous rents would eat up whatever they might gain from the sale of their home in a very short time, leaving them with nothing.

For workingclass families there is enormous insecurity. The lack of affordable housing sharply limits people's options. The opponents of the housing took advantage of this insecurity by raising the fear that their investments would be destroyed by the 200 units of low income housing. Given the shortage of housing it was simply not true, but it was repeated over and over.

It is not surprising that such a threat, or what was portrayed as a threat to their home and their investment, would cause such fear.

WHILE THE FULL COST 40 YEARS OF OPPOSITION to integrated and affordable housing can never be fully tallied, it is safe to say that nothing else has been more destructive to the city and its residents.

In southwest Yonkers, a ghetto was created. Public housing crowded into this small section of the city was destined to fail. Racism and segregation is a large part of the reason for more than 2,000 homeless in Yonkers.

The insistence on keeping housing segregation in place, has caused the deterioration of downtown Yonkers. Because of the refusal to locate housing on the east side, urban renewal in Yonkers came to a halt and the possibility for industrial development was sabotaged. The advice of city planners was repeatedly rejected in order to placate the selfish interests of east side land owners.

Because of the refusal to build affordable housing on the city's east side, the housing crisis facing thousands, both African-American and white, in this city has worsened. Decent affordable housing for the working poor, for young families and for senior citizens is all but impossible to find. Rents, housing costs, and taxes are all higher because of racism.

Everyone in Yonkers, African-American and white is paying for 40 years of resistance to desegregated housing.

For some of the housing opponents, particularly landlords and real estate speculators, their opposition to desegrated housing in Yonkers, has had a far-ranging political motive. There is good reason to believe that they purposely fought to keep Yonkers in the media spotlight as part of a national campaign against all public housing and all Federal assistance to housing.

For the real estate interests, the banks and landlords, there is no profit to be made in public housing and less profit in subsidized affordable housing. They care little for the problems they create in Yonkers; the high rents, the homelessness, the impossibly long waiting lists for housing and the fact that home ownership is out of reach of most families.

And they were now causing an added problem. According to George Sternlieb, director of Rutgers University's Center for Urban Policy Research, the uncertainty caused by the housing controversy, not the 200 units of low income housing, was by far the more threatening to the value of peoples homes.

Even this instability however, favored the banks and real estate operators. There is little profit to be made from stable neighborhoods. Profit comes from turnover. The more homes sold, the more money made. It's that simple.

The fact is that mixed neighborhoods, mixed both racially and by income, are the most stable and therefore the most secure for homeowners. The greatest turnover occurs when neighborhoods remain segregated.

Neighborhoods that are kept all white, are subject to racist scare-tactics and block busting. There is money to be made by encouraging white flight. Similarly, neighborhoods that are kept all African-American and often all poor, receive the least in city services. They are allowed to deteriorate and then are bought up cheaply and gentrified. Again, there is profit to be made off segregation.

Sternlieb and other housing experts have pointed out that the impact of 200 new low income housing units would be negligible in a city with 75,907 housing units. They point out that this is also true in the very neighborhoods where the housing is to be built.

In the scattered-site approach, the number of units on each of the 7 sites is to range from 16 to 48 and most of the sites are miles apart. In contrast, several southwest Yonkers neighborhoods have more than 1,000 units of pubic housing in an area of a few blocks.

While the opposition to the housing continues, it has a shrinking base of support and is resorting to ever more desperate attempts to block it. In a new legal challenge to the court ordered housing desegregation plan, filed in November, the SYF announced that they had discovered a hitherto unknown constitutional right—the right

to live without poor people.

Their legal brief to the courts asks for the housing plan to be overturned because it deprives them of "living and/or working in neighborhoods free from low class people of any race."

These "low class people of any race" include anyone who cannot afford an over-priced $200,000 home. The fact is that most of the current residents of Yonkers, if they had to buy their homes at today's inflated prices, would number among this class of people who ought to be kept out of "decent" neighborhoods.

TODAY IN YONKERS, sentiment is strongly in favor of moving ahead with the court ordered desegregation plan and making it work. A public meeting, on September 27th, organized by the FHCY urged an end to all further obstruction of the housing.

This community rally, titled "Moving Yonkers Forward, Together We Can make It Work," was an historic meeting in the city. Virtually every constituency was represented: African-American, white, Latino, Catholic, Jewish, Protestant, homeowners and tenants.

At that meeting, Karen Hill, executive director of the newly created Housing Implementation Office, spoke of the people calling and writing her about how to apply for the 800 units of affordable housing. "Many of them," said Hill, "come from the East Side. They are living doubled up with their parents because they cannot afford a home. They ask, 'Can I have a chance at the housing.'"

Hill added that city workers were also inquiring about the housing. "Those in this city who work here, who provide the services that keep this city functioning, they can't afford to live here. This housing is also for them."

More and more implementation of the housing remedy order is seen as a step in the direction of not only desegregating housing but also alleviating the city's critical lack of housing. The city and all of its citizens will benefit.

The Yonkers housing plan, adopted under terms settling 40 years of racial discrimination is a victory for all of Yonkers residents, Black and white. The plan is a basis for unifying, not dividing the city.

Except for landlords and large property owners, racism has hurt everyone who lives and works in the city. Already existing public housing was ignored and neglected because of racism. Afforddable housing that would benefit all was not built, in large measure, because of racism.

The enclaves of segregated communities that developed, created a city divided, and the housing crisis grew worse with the segregation and the division.

In December 1988, proposals were sent out for the new housing. Builders have responded and 1989 should see the beginning of construction. It is certain now that the housing will be built.

However, it also appears certain that the opponents of the housing will do all they can to sabotage it. They have a stake in seeing that it does not work, if only to prove their point. The politicians who oppose it can be expected to continue to obstruct and work to undermine whatever measures are needed to make it successful.

The challenge is to insure that the housing suceeds. The challenge is to insure that it is built well, fits into communities, is maintained properly, and that the people who will move in are welcomed to their new neighborhoods.

The possibility of unity to make the desegregation plan work provides the basis for solving the many housing problems that remain. For example: there is the continuing transformation of rental units into co-ops and condominiums that is doubling and tripling the cost of housing for thousands of families, many of them retirees. Rents in the city are far too high, and stronger, more effective rent control laws are needed. Repairing, cleaning up and maintaining the current stock of public housing is also a priority.

The basis exists now for solving these and other problems. Success will depend upon the lessons learned from the months of controversy and dispute over the desegregation case. The most powerful lesson is that segregation and racism is a double edged sword. It hurts both Black and white. Unity remains the fundamental ingredient for solving the urgent problems facing the people of Yonkers. □

Jazz: A Creative Force of Our Tme

GEOFFREY JACQUES

SIDNEY FINKELSTEIN'S *JAZZ: A PEOPLE'S MUSIC* is one of the most important works ever written on jazz music. It is a virtual manifesto against the ghettoization, the racist pigeonholing, that has afflicted the public's appreciation of this great music since its beginnings as ragtime a century ago. It exposes the lies and misconceptions that have surrounded this music, the attempts—made anew, it seems, each decade—to deny that jazz is one of the leading creative artistic forces of our time. And it does this by convincing its readers of the special beauty of this great music of the African-American people.

This book was written in the days when 52nd Street in Manhattan was the world capital of some of the most exciting, experimental developments in post-World War II music. "The Street," as it was known to musicians and their followers, was a block-long strip between Fifth and Sixth Avenues where the nightclubs nightly featured the greatest names in 20th-century U.S. music. Edward "Duke" Ellington, William "Count" Basie, Art Tatum, Coleman Hawkins and dozens of others, including young musicians still in their twenties, such as Charlie Parker and John "Dizzy" Gillespie, led bands in the small rooms carved out of the basements of brownstone houses on that block. Here the new jazz of the 1940s, known popularly as bebop, gained a wide audience both through live performances and through the broadcasting of such performances, from clubs like the Royal Roost, on the Mutual radio network.

Jazz: A People's Music, first published in 1948, is a book that reflects the exciting musical—and social—events of its time. In many ways its message is just as daring today as it was forty years ago.

That message—that the music we call jazz is a component part of the world body of creative music, a great music every bit as important in terms of its complexity, creativity, dynamic range and emotional depth as the great, celebrated music of the past—was a bold enough one in 1948. The alleged social inferiority of jazz—inferior because it was created by an allegedly "racially inferior" people—was a commonplace in those days. Indeed, the very concept that jazz music was as much concert music as dance music, as much composition as it was song and improvisation, was considered by many to be the height of pretentiousness.

Both Ellington and Gillespie caused uproars when they took their orchestras into Carnegie Hall in the 1940s; there were many "friends" of jazz who believed that smoky, airless rooms filled with the smell of stale alcohol, which never opened until just a few hours before dawn, were the only proper places for this "hot" music. The "soul" of the music, they thought, could thrive only where night creatures bred.

The myth was itself so inbred into the fabric of popular understanding of the sources and meaning of the music that it was even inscribed in public policy. For decades, the New York City police department fingerprinted jazz musicians and issued a special "cabaret card," a kind of semi-apartheid pass card, without which no musician could work in an establishment that sold alcohol. An infraction of the law could get a musician's card revoked. Thus, several important musicians were for several years denied the right to work at their chosen profession in the only venue available to them. The singer Billie Holiday was one of the better known examples. Pianist and composer Thelonious Monk spent several years in obscurity during the early 1950s because of this New York City-style "pass" law.

It was against the attitude that created such draconian public policy that this book was written. And in writing *Jazz: A People's Music,* Sidney Finkelstein was in step with the world outlook of some of the most outspoken and experimental jazz musicians of the day.

This is a foreword written for a new edition (International Publishers, New York, 1989) of this classic work by the late noted Marxist critic. Geoffrey Jacques' writings on jazz have appeared in *Freedomways* and other publications.

IN MANY WAYS THIS IS A VERY TOPICAL BOOK. Finkelstein wrote an interpretation of jazz that countered many of the more popular notions then circulating in the music and general press. The new jazz of the postwar era—the music called bebop—was, in a sense, fighting for its place in the sun. Aside from the difficult struggle to make a living faced by Parker, Gillespie, Monk and the others, there was also the struggle for the legitimacy of the music, not so much among listeners or musicians as among journalists, publicists and, possibly most important, record companies.

Although the new jazz had a nationwide, appreciative audience, it suffered a virtual boycott by the major big-business recording companies. The situation was so bad that, possibly, much of the music created by the pioneer generation of modern jazz musicians would not have been documented at all if it had not been for the enthusiasm of a few enterprising fans. They opened what began as basement recording operations to "publish" this music on phonograph records. When Finkelstein wrote about the modern jazz of the 1940s being a kind of beacon of anti-commercialism directed against the increasing trivialization and commoditizing of popular culture, he wasn't kidding.

Modern jazz was under assault in a number of other ways as well. There were numerous attempts to divorce bebop from jazz history. This took the form, principally, of a manufactured "feud" between the young generation of musicians and their elders, referred to in the press as "moldy figs."

Some unfortunate remarks by Louis Armstrong disparaging the new music (listening to Gillespie, he referred to the latter's music as "Chinese music") occasioned an attempt by the guardians of the "pure" jazz to mount a big publicity campaign in favor of an ossified, museum-like version of New Orleans music, which became known as "Dixieland" jazz. Musicians were brought out of retirement, touted as great discoveries in the "lost" art of "real" jazz, and placed on pedestals from which the so-called purists could attack the new, vital jazz music of the current day.

Those who didn't understand the new music (and some who may have feared it) violently attacked it as having nothing at all to do with the jazz that had gone before; and the new sound was so new that there seemed to exist two types of jazz—prewar and "modern."

All sorts of mythologies were put forward, not only concerning modern jazz, but the music as a whole. It was African, it was not African. It was the music of unschooled, unlettered musicians who played more from the heart than from the intellect. It was the music of the night, booze and sex. It was, indeed, a music of composition and improvisation. It was anything but a musical expression invented and inspired by the African-American people who, at the beginning of the century, found themselves joining the rest of the population in creating a modern, multinational, multiracial urban U.S. culture.

The musicians themselves, however, understood exactly who they were and what they were doing, in spite of all the adversity that surrounded them. But their fight was not an easy one. Ellington wrote suites and extended compositions that are still denounced by erstwhile "supporters" of his accomplishments. When Gillespie and Parker first appeared publicly with a racially mixed, modern jazz quintet at nightclubs in New York and Hollywood, the fact that they played whole sets as if they were concerts, not announcing each song and not telling jokes between songs, insulted audiences who had come to be "entertained" in the manner one expects when one goes to the circus or listens to a stand-up comedian.

Of course, these same musicians also played in concert-like situations, in theaters such as the Apollo in New York and the Paradise in Detroit. But the audiences there were different: largely African-American, along with people of other nationalities, their respect for the music was greater than that of the casual nightclub patron.

Jazz musicians also knew that the harmonic and rhythmic ground they were breaking in the late 1940s was in the vanguard of revolutionary developments in the arts and technology, in philosophy, social science and politics. The modern jazz of the 1940s was a music that sought, for the first time, to consciously define the musical product of the African-American people as a component of world developments in culture.

All of this is reflected here by Finkelstein who, working from a Marxist-Leninist perspective, seizes the initiative and makes bold analyses and projections about this art form.

THE VALUE OF *JAZZ A PEOPLE'S MUSIC* lies in its recognition on the one hand of jazz as a world music—a recognition long overdue—and on the other hand, of it as a music undergoing a profound revolution in structure and content.

The jazz "revolution" of the '40s is one of the most profound enigmas of contemporary culture. In many ways, it sounds less like a real revolution with each passing year. The connections between a blues played by Charlie Parker and a blues played by such mentors of his as Johnny Hodges or Willie Smith seem more obvious than ever. Indeed, there are times when one can listen to the music of the 1930s and early '40s—the prebebop jazz music—and follow those pieces with some of the seminal compositions of modern jazz, and wonder what all the fuss was about.

Yet it is impossible to escape the deep revolutionary enthusiasm one experiences when listening to such records as *Shaw Nuff, Dizzy Atmosphere, Things to Come,* or Dexter Gordon and Wardell Gray's *The Chase.* Finkelstein goes to great lengths to demonstrate the degree to which it was truly a "new" music. His critical, probing inquiry into the problems faced by the young generation of instrumentalists who were making American music in the 1940s is a welcome relief from the Hollywood publicist-style of writing that dominated so many of the books and periodicals of the period.

One has only to compare this book with such works as Leonard Feather's *Inside Bebop* (Robbins, NY, 1949), a book that combines aspects of bebop "cultism" with all the zeal of a Hollywood "fanzine," to get a picture of how far removed Finkelstein is from the condescending, patronizing attitude that made it difficult for many to take this important music seriously.

Finkelstein raises many important issues about the tasks that faced jazz musicians as they embarked on making conscious use of the fact that theirs was one of the fundamentally important art forms of our era. Indeed, bebop was a music that appeared on the scene swathed in crisis: it had a quality that transcended all previous jazz but that also exposed, not only its own limits, but those inherent in the structure in which jazz worked out its problems overall. A music of song and dance, bebop seemed unable to provide an answer to the question of whether the song form would, in the future, be the primary structure for jazz creation—and this has been a fundamental question with which musicians have grappled for the last four decades.

This, in part, explains aspects of the development of the music since this book was written: the experiments in extended form, modality, so-called "free" jazz and other approaches to musical creation that have made the use of the term "jazz" problematic as a label adequately describing contemporary North American improvised music that makes free use of African-American sources.

Yet, despite the various directions that music based on improvisation has taken in the last four decades, the term "jazz" is still the most useful for literary purposes. For one thing, it defines a tradition, and a way of looking at music that distinguishes itself from many other strains of music. In addition, it becomes increasingly necessary with each passing year to seize the word "jazz" from both purists and publicists, from opportunists and from those who, in Henry Threadgill's phrase, want to recreate a "jazz" of nostalgia, littered with "virtuosos of the graveyard."

Threadgill, a saxophonist and composer, is one of the leading improvisers and bandleaders of our day, and, as an artist, he faces many of the problems relating to form, composition and improvisation that Finkelstein suggests at the end of this book. But true to the jazz tradition, Threadgill answers these problems in his own way—and in ways completely different from those Finkelstein suggests. Threadgill combines a wide variety of traditional and modern jazz styles in a music that recalls the buoyancy of New Orleans music to the mid-1920s, while exploring the most profound harmonic, rhythmic and improvisational possibilities of today's most adventurous, creative music. Such recordings as his 1983 *Just the Facts* and *Pass the Bucket* (About Time AT 1005) and his 1987 *DYou Know the Number* (RCA-Novus 3013-I-N) are excellent starting points for an exploration into contemporary jazz at its best.

Jazz music is an art with its own language, its own tradition. During the last half-century, it has absorbed and transformed the language of a wide range of the world's culture; not just European music, but Asian and African music have been absorbed by musicians working in this tradition.

As is suggested in the final chapter, Ameri-

can musicians have had to find their own way of assimilating a multitude of influences. And while a composer like John Cage sought to tame Balinese and other Asian percussion music, to turn it into a kind of exotic wing of Euro-oriented composed music, drummer Art Blakey set up a jazz trap-drum set in a room full of Cuban drummers and began improvising. The result, for Blakey, was the development to maturity of a jazz drum style in which the African and Cuban influences can be deeply felt, but a style specifically in the African-American jazz tradition and by no means "African" music.

The same can be said for Threadgill and some of his colleagues. When, in the early 1980s, Anthony Davis wrote an opera based on the life of Malcolm X, he used his own small band as the basis for the orchestra that performed the music. Although critical reaction to *X* was mixed (as it has been with all of Anthony Davis' music), the work itself seemed to be an attempt to find a new form for the expansive language available to the musician working in the jazz tradition.

This tension, this constant dynamic between the rhythmic, harmonic and melodic language used in jazz performance on the one hand, and the form in which musicians express that language on the other, is a major driving force in jazz music. Jazz, as a component part of the popular music of the United States, always finds it necessary to connect itself with the blues and the song form, yet it is always stretching these forms to their limits. That David Murray, a major tenor saxophonist of the younger generation, can easily mix "free" improvisation and polytonality within the context of the traditional jazz quartet or octet, playing many of the compositions played by jazz musicians for decades, is one of the great examples of this tension at work. When Murray works with the World Saxophone Quartet, which performs *a cappella* (i.e., without a rhythm section), the song and blues forms are stretched about as far as any musicians of our era have ventured.

Much is to be learned by listening to these continuers of the adventurous, experimental tradition in jazz. Bands like the Art Ensemble of Chicago utilize the innovations introduced by musicians like Ornette Coleman, John Coltrane, Albert Ayler and Cecil Taylor in both tonal and rhythmic language in a music that in some moments seems to dispense with language altogether—yet even this most avant-garde of musical groups distinguishes itself by its continuing references to the blues and to the language of the popular song.

WHAT MUSICIANS HAVE DONE since *Jazz: A People's Music* was written is to turn the problem that Finkelstein saw as a limitation into an asset. Just as it is true that the conflict between language and form has placed limitations on jazz, it is also true that this conflict has been a force that has continued to make jazz the freshest, most dynamic musical impetus and influence in the contemporary world.

This is nowhere truer than in the art and work of trumpeter and composer Miles Davis. Davis, who began his career as a Juilliard School dropout and learned his music as a protégé of Charlie Parker, has become the single most influential musician of the postwar era, after his mentor. Davis' career spans all the major schools of jazz of the last four decades, and an examination of his career yields a wealth of information and enjoyment of the entire range of modern U.S. music. Davis has played with many of the major musicians of the postwar era, and two of his bands—the quintet of 1955-57 that included John Coltrane, and the quintet of 1965-69 with Wayne Shorter and Herbie Hancock—are considered by many to be among the finest creators and interpreters of jazz music during those years.

But Davis' career is important for a more fundamental reason. More than anyone else, Davis has constantly grappled with the tension, the dialectical interplay and contradiction, between the advanced harmonic, rhythmic and melodic language of jazz and the continuing necessity to find a form close to popular music in which to express that language.

For this reason, Davis's work has always been controversial. For the past two decades, he has abandoned the traditional, pulsating 4/4 rhythm of jazz in favor of a rhythmic structure closer to that used in the contemporary musical forms of rock-and-roll and rhythm-and-blues. To the dismay of the "purists" in his audiences, he led the way in the popularization of a hybrid-style dubbed "fusion." Yet Davis himself was never a "fusionist." While others have allowed themselves to become trapped in the rhythmic and harmonic prison implied by the simplicity of contemporary popular music, Davis has used

this form as backdrop for a set of wide-ranging improvisations that sometimes seem to ignore their relatively pedestrian setting. But in his latest recordings, as well as in concert, Davis seems to have advanced even beyond these limitations, integrating both the contemporary rhythmic patterns and the latest generation of electronic musical instrumentation into a more holistic musical approach.

Davis' insistence on the use of rhythmic elements from contemporary popular music also reflects his desire to maintain his own version of African-American creative music as a genuinely popular art. Many critics denounced his 1987 release *Tutu* (Warner Bros. 9 25490-1) as a banal exercise in "techno-pop." But one is compelled to challenge these sages to find a "techno-pop" record this inventive, this full of the sound of surprise—which is the hallmark of the jazz tradition! It would be useful for readers of this book to listen to the entire recorded output of Miles Davis to get a good idea of how a major artist in the contemporary jazz world finds solutions to the problems we have posed here.

ONE IS TEMPTED in a "Foreword," to recite chapter and verse of modern jazz history in the four decades since Finkelstein's book was written. But that would require another book. At the same time, it is useful to pass along some advice. In the last decade or so there has been a kind of revival of jazz in the United States, although the results have been mixed. One aspect that can be misleading is an emphasis on the music of the 1940s and 1950s in a way more suggestive of nostalgia than of critical, enjoyable appreciation. The music of that period was a rich, multilayered and provocative body of work, and the current emphasis on the brilliant work of the so-called "hard boppers," such as drummer Art Blakey or pianist Horace Silver or saxophonists John Coltrane and Theodore "Sonny" Rollins, should by no means obscure the exciting, experimental work of bassist-composer Charlie Mingus.

An huge reward also awaits any listener who takes the time to carefully examine the work of Thelonious Monk. The two-volume recording made at the Five Spot Cafe in Manhattan in 1958 with tenor saxophonist Johnny Griffin (Riverside RLP 262 and RLP 279), displays all the brilliance and inventiveness that earned Monk the nickname "High Priest" of modern jazz.

No accounting of jazz music of the 1950s would be complete, however, without the inclusion of the contributions of the musicians who lived in such centers as Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles and San Francisco.

Finkelstein emphasizes that the history of jazz is bound up with the African-American people's struggle against discrimination and with their struggle for democracy and full equality. Writing in the 1940s, he reflects the thinking then widespread in left circles, referring to the African-American people as a "nation." This is related to the slogan first put forward by the Communist Party in 1928, of national self-determination for Black Americans. Although this remained the dominant Communist view until the late 1950s, when Finkelstein wrote, there was beginning to be a shift in emphasis in Marxist writings away from a separate "nation" as a probable option.

Largely as a result of the Communists' own deep involvement in the life and struggles of Black people, as well as close observation of the main trends of struggle on the political and cultural fronts in the African-American community, emphasis focused more and more on the problems of the fight for democracy and full equality as part of the multiracial American nation.

In studying the history of jazz, therefore, it is only natural that Finkelstein should point to the interconnection between the history of jazz and the fight against segregation, oppression and superexploitation faced by African-Americans. But jazz is not simply protest music. To be sure, there is protest within the fabric of jazz. However, the link between the development of jazz and the struggle for democracy is more than protest.

Although jazz is a world-class art form, it is still treated as a second class citizen, as "entertainment," with all the commercialized, commoditized trappings which that term entails in our culture. Although recognition of jazz's status as concert music is much more widespread now than it was forty years ago, the smoky, smelly nightclub is still considered the "authentic" place to hear this music. The so-called "friends" of jazz still insist that the jazz musician be some sort of mysterious "night creature" instead of an artist.

Some of the most intense discrimination against jazz music comes in the form of faint praise. The treatment of jazz at New York's Lin-

coln Center, one of the premier musical performance venues in the country, affords one example. In the summer of 1988, a highly publicized series of "Classic Jazz" concerts was held there. This "celebration" of the music of Edward "Duke" Ellington and of Tadd Dameron, one of the important composers and orchestrators of the 1940s, with a concert featuring the work of percussionist Max Roach sandwiched between them, was crammed into one week during the Center's regular "down time"—the hot August days between the end of the summer season and the beginning of the "regular" nine-month season.

With this presentation and the several concerts that form part of the huge New York jazz festival in June, also taking place at the Center, one might think that the doors of the concert hall and the conditions of concert-performing are at last open to the jazz performer. But the jazz musician at Lincoln Center is still a paying, temporary "guest."

Compared to the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, for example, the jazz musician still suffers second-class citizenship at this major U.S. center for the performing arts. The 44 musicians who performed the 30 concerts in the Chamber Music Society's 20th Anniversary season at the Center included 18 "resident" musicians, some of whom have been resident at the center for many years. These musicians (all of whom are white) receive a hefty salary from the Center and are expected to devote their time to perfecting their skills for the purpose of making great chamber music at Lincoln Center. They are not expected to spend their time traveling the world in search of enough one- or three-night engagements in small, smoky rooms from New York's Village Vanguard to Paris's Le Petit Opportun and beyond, in order to earn a salary barely higher than an average U.S. working-class wage in the 1980s. That fate is left to the jazz musician.

In 1987, Congress declared jazz to be a "rare and valuable national treasure." Yet this compliment has done nothing to change the conditions under which most jazz musicians are forced to work. They are still mercilessly exploited. A nightclub owner in New York City, with room for 150 patrons, can expect to make about $3,000 each time he fills the club, at today's prices. Customer turnover can be high, and a club can be filled as many as three times in a single night if a band is really popular. For a night's work, however, even of three performances, the average band member, no matter how skilled or popular, can expect an average evening's earnings never to be much more than $100 for as many as six hours' work. Although bandleaders may receive substantially more, the band's entire salary for a week, including the bandleader's premium, will rarely be more than the gross receipts of the club for a single night.

And these musicians normally work a six-night week, beginning at 9:30 p.m. and ending at 4:00 the next morning. Such is the political economy of U.S. capitalism as it applies to this "national treasure" of the United States.

A similar situation prevails in the world of phonograph recording, where royalty and residual payments are unknown unless the musician is lucky enough to record with a company that has a contract with the American Federation of Musicians—and where musicians are able to enforce that contract.

As for copyright protection, the laws don't seem to apply to jazz music. Whole compositions have been "lifted" from jazz composers and used for commercial purposes without permission, credit or remuneration. This has gone on for so many decades that it may come as a surprise to many that songs thought to be in the public domain are actually the work of living jazz composers who long ago ceased receiving any payments for the use of their work.

THE STRUGGLE TO ABOLISH both the second-class social status faced by musicians and the miserable conditions they are all too often forced to work under, is bound up with the struggle for democracy and trade union rights. This is true because jazz is not only the music of the African-American people but also part of the national culture of the multinational, multiracial United States. Its birth among the African-Americans is, of course, one of the by-products of national and racist oppression; but jazz is also a music born of a people overwhelmingly from the working class. Indeed, jazz is the most highly developed art form produced by the working class in this country. It is this class character of the music that makes it most easily identifiable with "city life." The sound of the city, of its people at work and at play, is the sound of jazz. Those whose only ex-

perience with jazz is on a college campus or in Manhattan south of 14th Street may be inclined to forget that every decade sees a new generation of musicians arise from the African-American working class communities of Chicago, Detroit, St. Louis, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Los Angeles and a host of other cities.

It is true that many more jazz musicians are being trained in universities, and that is a reflection of the victories won in the struggle for democracy by jazz, the African-American people and the nation as a whole. But there also remain hundreds of practicing and student musicians, Black and white, in the "schools" of jazz musicians resident in the cities named above. Although government and corporate policy of the last two decades seems to be directed at a systematic destruction of the Black urban neighborhood, depriving its young musicians of an environment worthy of their great art, these communities continue to produce an astonishing number of highly developed artists.

Musicians in these centers need to be recognized as first-class citizens; the concert halls, schools for the creative arts, and publicly supported musical societies must be made places where jazz musicians, too, can develop their art. Many of these halls, schools and societies are supported by tax money, workers' money. That Chicago, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia and Detroit and other cities can support world-class symphonic orchestras, with an entire infrastructure behind them, and yet not support similar organizations of jazz musicians is, at the very least, an acute embarrassment for our country. It is a violation of democratic principles, of fair play. It is a measure of the dominance of institutional racism in the cultural life of the United States.

Just as symphony orchestras are supported by taxpayers' money, so should jazz orchestras, and the infrastructure that goes with them. Of course the rich won't, as a class, volunteer such support (though some individuals and corporations might); other means, such as tax incentives for people who support jazz, might be used. It is also important that a fight be waged to reinstate the programs lost during the last fifteen years, programs which had served as a vital educational resource for generations of musicians. Music programs must be restored in public schools, where they have been abolished by the vicious budget cuts instituted by the federal government. This is not only a question for jazz; it is a vital question for democracy.

The rising popularity of jazz festivals throughout the United States suggests that the mass of the popular audience for jazz music is ready to abandon the smoky nightclubs for more humane venues to hear and enjoy this music. Yet the nightclub remains a basic part of the jazz musician's life. Humanizing these performance spaces is, first of all, the job of the jazz musicians themselves. One way of doing this is by using the musicians' union to exert pressure on club owners, through collective bargaining and public exposure of present conditions. This will require a "political" collectivity and an awareness among musicians themselves of their status as trade unionists and the possibilities arising from that status. The tools for change are there; what is necessary is the united will to make changes.

Ultimately, however, it will take broader social and institutional change to create a situation where jazz music has a social stature in its home country equal to its artistic stature among musicians, artists and music lovers everywhere. As long as private profit is the goal of those who hire musicians, there will be problems for jazz. As long as racism remains a tool of superexploitation for the country's biggest bankers and industrialists, it will be difficult to solve the problems faced by jazz musicians. But each victory gained toward raising the stature of this great music will be linked with the struggle to remove the obstacles that hold our society back from reaching its full potential in so many areas of social, economic and cultural life. What kind of society is possible with these obstacles removed? African-American artist Elton Fax, in studies such as *Hashar* (1979), looks at the life of racial and national minorities and the status of their artistic and cultural life under socialism in the USSR. Some of the facts he found there are illuminating.

A *SOCIALIST* CHANGE in our social and institutional structure in the United States will, if historic practice is any guide, immeasurably raise the stature of culture and of the artist in our society. This is because any fundamentally democratic, revolutionary change in these institutions will, of necessity, be accompanied by a radical cultural change—political revolution is intertwined with *cultural* revolution.

The democratic measures proposed earlier in this Foreword, as well as those proposed by Finkelstein, presuppose attacks on structures—political, social, as well as cultural—that maintain the status quo. Whether such measures be small or large, their aim is similar; to overturn the commoditization of our culture and to assert its true multinational, multiracial nature. This aim makes this book one of the most valuable ever written on jazz. □

BIBLIOGRAPHIC AND DISCOGRAPHIC NOTES ■ Since *Jazz: A People's Music* was first published, there have been a number of books on many aspects of the music and its history. For those who want an exposition on the history of African-American music that deeply influenced this book, Le Roi Jones' *Blues People: Negro Music in White America* (Morrow, New York, 1963) will be especially rewarding. Along with his *Black Music* (William Morrow, 1968) and *The Music: Reflections on Jazz & Blues* (Morrow, 1987), this is some of the finest work by a perceptive and engaged writer who, under his adoptive name, Amiri Baraka, is one of the outstanding U.S. poets and playwrights of our time. Also recommended is A.B. Spelman's *Four Lives in the Bebop Business* (Limelight Editions, New York, 1966), an outstanding profile of the life and working conditions of the modern jazz musician, exposed through extensive interviews with saxophonist Jackie McClean, pianists Cecil Taylor and Herbie Nichols, and composer/saxophonist Ornette Coleman.

Ira Gitler's *Jazz Masters of the Forties* (MacMillan, New York, 1966) and Joe Goldberg's *Jazz Masters of the Fifties* MacMillan, 1965) are good survey books African-of the music of those decades. For the 1960s and beyond, aside from the sources cited above, such works as Valerie Wilmer's *As Serious As Your Life* (Lawrence Hill, Westport, 1980) and *The Freedom Principle: Jazz after 1958* (Morrow, 1984) are invaluable. *Jazz Panorama,* a collection of articles edited by Martin Williams (Collier, New York, 1964) is a good work on the music of the late 1950s and early 1960s.

Several musicians have published excellent books on jazz, covering some of the subjects Finkelstein touched on. Among the most noteworthy are: *Jazz Masters of the Thirties* (MacMillan, 1972) by Rex Stewart, a long-time member of Duke Ellington's orchestra; *Piano Jazz* (Wm. C. Brown, Dubuque, 1982) by Billy Taylor; and *Notes and Tone* (Perigee, New York, 1982) by drummer Arthur Taylor.

Finally, the most outstanding autobiographies of modern jazz musicians are John "Dizzy" Gillespie's *To Be or Not to Bop* (Doubleday, Garden City, 1979) and Charlie Mingus *Beneath the Underdog* (Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1971). At this writing, African-American poet and historian Quincy Troupe is finishing his authorized biography of Miles Davis.

All of the above books contain extensive discographies. But recording companies often reissue and repackage old recordings. That is one reason it is difficult to update the extensive discography provided by Finkelstein. Indeed, the record companies and the catalogue numbers he lists may be of historical value to record enthusiasts, and any attempt to bring the information up to date could be obsolete almost as soon as it appeared.

However, two suggestions may help solve this problem. Current recordings are advertised in the music press: *Downbeat, Code, Cadence, and Musician* magazines, as well as *Billboard,* are useful sources. Probably the most useful, however, is the *Schwann* catalogue of all records currently in print (available quarterly from 825 Seventh Avenue, New York, NY 10019). This catalogue is the basic resource used by record stores throughout the United States. □

A Workingclass Community Confronts Racism

DENISE WINEBRENNER

STEEL WORKERS, AUTO WORKERS, MACHINISTS, construction workers, teachers, health care workers and religious leaders spent a rainy, muddy October afternoon scrubbing and cleaning a vandalized church in Elyria, the county seat of Lorain County, Ohio.

With skill and elbow grease plus the use of industrial strength solvents and a machine to apply them, donated by a local contractor, Black and white workers restored the Glorious Apostolic Church (Pentecostal) to its African-American congregation in pristine condition. They replaced windows, erased racist slogans and swastikas from the church walls and set up the pews and chairs for Sunday worship. Trade union leaders and workers of all nationalities, races and religions stood together on the church steps. Father Vincent Peterson from St. Anthony's Church in Lorain (the city), and Bishop Oney Fitzpatrick from the Glorious Apostolic Church, led workers in a prayer calling for unity and brotherhood in their community.

The attack on the Glorious Apostolic Church occurred at the height of the filthiest election campaign in Ohio's history. From the Bush-Quayle campaign came the "WillieHorton" commercial, shamefully appealing to racism. Not to be outdone, Ohio Republicans mounted an anti-Semitic, red-baiting attack against incumbent U.S. Senator Howard Metzenbaum, a Democrat.

USX, LTV, Ford, G.M. and many other transnational corporations paid for the divisive, big lie barrage on television, radio and through direct mail. The message flooding the air waves and flowing through the post office was clear. From the viewpoint of USX and Ford, who paid the bills and of the Republican politicians who vied for leadership of the country—racism, anti-Semitism and red-baiting created an atmosphere that could win an election.

On the other hand, the Democratic Party, whose presidential nominee entered the election with a war chest of $48 million dollars, was in a position to publicly answer the Big Lie. But stood silent. The Metzenbaum campaign took on the lies in a forthright way. He was handily re-elected to the U.S. Senate.

In Lorain County, unions and the religious community, acting independently, rose to answer the racist violence sparked by the daily dose of hate. When news of the racist attack flashed across the front page of the *Lorain Journal* and the *Elyria Chronicle*, union leaders of USWA 1104 at the USX Lorain Works noticed that the newspaper articles carried only the story of the attack. There was no response; no condemnation. "It made the Lorain community look like a bunch of racists," said one USWA leader.

In the award winning *Lorain Labor Leader*, USWA 1104's newspaper, union president Al Pena condemned the attack in his monthly column. At the end of his article, Pena re-printed, in total, Dr. Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech. Zone 1 grievance man, Bruce Bostick, also denounced the attack in his monthly grievance report.

"We talked about what had happened and drafted a letter to the editor (of the *Lorain Journal*)," said Bostick. "Then we got on the phone and contacted other unions. We brought up a resolution to the AFL-CIO condemning the attack. It passed overwelmingly. Then we called a meeting of the entire community to discuss what to do."

In a letter to the editor of the *Lorain Journal,* published October 17, Al Pena and Rex Waldron, chairman of the union's (USWA 1104) Political Action Committee, wrote, "It greatly disturbs us to see, in this day and age, the disgraceful attack on your (Fitzpatrick's) church. It was scrawled with racist and bigoted remarks and was, without a doubt, the work of a person or persons who have no right living in a free society."

The labor leaders called for the vandals to be prosecuted to the "maximum" and for "us all—

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labor, church, political and all other peoples' organizations—to rededicate ourselves to the fight against discrimination in all its ugly forms."

WITHIN A FEW DAYS AFTER THE ATTACK, union leaders convened a support meeting at St. Anthony's Church in Lorain. USWA Local 1104 sent their civil rights committee. The International Association of Machinists sent their business agent. UAW locals 425 and 2000, representing Ford workers, sent official representatives. The Lorain teacher's union, the United Food and Commercial Workers and the county worker's union were all present. Peace groups from Oberlin and Elyria participated and peace activists from as far away as Sandusky traveled to Lorain to attend. Numerous churches from all parts of the county sent their representatives. "I've never seen such a large and diverse gathering," commented Father Vincent Peterson, who hosted the meeting. "People just came out from all corners of the county to answer the attack on the church."

Adding to the significance of the size and breadth of the meeting is the fact that the county's entire population, according to census figures, is 518,720. Its composition is 92 percent white, 5 percent African-American and 2.8 percent Hispanic heritage.

Workers discussed the situation at the Apostolic Church and decided to organize. They agreed on the goal of "unity, to fight against racism and other forms of divisiveness, to fight for economic and social justice and peace." Union leaders noted that each organization present was "working for these goals in our own groups and that by uniting our efforts, our strength in our struggles is multiplied."

Representatives at the meeting established Lorain County Justice and Peace (LCJP). "We called the group justice and peace for a reason," said a peace activist from Sandusky. "So often peace groups do not respond in a forthright way to justice issues. In the Catholic Bishop's Letter, they point out that if you want peace, you work for justice. Justice had to come first. So we wanted justice up front."

Committees were set up, volunteers signed up and workers took action. They met with Bishop Fitzpatrick, put on their work clothes and cleaned up the church.

At their next meeting, LCJP congratulated the 30 workers who pitched in on the clean-up crew at the Apostolic Church. One member rose to report that racist grafitti had been spray painted on the walls at Elyria High School. The LCJP sub-committee on racism investigated. Workers met with the school principal and volunteered to speak with the students concerning racism. While that remains in the works, LCJP has also proposed to the Board of Education that dances be held in the gyms. Money raised at these dances and donated canned goods would be handed over to the Lorain County Cupboard to feed hungry residents.

LCJP pointed out to the school board that the federal food surplus program has been severely cut by Congress. Yet, families continue to go hungry because of the plant closings and layoffs by G.M. (2,500 workers lost their jobs only last year when Fisher Guide in Elyria closed down) and other factory owners. Talks continue with the school board to get the project off the ground.

Trade unionists said that youth programs are desperately needed in the county. They know that the cutbacks in education by the Reagan Administration, especially in extra-curricular activity, have left many youngsters with nothing to do. They feel that something positive has to be done. Helping to raise money and food for hungry people will pay off for workingclass families.

LCJP IS A DIVERSE GROUP. Trade unionists did not want just a union group. They didn't want to leave any well-meaning persons out. LCJP includes small business people, religious activists, community leaders concerned with youth and environmentalists. Openness enables LCJP to discuss and act on a wide range of issues including union organizing drives; protesting Adolfo Calero, the contra leader who spoke in Oberlin; and halting a toxic waste incinerator slated for construction in the southern part of the county.

The attack on the Apostolic Church is not an isolated incident in Lorain County, a major industrial center. It is attributable to the corporate offensive against workers, starting with the massive lay-offs by USX at the Lorain mill in the early 1980's. Lorain county ranks fourth in Ohio in its unemployment rate. Boarded up small businesses and "For Sale" signs dot the lawns of workers' homes. The massive take-aways by USX occurred in 1983, and in 1986 the corporation tried to break the USWA.

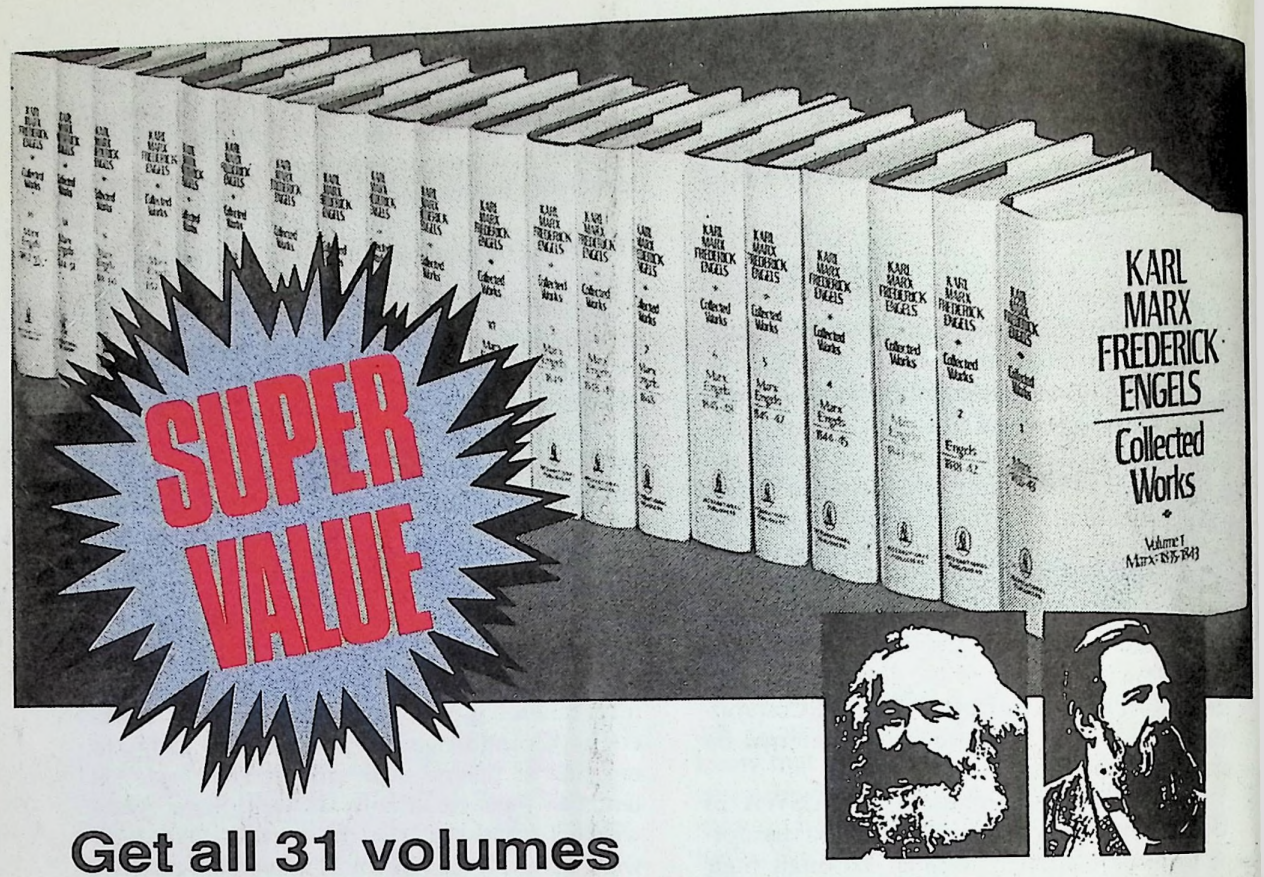
Workers in Lorain did not take this offensive lying down. They fought back. The Lorain Unemployed Crisis Center held conferences on plant closings, proposing federal jobs legislation, the Hayes Bill, and an industrial authority for the county to take over closed plants. When G.M. announced the closing of the Fisher Guide plant in Elyria, auto workers led a march of hundreds of trade unionists to protest the closing.

During the USX lockout in 1986, the USWA initiated a labor day march for the first time in years and held numerous solidarity rallies. UAW Local 425 volunteered its union hall when steel worker's meetings became too large to fit into their own hall. The union established a family committee to assist in the six month lockout, reaching out to the Lorain community to organize support for the union. When USX attempted to move steel by rail, hundreds of steel workers and supporters rallied on the tracks to stop the train. At the conclusion of the lockout in 1987, the AFL-CIO initated a Union Support Committee to come to the aid of unions threatened by companies in the county.

When USX failed to break the USWA in 1986-1987, they turned their attention to disrupting the union elections in 1988. Through their stooges, they red-baited the entire local leadership on the floor of the union hall. It was a leadership that had fought racism and red-baiting to unite the local against the company. USX wanted a local isolated from the rest of the trade union movement, the community and the left to protect their profits. Steel workers answered the challenge. They voted to remove the anti-communist clause from their constititution and to suspend the stooges from their local. The local leadership was re-elected overwelmingly.

THE THEME OF UNITY, racial unity and trade union unity runs throughout the struggles of workers in Lorain County. Trade unionists active in LCJP reached the conclusion that racist attacks will not stop at one Black church; that, unless answered, attacks will continue threatening their unions; and that racist violence becomes anti-Semitic violence or anti-Catholic violence or political violence. It is harmful to the working class and benefits USX, Ford and General Motors, which shut down plants and got millions in tax breaks from the Reagan Administration, leaving communities in poverty.

Finally, trade unionists in LCJP said that the attack on the church was an affront to their dignity. Emerging out of struggles in Lorain, workers have confidence and pride in their ability to organize to defend their unions. That pride extends to their community as well. Some white workers expressed it in the remark, "We don't want Lorain to be known as a bunch of racists." And they proved it by not letting the attack go unanswered. Racism, for trade unionists, is unacceptable behavior. They not only do not want to be identified with racism, they will lead the fight to stop it. □



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