

**UCLA**

**Ufahamu: A Journal of African Studies**

**Title**

Marxism and Nationalism in Black Revolutionary Movements - U.S.A.

**Permalink**

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/9p21q365>

**Journal**

Ufahamu: A Journal of African Studies, 2(2)

**ISSN**

0041-5715

**Author**

Pointer, Fritz H.

**Publication Date**

1971

**DOI**

10.5070/F722016594

**Copyright Information**

Copyright 1971 by the author(s). All rights reserved unless otherwise indicated. Contact the author(s) for any necessary permissions. Learn more at <https://escholarship.org/terms>

Peer reviewed

MARXISM AND NATIONALISM IN BLACK REVOLUTIONARY

MOVEMENTS - U. S. A. (1)

by

Fritz H. Pointer

Before we begin I think it wise that we get some kind of working definition of terms in order that we may more fully appreciate this analysis of Black Revolutionary Movements in the United States. In order to reaffirm the inextricable unity of past and present, I will draw from the movement's most current spokesman and father of modern day Black Nationalism, Malcolm X: "When you want a nation, that's called nationalism...the white man wanted this land so he could set up another white nation. That's white nationalism. The French Revolution was white nationalism. The Russian Revolution...was white nationalism. All the revolutions that are going on in Asia and Africa are based on...black nationalism. A revolutionary," says Malcolm, "is a Black Nationalist." (2) Nationalism has been variously defined by past and present leaders and articulators of the black revolutionary movement within the United States. The essential definition and meaning, however, remains consistent, be it articulated by an 18th century Paul Cuffee, a 19th century Edward Blyden or Henry Highland Garnet or a 20th century Dubois, Garvey or Malcolm. Today, however, for our more particular analysis of the United States movement, I will merely supplement the preceding incisive Malcolman definition with this recent definition of Dr. James Turner who says, "Nationalism is a strategy of survival and a philosophy of social reality in as much as it recognizes the essential racial dichotomy in American economic organization and it's political process, and the fundamental racial separatism in the structure of social institutions and culture in the United States." (3) Thus, Malcolman nationalism not only takes into account the historical development of nations, but is consistent with historical reality and the racist development of America under European hegemony.

There are some who would deny that Africans in America comprise a nation; such a view is taken by the Communist Party U.S.A. stated in the *New Program May 1970*: "Even though Black people do not now constitute a nation, we do not place any limitations on their struggle to satisfy their aspirations up to and including their right to develop self-government and to exercise the right of self-determination." (4) It is important that we take note of this very serious ideological flaw in the C.P.U.S.A.'s analysis of Africans in America. For, as this paper will show, it is from the concept of nationalism or nationhood of Blacks in America that we can begin to

plot our ideological direction for final victory over our White American oppressors, and that we can regain and sustain our national integrity and identity. It would be wise for the writers of the 1970 Communist Party Program to check again with Joseph Stalin whose concise and classic definition of nation was advanced and made applicable by the Communist Party U.S.A. in 1948: "an historically evolved stable community of language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in a community of culture." (5) Africans in America most surely fit this definition. Even so, there are certain obstacles to the realization of national consciousness, the principle ones being ideological and geographic, for a claim to nationhood is an act of the highest political consciousness.

The second factor we want to consider in Black Revolutionary Movements in the United States is Marxism. Again, for purposes of clarity let us state a working definition of Marxism simply for purposes of coherence within the context of this paper:

*The foundation of scientific socialism (Marxism) dates from the publication of The Communist Manifesto in 1848 by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels... they discovered the laws of capitalist development and proved that the growth of capitalist society, with the class struggle going on within it, must inevitably lead to the downfall of capitalism, to the victory of the working class, to the dictatorship of the proletariat and socialism. (6)*

In this definition, we have introduced certain terms, i.e. working-class, proletariat, socialism, etc., that will have to be more clearly defined and understood as they apply to America, and particularly as they apply to the Black Liberation Movement in America.

The historical method (dialectical materialism) used by Marx in analysing Western Europe, mainly England, the most industrialized country of the 19th century, is by no means esoteric or ethnically exclusive. The traditional charge that Marxist socialism, because it developed in Europe, is alien to the Black Liberation Movement in the United States and to the United States itself is stupid: "as well assert the same of the alphabet, the multiplication table, the law of gravity... all of which also developed outside the United States." (7) And to associate Marxist socialism with a color...well, I doubt that we can go one better than "red". What Marx offers is universal truth, objective and subjective; Marxism is no more exclusively European than Maoism is exclusively Chinese or than

Nkrumahism is exclusively Africanism or than Malcolmism is exclusively (what?) American...forgive me for the mention of Malcolm - but I'm only trying to get this little idea across. Which is that Marx simply opened his eyes to what was going on around Western Europe at the time 1830-1850, and saw that where people were being exploited, oppressed and kept abject, it was because somebody else owned their land and their labor and, in the case of chattel slavery in the United States, them - that is the person and his labor were owned by another. It was just as Malcolm described these various revolutions, French, Russian, American, "it was the landless against the landlords." (8) Marx saw that there were "classes of people" horizontally stacked according to who owned the land and the means by which that which comes from the land could be used for the collective benefit of all, instead of for the private good of a few. Marx, through reading the 14th century writer Ibn Khaldun, and others, found a harmonious economic system in African Communalism. In this system of African Communalism there was collective ownership of land. "Socialism is an economic system which is based upon common ownership of the means of production. It eliminates the private exploitative element within society and places the power and controls into the hands of the people who work and who do not exploit the work of others for their own profit." (9) Thus, this paper proposes to demonstrate, through historical analysis, how the ideas and practice of socialism (Marx) and nationalism (Malcolm) provide a universally understood basis, with or without documentation, for the liberation of oppressed people.

"Land is The Basis of Freedom, Justice and Equality - The Landless Against the Landlord."

Prior to the Civil War (1860-1865) in America there were two economic systems straining to co-exist; the industrial cheap labor North, and the slave holding agricultural South. Black people had fought in the first American Revolution for a piece of land and the independence that comes with it and never got it. They had bled and died for both British and American promises of freedom and never got it. The British abolished the slave trade in 1803 and continued slavery. Having lost their American colony, they struck out for Asia and Africa in an effort to establish colonies...and markets of exploitation for their cheap manufactured goods; a kind of domestic slavery, from the Asian and African point of view, and less expensive as far as Europe was concerned. Africans were powerless; they didn't have guns, so why not enslave them on their own land. Colonialism they called it, the same colonialism from which the new states of America freed themselves in the Revolutionary War of 1776. Americans exercised their right as a people, as with any people, to Revolution, and it

was written into The Declaration of Independence by Thomas Jefferson. It was a liberating revolution for the American people--obviously this did not include Africans in America or Indians.

*The revolution by establishing American national independence, shattered the restrictions placed upon the colonial productive forces by England; it freed the national market and opened the way for a speedy growth of trade and industry...it brought limited political rights to the small farmers and also to the workers...but it did not destroy Negro chattel slavery. (10)*

It was precisely this question of chattel slavery that the young nation did not want to face. Black people who were victims of this most inhumane system in recorded and unrecorded history had to face the question "liberty or death" daily - and they did. The successful defeat of the French by the African military genius of Haiti, Toussaint d'Ouver-ture, spurred the revolutionary struggle of Africans in America to unprecedented revolts and insurrection against this system of oppression. The names of Nat Turner, Denmark Vassey, Gabriel Prosser, Harriette Tubman, John Brown, are immortalized. None of these revolts, however, was enough to break the chains of the slave-holding South. The North saw in this perpetuation of agricultural chattel slavery a retardation of capitalist development, as they were in need of more cheap labor. Antagonism mounted in the minds of white workers threatened by the possible abundance of even cheaper black labor, making its way North in trickles via the underground railroad. Hostility from white workers was so great at times that many runaways would not stop, but would proceed on to Nova Scotia, where they eventually founded many communities and small cities. The sides North vs. South were now being taken to determine who was going to be the slave-master; big-private industry or big-private plantation owners. The Republican Party fought its way to victory in 1860 as the party of free labor. (11) Lincoln won the election of 1860 on that platform; and before he could be inaugurated in March 1861, seven states had seceded from the union and formed the Confederacy. "What the slaveholders call the South," said Marx, "embraces more than three quarters of the territory hitherto comprised by the Union." (12) It was thus the large plantation owners who led the South into war, carrying the five million poor whites blindly with them. They were actually asking for an expansion of slave territory. Dubois has summed up the condition of the pre-Civil War South this way,

*...the South turned the most beautiful section of the nation into a center of poverty and suffering, of drinking, gambling and brawling; an abode of ignorance among black and white more abysmal than in any modern land; and a system of industry so humanly unjust and economically inefficient that if it had not committed suicide in Civil War, it would have disintegrated of it's own weight. (13)*

### The Great Betrayal

The war was conducted under the slogan of "save the Union" and for the "non-extension of slavery". In five years 1855-1860, Lincoln moved from the position of non-interference in the institution of slavery to one of full-emancipation. The world, at first, did not see or understand, that of all the things Americans wanted, freeing the slaves was the last. All the hatred that the whites had after the Civil War gradually began to concentrate on blacks. "They caused the war - they, it's victims. They were guilty of all the thefts of those who stole. They were the cause of wasted property and small crops. They had impoverished the South, and plunged the North into endless debts." (14) The poor white clung to the planter and his ideals. This rich planter sought redress on the basis of a unity of whites against blacks and not unity of poor against rich, or of worker against exploiter. The white planter endeavored to keep blacks at work for his own profit on terms that amounted to slavery (tenant farming, sharecropping) or were hardly distinguishable from it. The issue was land for the ex-slave and the poor white. "A democratic solution of this question would have meant the confiscation and breaking up of the big plantations - the redistribution of land among the ex-slaves and the landless poor whites." (15) The Black Codes, Jim Crow and a host of other primitive promulgations were directed against the now "semi-independent", self-supporting African mass in America. Land that black people had fought for was, by force of arms, legal tricks and theft, being taken by a newly financed group of Southern planters. A new plantation system was reorganized based on tenancy and sharecropping. This was the "raw deal" of 1877 which

*permitted the Southerners to keep black people in servitude as long as the Northern industrialist could industrialize the country and accumulate the capital, and the white workers could homestead in the West and provide food-stuffs for the continued industrialization of the East. It is this deal which has given*

*the black struggle both its class and its race character. (16)*

Today, the Morgans, Rockefellers, DuPonts, Mellons, and Fords are the real owners of the South. They underwrote the plantation system and its color-caste system. Their banks maintain the credit structure - they also control the South's steel, coal, tobacco, railroads and utilities. For example, Georgia is 85% absentee owned; 50 cents of every dollar on deposit in Georgia banks is owned in the North. The South and its plantation system became inextricably interwoven with the structure of American imperialism. The "South's industry is geared to its absentee rulers, rather than to the necessities of the region and it's people." (17) The North supports the industrialization of the South, maintaining monopoly advantages, control, and super-profits, i.e. cartel restrictions, patent restrictions and the like. Reshaping the South industrially did nothing to exclude the semi-feudal relations and the slave survivals of the Southern economy.

### The Road to Revolution

Harry Haywood in 1948 wrote, "The Black Belt is the center of America's Black problem, the core of it's greatest concentration...here in the status of the Black Belt Black, is the clue to the economic, social and cultural inequality of America's black millions." (18) Over one-third of the total African population in America live in the Black Belt doing mostly tenant farming and share-cropping. Haywood points out that during the era of the so-called great migration (1910-1930), "the total black population did not decline, in fact, it even increased, although the increase was slight as compared to that of the white population." (19) If we confine ourselves to the facts rather than to wishful thinking, what we find is not the breaking up of the concentration of black people in the Black Belt, but its stubborn persistence.

Lenin in 1913 stressed the agrarian features of the black question in his study, *The Development of Capitalism in Agriculture in the United States*. He drew attention to the

*remarkable similarity between the position of the South's black tenancy and that of the former serfs in the agrarian centers of Russia prior to the 1860's, i.e. "semi-slave" share tenants, and a plantation system kept alive by finance capital. With regard to the Black Belt, the economy is typically that of an oppressed nation. Its immediate direction is in the hands of local white capitalists and landlords who*

*act as the outpost command for the real rulers,  
the financial dynasty of Wall Street. (20)*

In this rural belt of black and white poor farmers lay all the objective conditions for a land-based national, third American Revolution...socialist style. And the only variable that has prevented its occurrence is the racism of the white proletariat and the impotence of the rural black masses. Here we get into other dimensions - dimensions that require another brief look at the development of American monopoly capitalism to the stage of imperialism. The variable we want to consider here is racism, and we want to pay closer attention to the relationship between this system of racism and the development of American capitalism. We don't want to get involved with any kind of "chicken and egg" ideas where this development is concerned. For it is the opinion of this writer that we are not involved here with an either/or question: i.e. either racism existed first and contributed to the development of slavery and the rise of capitalism, or racism developed out of the rise of capitalism and the need to enslave other men. It is rather both. That is, racism is both the product and the incentive for the enslavement of black people and the rise of capitalism.

James Boggs in the October, 1970 issue of *The Black Scholar* writes, "The first thing we have to understand is that racism is not a 'mental quirk' or a 'psychological flaw' on an individual's part. Racism is the systematic oppression by one race of another." (21) This kind of a system was unknown in the thousands of years of recorded and oral history before the emergence of capitalism four hundred years ago - thus most clearly indicating an organic link between capitalism and racism. Further clarifying this point, in light of current Marxist fanfare Boggs states,

*Instead of the vertical color line dreamed up by white radicals, there has existed a horizontal platform resting on the backs of blacks and holding them down, while on top white workers have been free to move up the social and economic ladder of advancing capitalism. This horizontal platform, a ceiling for blacks and a floor for whites, has created and maintained a black labor force serving the economic needs of advancing capitalism. (22)*

It is clear, or should be clear from the preceding section, "Landless Against the Landlord", that this Black platform has existed from the arrival of Europeans in Africa and the consequent transatlantic slave trade up to the present struggle against the last vestiges of colonialism and neo-



colonialism. Each wave of immigrants that came to the United States, for whatever reason, used the backs of the black man as a stepping stone for whatever progress they made. As any fool knows, the difference between a stepping stone and a stumbling block is how high you lift your leg. And some black people were aware of this, and realizing they comprised the bottom rung, the lowest strata in the Euro-American hierarchy, found it necessary to climb to the "top" of the ceiling and stand on their people and sell them American garbage of "rags to riches".

The problem of racism today has become not only a national but an international disease spreading with the movement of European hegemony throughout the world. In the case of the United States, it has kept and maintained Africans in America as a cheap colonial work-force to preserve the value of existing capital. In 1948 Harry Haywood stated, "In reality, the so-called racial persecution of the Negro in the United States is a particular form and device of national oppression." (23) It would be wise to remember here the point concerning the so-called Black migration. For what we find is that despite the migrations of the last 90 years black people exist as a stable community and form a majority of the population over a broad area. Approximately one-third of our numbers remain amassed in the Black Belt area. This takes into account both the urban and rural populations where the latest U. S. Census indicates 12 million in 12 states in the South. Such is the situation that led Malcolm X (speaking to the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party - forerunner to The Black Panther Party) to state on April 3, 1964, "If the Black man in these Southern states had his full voting rights, the key Dixiecrats in Washington, D.C., which means the key Democrats in Washington, D.C., would lose their seats. The Democratic Party itself would lose its power, it would cease to be powerful as a party." (24)

We are all aware of gerrymandering, rigged elections, false census statistics and the like that characterize all Southern politics and perpetuate the political impotence of the region's predominant Black population. It is certainly true that "A breath of genuine freedom for the millions of Black bondsmen would change the (economic) social face of the South." (25) The South, the Black Belt, is key for any serious analysis of Nationalism and Black Revolutionary movements in America.

What kind of work do these millions of black people do? For the most part these people are laborers in cotton and tobacco fields, coal mines, steel mills, saw and planing mills, ginning and cotton seed oil mills, in furniture, turpentine,

refining, chemical industries, in pulp and paper, in longshore, tenant farming and sharecropping. The most influential segment of what can be called a Black bourgeoisie resides in the cities functioning mainly in the fields of insurance, small-scale banking, real estate, entertainment, undertaking and other services for the Black community. (26) In his classic study, *Black Bourgeoisie*, E. Franklin Frazier writes that the Black bourgeoisie in the United States, "first, lacks the basis in the American Economic system" and that it has "subsisted off the crumbs of philanthropy, the salaries of public servants, and what could be squeezed from the meager earnings of Black workers...it has been impossible for the Black bourgeoisie to play the traditional role of this class." In conclusion, Frazier states, "the Black bourgeoisie suffers from 'nothingness' because when Blacks attain middle-class status, their lives generally lose both content and significance." (27)

There is also a thin stratum of professional people including doctors, lawyers, teachers, ministers (the largest group) and social workers, but it must be kept in mind, that all these so-called "classes" suffer from the most ferocious national oppression. Thus it is that the fight for self government in the Black Belt (the South) and in the urban centers of the North where Black people comprise a majority in over 50 cities, is the fight for the right of self-determination by The Black Nation. Harry Haywood defines the concept, content and principle of the right of Self-Determination as:

- (1) *Meaning simply the right of the people of a nation to determine their own fate, or destiny free from forcible intervention from without by the people of another nation.*
- (2) *A nation has the right to organize it's own life in the manner or form it chooses, independent of the dictates of any other nation - to be master of it's own house.*
- (3) *Finally, the recognition of the sovereignty of a people in all matters affecting their internal life as well as in matters involving their relationships with other peoples or nations (including the right, as distinguished from obligation, to secede). (28)*

Lenin was one of those who recognized and analysed correctly the national character of anti-capitalist movements in the new era of imperialism. Lenin discerned that imperialism not only divided its own country into "haves" and "have-nots" but also amalgamated the whole world into a system of "haves" and

"have-nots". In addition to this it has created a world in which there are races of "haves" and "have-nots". Therefore, "Lenin's approach united the class struggle with the struggle against other forms of oppression, namely national and racial ...and this laid the basis for the character and the shape that the present-day world revolutionary movement has taken." (29) It was the fundamental socialist view of the Black Revolutionary Movement of the 1930's that its leadership (Dubois, Ralph Bunche, etc.) was able to apply to the Black Belt where all the prerequisites existed for a national revolutionary movement of Black people against American imperialism. Ralph Bunche, writing in 1940, states, "The South must be subjected to a new agrarian and industrial revolution before any significant changes in the fundamental relationship - political, economic or racial - will occur." (30)

At the same time (1920-30), a different brand of nationalism was being reintroduced by Marcus Garvey. Garveyism reflected, to a large degree, the ideology of the Black petty bourgeoisie, and diverted attention from the potential anti-imperialist course into channels of "peaceful return to Africa". Garvey's movement captured the imagination of millions of Black people in the post World War II period of Northern migration. Garvey's ideology was also both nationalist and racial with certain limited socialist characteristics, i.e. co-operative business enterprises. Significantly, however, Garvey's movement represents a mass break with the dominant bourgeois leadership of the N.A.A.C.P. His "Africa for the Africans Abroad and At Home" did not agree with the integrationist, civil rights program of the now (1920) reactionary leadership of A. Philip Randolph, Ralph Bunche, W. E. B. Dubois and a few others. Labelling his "back to Africa" scheme "grandiose", "bombastic" and totally unrealistic, they offered alternatives of gradualism and integration. Garvey's movement, however, did little to change the objective day to day living condition of Black people, though it did bring about a cultural renaissance of a kind, and if you will pardon a pun, "it missed the boat".

Following the Garvey era there was, as in the period following the assassination of Malcolm X, a definite retardation of the Black Revolutionary Movement in America. A. Philip Randolph, once a socialist and thoughtful leader of his people, took the opportunist path of the Roy Wilkins and Whitney Youngs. The N.A.A.C.P. became the representative spokesmen for the Black masses.

For the period 1955-1970 Turner quotes from Rev. C. T. Vivian's recent book, *Black Power and The American Myth*,

*The first fundamental assumption with which we began was that integration would be the route to Black freedom. And this was an inherent part of all our other assumptions. The concept of integration won our allegiance because it fit our understanding of how the people of a culture should relate to one another. It fit our understanding of the values which should determine the institutions and priorities of a society. It did not, however, fit American reality. And the measure by which we misjudged that reality is precisely the measure of the yawning gulf between blacks and whites. (31)*

The integrationist, non-violent movement died violently with the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King.

The only other movement that has maintained a consistent following is that of the Religio-Nationalism of the Nation of Islam. The Honorable Elijah Mohammed, prophet and founder of the lost and found Nation of Shabazz (the so-called American Negro), is the leader of that movement. In the most realistic nationalistic program in America today, the Messenger advocates complete separation from the white world. Mohammed legitimizes his leadership by basing it upon the history, condition, and needs of Black people in the United States. In spite of the diversity of motives which lead people to join, they remain in the Nation because it offers a way out for the despised but upwardly mobile lower-class Blacks. (32) It was on the strength of this movement that Malcolm X rose to power and prominence. The Pan-African Revolutionary Nationalism of Malcolm X set the stage for today's struggle as Panthers, sons and daughters of Malcolm X. Malcolm adhered to the tenets of Islam and the Koran until his assassination. He found no contradiction between religion and politics. He stated often, "A man's religion is between him and his God". (33) Never imposing, he broke with the Nation (1964) to form the Organization of Afro-American Unity. Malcolm gave as his reason for breaking with Elijah Mohammed and the Nation of Islam, their lack of involvement in day to day political struggles of Black people. It was certainly a blow to the Nation for Malcolm had, more than any other follower, practically built the movement single-handed. From the time he left prison in 1952, he had dedicated himself to doing just that. Malcolm also suffered, as his assassination proved; for, in leaving the Nation, he left the security and firm base of a highly disciplined organization.

In Malcolm X we get the clearest blending of the race and class struggle of Black people on both a national and an inter-

national basis. It was Malcolm X who brought to our attention the fact that, "wherever a dark man was being oppressed he was being oppressed by the white man." It was Malcolm who made us aware that "the Black revolution is world wide in scope and in nature." Concerning Capitalism, Malcolm said, "a capitalist is a blood-sucker; you show me a capitalist and I'll show you somebody who is trying to suck the blood out of over three-fourths of the world's people." (34) This is the meaning of Capitalism and the reason it must be destroyed. It alienates the working class on the home-front. It alienates the oppressed nations and peoples and races throughout the world. Its tendencies toward fascism and the threat of a thermo-nuclear war evoke an ever-widening struggle of democratic and peace-loving people. The war in Vietnam is a clear example of this. More than anything else Malcolm X, El Hajj Malik Shabazz made us aware, as the Messenger had made him aware, of who our enemy is...white people. Some will want to say white monopoly capitalists and their bureaucratic lackeys. Say it the way you want, I think we're shooting in the same direction. As with Nat Turner and other heroes of our African past, many white writers have been trying desperately to distort this fundamental truth about Malcolm by suggesting...he changed. When getting off the airplane after his second trip to Africa, a reporter stepped up to Malcolm with the frenzy of a school-boy and asked, "Malcolm, we heard you changed?" Malcolm replied, "Have you?" (35)

### The Next Step

Malcolm X's formation of the O.A.A.U. is indicative of the programmatic direction he and The Muslim Mosque Inc. were going. This organization was patterned after the Organization of African Unity (O.A.U.) established at Addis Ababa, in May, 1963. The ideology of the organization can be defined only as a Pan-African Revolutionary Nationalism. Malcolm suggested to African heads of state that they take the issue of the racial situation in the United States to the United Nations, a proposal later picked up and undertaken by the Black Panther Party. In fact, as Earl Anthony reports in *Picking Up The Gun*, Eldridge Cleaver was to be the West Coast representative of the O.A.A.U. Instead, Cleaver went the way of popularity and joined The Black House, a San Francisco Cultural Nationalist group which later spawned The Black Panther Party for Self-Defense.

It is with Eldridge Cleaver, Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale that the ideological and programmatic direction laid down by Malcolm X received its most trying test. Cleaver states in *On The Ideology of The Black Panther Party*, Part I,

*The ideology of The Black Panther Party is the historical experience of Black people and the wisdom gained by Black people in their 400 years long struggle against the system of racist oppression and economic exploitation in Babylon, interpreted through the prism of the Marxist-Leninist analysis by our Minister of Defense, Huey P. Newton.*

It is important too, to take note of what Cleaver refers to as "our mass line" (rallies to free political prisoners) and "our party line" (the peoples' revolutionary vanguard army). For some time the Panther Party was viewed as an ultra-reform organization bent on some kind of "violent integration". Such views have since been suppressed in light of the ideological development of the young party and day-to-day practice.

It is the role of the Communist Party U.S.A. to perpetuate such myths as working-class solidarity, black and white unite and fight, but if you'll pardon the expression, "it just ain't that way". And the important thing is, Black people don't want it that way. "It would be closer to the truth to say that the Muslims through Malcolm have planted the ideological seed for the next stage of revolt, i.e., separation and independence from white society rejecting white society and all it's values."

"The enemy of Black people is not just a class. Our enemy is people, and the people are American whites of all classes, including workers...and to expect Black Revolutionary Movements to embrace white workers inside the black struggle is in fact to expect the revolution to welcome the enemy into it's camp." This is the ideological line which was laid down by Malcolm X and which the Panthers became somewhat vague about in their alliances with the "Peace and Freedom Party" and other so-called leftist groups. From the standpoint of the Party spokesman this would have to go under the heading "mass line", being necessary strategy to meet a specific need. The masses of Black people, however, were not really as confused by this "unholy-alliance" as they were disappointed. It was this alliance that split the leadership of the Party - Cleaver vs. Carmichael - and saw Black people scurrying back to other more "cultish" organizations. Carmichael held tenaciously to his position of forming alliances from a position of strength, while Cleaver dismissed him as a reactionary cultural nationalist. Carmichael was in no mood, ideological or emotional, to forge alliances he had just broken with the now defunct SNCC. He suggested, and rightly so, that if there were revolutionary whites around, they

should go to the white community and organize white people to overthrow the capitalist system. Sounds funny - well, listen again to what James Boggs has to say concerning such organizations: ... "whether they admit it to themselves or not, if anyone wanted to build a quick mass organization in a white working class community today, his best bet would be to go in as a Klu Klux Klan or White Citizens Council organizer to mobilize white workers to unite and fight against blacks." That is, the black worker knows that if he is to depend on the white worker he will never get anywhere. The white worker is becoming more of an enemy everyday; labor unions are among the most reactionary and discriminatory organizations in the country. This racism corrodes what little class consciousness white workers might have. We reject the Communists who "reject the notion that Black freedom can be won without white allies." It is only the arrogance and racism of the Euro-American white left that makes this proposition worth the paper it's printed on.

### "Black People of the World Unite"

The purpose of this paper has been to show that the ideas of Socialism (Marxism) and nationalism are by no means geographically or ethnically exclusive. My method has been historical and I have endeavored to show through historical and empirical evidence that, in the rise of Black Revolutionary Movements in the United States there has been a precedent established; that in the historical development of all humanity, and in the case of Black Revolutionary Movements in America in particular, these ideas are by no means accidental or esoteric.

---

### Footnotes

1. James Boggs, *Racism and the Class Struggle*, (New York, 1970), p. 50. "Because Afro-Americans were the first people in this country to pose the perspective of revolutionary power to destroy racism, I have been using the word 'black' as a political designation to refer not only to Afro-Americans but to people of color who are engaged in revolutionary struggle in the United States and all over the world. It should not be taken to mean the domination of Afro-Americans or the exclusion of other people of color from black revolutionary organizations."
2. Malcolm X, *Message to the Grassroots* (record).

3. James Turner, "Black Nationalism: The Inevitable Response," in *Black World*, XX(January, 1971), p. 6.
4. Communist Party, *New Program of the Communist Party U.S.A.*, (New York, 1970), pp. 60-61.
5. William Z. Foster, *History of the Communist Party of the United States*, (New York, 1952), p. 26.
6. Harry Haywood, *Negro Liberation*, (New York, 1948), p. 152.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 27.
8. Malcolm X, Message.
9. Claude Lightfoot, *Black America and the World Revolution*, (New York, 1970), p. 57.
10. W. Foster, *History of the Communist Party*, p. 16.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 43.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 53.
13. W.E.B. DuBois, *Black Reconstruction in America*, (New York, 1968), p. 51.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 125.
15. Harry Haywood, *Negro Liberation*, p. 107.
16. James Boggs, *Racism*, p. 28.
17. Harry Haywood, *Negro Liberation*, p. 107.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 12.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 17.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 145.
21. James Boggs, "Uprooting Racism and Racist in the United States," in *Black Scholar*, II(October, 1970), p. 3.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 6.
23. Harry Haywood, *Negro Liberation*, p. 137.
24. Paul Boutelle, *The Case for a Black Party*, p. 13.
25. Harry Haywood, *Negro Liberation*, pp. 13-14.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 145.
27. E. Franklin Frazier, *Black Bourgeoisie*, (London, 1967), pp. 193-195.
28. Harry Haywood, *Negro Liberation*, p. 160.
29. Claude Lightfoot, *Black America*, p. 85.
30. *Ibid.*, pp. 187-188.
31. James Turner, "Black Nationalism," p. 5.
32. E.U. Essien-Udom, *Black Nationalism*, (New York, 1960), p. 97.
33. Malcolm X, *Message*.
34. *Ibid.*
35. *Ibid.*

\* \* \* \* \*

FRITZ POINTER received a M.A. in African Studies from UCLA. He is the author of "An Appeal to African Writers to be African," which was published in the first issue of Ufahamu.



