

PROLETARIAN FEMINIST REVOLUTIONARY NATIONALISM



A STUDY PACK ASSEMBLED BY
THE MAOIST INTERNATIONALIST MINISTRY OF PRISONS
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Introduction

Maoism holds that the principal contradiction in the world today is between imperialism and the oppressed nations. In this study pack MIM(Prisons) applies our general line on the national question – developed from the universal theories of Marx, Lenin, Stalin and Mao – to the specific conditions of the oppressed internal nations of Turtle Island. Many articles in here are reprinted from the original *MIM Theory 7: Proletarian Feminist Nationalism*, which was published in 1995, but remains relevant today. We've run out of copies of *MIM Theory 7* and so created this compilation of articles to fill the gap and update some of the content from that theory journal. This introduction is pulled from that theory journal and updated by MIM(Prisons).

Socialist revolution begins with a national liberation struggle led by a communist vanguard party. A vanguard is a force with a demonstrated experience of supporting the Cultural Revolution in China, opposing post-Stalin Soviet revisionism and post-Mao Chinese revisionism, and promoting the interests of the proletariat of the oppressed nations against the parasitic nations and classes that dominate the First World.

This study pack includes theory on nation-building and organization, reviews of contemporary organizations, and reviews of the now defunct vanguards of a generation before us: principally the Black Panther Party and the Puerto Rican Revolutionary Workers Organization.

Through struggle, practice and the application of the mass line, the line on revolutionary nationalism has evolved over time. Decades ago, the early MIM referred incorrectly to “Afrikan Amerikans,” and then updated that to “Black” – to denote a cohesive nation separate from the Amerikan nation, MIM(Prisons) now uses “New Afrikan.” The language in older articles reprinted from MIM have not been updated. Similarly our use of the term Chican@ has evolved in recent years as is discussed in articles in this study pack.

More than any other strategy – from attempted integration into the dominant nation to the false unity of oppressed nation proletarians with dominant nation labor aristocrats – national liberation has proven itself to be the best force against oppression this century.

China, Vietnam, Albania and other communist-led national liberation successes provide the inspiration to apply a materialist analysis to conditions for such successes on Turtle Island. There will always be close affinity between contemporary struggles in

In Support of Self-Determination and New Democracy

by MC5
from MIM Theory #7

It is perhaps most appropriate to start this issue with a quotation from Eldridge Cleaver, when he was still a politically sane leader of the Black Panther Party: “Another proposal of the Black Panthers which is winning more and more support in the black colony is the call for a U.N. Supervised plebiscite in black communities across the nation. The purpose of the plebiscite is to answer the question, once and for all: just what the masses of black people want. Do the masses of black people consider themselves a nation?”(1)

Later in his book, *Post-Prison Writings and Speeches*, Cleaver said:

“There have been too many people and too many organizations in the past who claimed to speak for the ultimate destiny of black people. Some call for a new state; some have insisted that black people should go back to Africa. We Black Panthers, on the other hand, don't feel we should speak for all black people. We say that black people deserve an opportunity to record their own national will.”(2)

Some have advised MIM to go no further than this quotation. They believe that agitation for the right to self-determination is the complete Marxist-Leninist-Maoist platform on the national question.

But the position put forward by the Panthers and other national liberation organizations around the world is the point of departure and point of return. Like the early Black Panthers and other national liberation groups, MIM agitates for the right to self-determination, and like the Black Panthers and other national liberation groups, it also has an opinion about what the oppressed people should do within North America – liberate their own national territories.

This recognizes that no socialist government will oppress any nation or encroach on the territory any anti-imperialist nation inhabits or has seized from Amerika.

The question is how best to get to the point where oppressed peoples can really have the choice of living in their own liberated territories. If the revolutionary forces accumulate the power to make that a real possibility, then it is appropriate to ask the question, “integration or liberation?” Then there should be a plebiscite or series of plebiscites to decide the question. Asking the question before the oppressed nationality has the power to control territory only proves what the people will say when the imperialists are twisting their arms behind their backs. The people must have a genuine choice, not a choice dictated by the imperialists. Then we can trust an oppressed nation plebiscite — the outcome of the ballot box among the people. MIM does not support the concept of plebiscites that would allow integration with imperialism as expressive of self-determination.

The need for the power to halt a fair plebiscite where the oppressor does not force the oppressed nation into choosing between two lesser evils is the reason why the slogans “Black Power,” “Red Power,” “Yellow Power” and “Brown Power” make sense. Perhaps they should be “Black Power” [we’d say “New Afrikan” today – MIM(Prisons)], “First Nation Power,” “Aztlán Power” etc. Those slogans do not force decisions down the people’s throats: They build for the day when the oppressed peoples can make their own decisions and have them implemented.

At this time. We are “creating public opinion to build the independent power of the oppressed.” That means we are using legal methods to put forward our view and build independent institutions.

As the people find themselves more organized they often end up in armed struggle with the imperialists who want to keep the people dependent on imperialist institutions. When a Canadian mayor seized some land from the Mohawk nation, there was armed conflict at Oka. Not surprisingly, within the Mohawk territories, the Mohawks are already running their own schools, border police, hospital and fire department.

Hence, after a certain level of success in creating public opinion and building evermore independent institutions, the imperialists crack down and the masses must defend their gains in armed struggle. All around the world, the people find themselves repressed by U.S. Imperialism and take up armed struggle to defend their independence and also their right to eat and have shelter and clothing.

NEW DEMOCRACY

After armed struggle the war between the oppressed nations and oppressor nations reaches a certain stage; then finally we

can speak of a new democratic period in North America. In this stage, the Maoist-led forces will have defeated the imperialists and seized power. The Euro-American people’s government will be put into a receivership of the oppressed nations in order to prevent the restoration of imperialism.

Meanwhile, the oppressed nations will get on their feet in this stage. This will mean the people exercise dictatorship over their white nation oppressors. In this stage, the national bourgeoisie of the oppressed nations will play some role in organizing their peoples economically and politically.

Under New Democracy the oppressed people will learn what it means to live without imperialist police terror and they will learn to speak their mind without fear of the consequences from the oppressor. Also during this period, the oppressed nations will learn what it means concretely to choose a piece of land and nationhood.

The new democratic period will complete itself in plebiscites on nationhood. The peoples will decide for themselves if they want their own separate nations or some other arrangement.

The completion of the plebiscites will mark the transition to socialism and the end of the new democratic period. The peoples will have found their way of building cooperative economic relations among other nations. In the course of organizing plebiscites for national self-determination and/or regional autonomy, the Maoist forces must work to develop the first stage of the new democratic revolution so that it may quickly transform into the second stage – socialism.

In the whole new democratic and socialist periods, the danger of counterrevolution exists. Hence, we cannot predict that the Maoist-led forces will win at every step. We only outline our strategic plans and goals. To recapitulate, the major strategic stages as seen in history so far and crystallized in Marxism-Leninism-Maoism (principally Maoism), take the following form in North America:

1. Now: Create public opinion and independent institutions of the people to prepare to seize power.
2. After an accumulation of power in the first stage, the second Stage is a qualitative leap characterized by armed struggle for state power.
3. New democracy is an abbreviated stage relative to that in Third World countries. This stage includes dictatorship of the oppressed nations over the oppressor nation.
4. Individual dictatorships of the proletariat within the oppressed nations; joint dictatorship of the

international proletariat over the Euro-Amerikan nation.

Trotskyist groups, including groups like the RCP and Progressive Labor, deny that oppressed nations in North America require a new democratic stage, because they are not preparing the actual conditions necessary for the self-determination of the oppressed nations.

Since there are not many vestiges of feudalism in North America, the new democratic period will have fewer tasks in North America than similar periods in the Third World. At the same time, the political superstructure is not far removed from the days in which superexploitation of oppressed nationality peasants did take place. There remains some questions of "civil rights" that would be respected in a radical bourgeois democracy.

Historically, under the dictatorship of the proletariat, the bourgeoisie has lost its civil rights. Select other counterrevolutionaries have also lost those rights. This is a universal truth of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

But in self-determination of nations, the issue is one of entire peoples. Since MIM is sincere about creating the conditions for national plebiscites of the oppressed nations no matter how small, MIM sees that New Democracy is essential. After all, in these plebiscites, the entirety of the oppressed nation, including its labor aristocracy, petit-bourgeoisie and bourgeoisie should be allowed to have a say as to whether or not there will be a separate nation. Hence, we cannot refer to these plebiscites as part of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The one thing that must guide the whole new democratic stage is the dictatorship of the oppressed nations led by their proletarian parties over the Euro-Amerikan nation, the agents of U.S. imperialism. It is inevitable that this joint dictatorship of the oppressed nations will not be perfect and will not reflect the participation of all oppressed nations instantly. However, the proletarian parties must act toward this goal in order to absolutely assure that there is no restoration of imperialism.

If the proletarian parties do not take a firm hand in the situation, and if the national bourgeoisie comes to dominate in too many oppressed countries, there will be a reversion to neo-colonialism with a new lineup of imperialist powers. The organizations most responsible for organizing the overthrow of U.S. imperialism have the international responsibility of ruling in the interests of the international proletariat and its allied classes and thus insuring the forward motion of history. Only if the revolutions are led with the ideology of the international proletariat will it be possible to make progress.

The joint dictatorship of the oppressed nations over Euro-Amerika and U.S. Imperialism will not be able to instantly cleanse the Euro-Amerikan nation of influence from its parasitism. That is why we advocate that the oppressed nations go forward and build their own nations and institutions while the dictatorship of the oppressed nations over Euro-Amerika and U.S. Imperialism prepares the basis for the civilized entry of the Euro-Amerikan people into the community of the human race.

On the other hand, it is possible that the oppressed nations have such great faith in their powers to exercise joint dictatorship over Euro-Amerika and U.S. Imperialism that they may feel it is unnecessary to liberate their own national territories. That choice is up to the oppressed nation people in the plebiscites of the new democratic period.

MIM advocates that the oppressed nations liberate their own national territories, but it will respect the decisions of plebiscites. National territory is defined as the land which a nationality inhabits, or seizes.

MIM believes that with the development of the Maoist movement, the correct analysis and strategy leads to national liberation. The only way that people are going to get a real choice between integration and national liberation is by the organization of a national liberation movement. Hence, MIM has pushed into the details of national liberation. All the while it reminds people that the final choice is the peoples'.

ON MULTINATIONAL ORGANIZING

Although MIM believes that the next stage of struggle will see the development of Maoist vanguard parties in the separate oppressed nations of North America, MIM is currently an organization with no membership restrictions. No person of any class, gender or national background is excluded if s/he fulfills membership requirements.

To understand how this came about, it is necessary to understand the history of Maoist revolutionary struggle within the borders of the United States. In the late 1960s and even to an extent in the early 1970s, there were Marxist vanguard parties for many of the oppressed nations within North America. The largest was the Black Panther Party.

In those days, there were several strong Maoist parties with high newspaper circulations and other forms of independent power. Today, MIM takes a multinational form and it still does not have the independent power anywhere approaching that of the Black Panther Party by itself.

Many comrades becoming communists in the 1980s and

1990s knew nothing of the revolutionary nationalism of the 1960s within the United States. Thus, MIM has become perhaps the largest distributor of crucial revolutionary works from the 1960s. Nonetheless, at this time, MIM can only work toward the day when there are Maoist vanguard parties in the oppressed nations and a joint organization of the Maoist parties that lead the dictatorship over the Euro-Amerikan nation.

In this MIM must record its differences with Lenin, who did not live to see the world's anti-colonial struggles:

“The socialists of the oppressed nations must, in particular, defend and implement the full and unconditional unity, including organizational unity, of the workers of the oppressed nation and of the oppressor nation. Without this it is impossible to defend the independent policy of the proletariat and their class solidarity with the proletariat of other countries in the face of all manner of intrigues, treachery and trickery on the part of the bourgeoisie.”(3)

It has proved possible in actual fact to advance Marxism-Leninism in the traditions of Stalin and Mao quite dramatically without forming a multinational organization. It is not something that we can record as a proud moment in the human race, that single-nationality organizing was necessary in the Black nation of North America and also Azania. Yet, we must now recognize as indubitable historical fact that these single-nationality parties advanced the revolution more than their multinational cousins of the same time and place. We are referring to the advances of the BPP compared with those of the Progressive Labor Party of 1966-1970 and also the advances of the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) and its circles compared with those of the African National Congress (ANC) and the Communist Party of South Africa.

Some have criticized MIM for not supporting existing nationalist organizations in the 1990s as the vanguards of their oppressed nations in North America. In the 1960s, MIM would have recognized the Black Panthers, the Young Lords and other organizations as the vanguards of their nations. Today, MIM is playing the vanguard roles in all the nations in North America. A vanguard is a force with a demonstrated experience of supporting the Cultural Revolution in China and opposing post-Stalin Soviet revisionism and post-Mao Chinese state capitalism.

In fact, there is no other genuine Maoist party in North America, only revisionist ones and some progressive bourgeois nationalist organizations. MIM has on occasion had talks with revolutionary-minded nationalist groups that are friends to

Maoism, but thus far, there has been no success in finding or establishing unity between MIM and these organizations on the cardinal questions – the experience of capitalist restoration in the Soviet Union and China, the Chinese Cultural Revolution and the nature of the Euro-Amerikan working class. Such single-nationality organizations existed in the 1960s and 1970s, but because of state repression, only non-Maoist imitations of them exist today.

There have been many times in history where communist movements took advantage of their multinational side as a launch pad into revolutionary nationalist struggle. In the Chinese revolution, the general staff of the Communist Party first met in France of the 1920s. That includes top leaders like Zhu De (Chu Teh), Zhou Enlai and even Deng Xiaoping, when he was still a revolutionary.(4)

Vietnamese and other “Indochinese” comrades cut their teeth in the French Communist Party itself before going to Vietnam and launching a successful national liberation struggle.

Lenin had an important refuge with comrades in Finland. Finland served as a meeting place and a source of funding and arms.(5) And of course it is well known how Marx and Engel had to move from country to country because of state repression.

In all these cases. What is important is using whatever advantages in struggle that are available. Huey Newton also put this very well. He did not regard a single-nationality vanguard party as sacrosanct, just a means to an ends, the internationalist future. By the time of the following quotation, Newton was already backing off the position that he formerly had (and that MIM still holds) on nationalism and internationalism.

Interviewer: “You are talking about this ideology of intercommunalism as part of the program of the Black Panther Party and telling us that the idea is to strive for unity of identity. Yet a few minutes ago you mentioned that the Party only accepts blacks as members. That sounds like a contradiction to me.

NEWTON: Well, I guess it is. But to explain it I would have to go back to what I said earlier. We are the spearhead most of the time, and we try not to be too far ahead of the masses of the people, too far ahead of their thinking. We have to understand that most of the people are not ready for many of the things that we talk about.

“Now many of our relationships with other groups, such as the white radicals with whom we

have formed coalitions, have been criticized by the very people we are trying to help, For example, our offer of troops to the Vietnamese received negative reaction from the people. And I mean from truly oppressed people. Welfare recipients wrote letters saying, 'I though the Party was for us; why do you want to give those dirty Vietnamese our life blood?' I would agree with you and call it a contradiction.

...

“So I would say we are being pragmatic in order to do the job that has to be done, and then, when that job is done, the Black Panther Party will no longer be the *Black Panther Party*.”(6)

History has shown that Huey Newton was correct within U.S. Borders and also South Africa. In both places, the struggle against imperialism and colonialism took its most advanced form in single-nationality parties. This is one reason that MIM believes that the struggle will continue to take single-nationality forms in the future. The reason is not hard to find: great nation chauvinism of European-descended peoples has created a distrust of multinational organizations on the part of the oppressed masses.

MULTICULTURALISM

There exists today a neocolonial trend of thought called “multiculturalism” that places more emphasis on who is speaking than what is said. There are those who say that oppressed nationality people are always correct and oppressor nation individuals are always incorrect. This line of thinking leads to paralysis once people learn that oppressed nationalities and oppressor nationalities are not monolithic. There is Mao Zedong and there is Chiang Kai-shek. There is Malcolm X and there is Clarence Thomas. Everyone has their own opinions and ideologies. To get anywhere, we cannot support the opinions of all members of oppressed groups equally. We have to take a side, something the “multicultural” advocates don't understand.

In organizing a very large campaign to cut U.S. Ties to apartheid South Africa in the early 1980s, MIM predecessors often fanned out to organize numerous meetings and debates. In this organizing work, it was not always possible to have the masses of Azania there to help us, though they and their leaders strongly requested that we do this work to stop the U.S. Imperialists from propping up the apartheid regime.

Sometimes, an Uncle Tom would show up at a small meeting here or there to deny that he had “any use” for the movement to

cut U.S. ties to South Africa and sometimes there would be no other Black people at the meeting. No oppressed nationality is monolithic in its opinions, and the other people there at the meeting had an obligation to criticize the line of the Uncle Tom, and support the masses of Azania. No person, no matter what nationality, can keep his or her political bearings without keeping the general interests of the international proletariat at heart. There is no other way to avoid confusion and paralysis.

MIM disagrees with Stalin on this question. Stalin conflated the realm of political necessity in leading the masses with the realm of scientific struggle that must occur within vanguard parties. In so doing, he tended to contradict his own formulations on the general problems facing revolutionaries on the national question. MIM supports Stalin when he spoke generally and not just “as a Georgian.”

“If the struggle against Russian chauvinism were undertaken not by the Russians but by the Turkestanian or Georgian communists, it would be interpreted as anti-Russian chauvinism. That would confuse the whole issue and strengthen Great Russian chauvinism. Only the Russian communists can undertake the fight against Great Russian chauvinism and carry it through to the end.”(7)

“The intention is to point to the duty of the local communists, the duty of the non-Russian communists to combat their own chauvinists. Only the Tatar, Georgian and other communists can fight Tatar, Georgian and other chauvinism.”(8)

In contrast, MIM would say that it is precisely among the communists where the scientific method must be protected at great cost if need be. Chauvinism is chauvinism and must be discovered and recognized by all communists.

Those who attempt to cut down multinational organizing undercut revolutionary science. The correct line is correct regardless of who speaks and organizes for it. This is part of what MIM understands Mao to mean by “ideological and political line is decisive.” We should notice that he didn't say that “subjective factors” or “intentions” “are decisive.” No, he said “line” to stress the decisiveness of the science of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism.

Those who take a simple position on this question by opposing all multinational organizing fall into narrow nationalism, sometimes with an ultra-left veneer.

Some reasons for opposing multinational organizing include the following (correct) suppositions: white people, men and

upper class people are certainly less likely to organize on the proletarian side than oppressed nationality people, women and proletarians; and the oppressed need not make any compromises with the oppressor groups in order to liberate themselves. The oppressed will liberate themselves.

But none of this means that multinational organizing is incorrect. Those who cut down multinational organizing cut down the Chinese, Vietnamese, Eritrean, Tigrayan, Peruvian and Russian revolutions of this century. In other revolutions there was a single-nationality composed of various “races,” as in the case of Cuba. Hence, to oppose multinational organizing in all circumstances is to oppose communism. To oppose communism is to oppose all the genuine nationalism of the oppressed nations, as we shall see.

MAOIST INTERNATIONALIST PARTY OF AMERIKA

As the Maoist movement expands, there will be more and more single-nationality parties. The one exception should be the Amerikan Maoist party. It must always recognize the weak basis for its existence as a genuine Maoist party.

Unless some dramatic turns and protracted historical struggle occurs relatively soon, it is possible that Euro-Amerikans will require multinational organizing all the way until we reach communism. The Maoist Internationalist Party of Amerika should always accept other nationalities, because the material basis of Euro-Amerikan internationalism is weak and will require outside assistance.

Whether it is the Peruvian or Filipino comrades, the oppressed nationalities have an interest in organizing the Euro-Amerikan comrades to the greatest extent possible. As we mentioned, it is possible at some point the oppressed nations will put together a multinational Maoist Internationalist organization to direct the Euro-Amerikan comrades. That in effect would also be a multinational party including the Euro-Amerikan comrades on an equal scientific basis, though again, for material reasons, the Euro-Amerikan people are not as likely to join internationalist struggle as oppressed nation peoples. For that matter, the people of the “New Third World” of North America are less likely than the oppressed peoples of the Third World to take up proletarian revolution.

NARROW NATIONALISM ISN'T NATIONALISM

Great nation chauvinism is the opposite pole of narrow nationalism. Great nation chauvinists dismiss the revolution in

Albania, for example, because Albania is so small and not very powerful in world affairs. Many of those people call themselves communists, but in reality they are great nation chauvinists in leftist clothing.

When it comes to the national question, great nation chauvinism is the principal danger. That is especially true within the imperialist countries and North America as a whole.

Even in the so-called Marxist circles of the imperialist countries and the Maoist circles themselves, the main problem of national chauvinism comes in not recognizing the alliance of the imperialist country working classes with the imperialists. Likewise, the typical assumption of “multiracial” organizing is that integration is the best immediate goal. Under this assumption, the supposedly exploited white working class is presumed to be a good ally of the oppressed nations.

Even within the oppressed nations of North America, great nation chauvinism, and not narrow nationalism, is the main problem on the national question. Many oppressed nationality people identify with their oppressors and adopt the ways of their oppressors in conscious and unconscious ways.

In contrast with great nation chauvinism, narrow nationalism is an ideology which glorifies a very small bit of oppressed nation existence – typically some aspect of its culture. Narrow nationalists (as well as Anglo-identified “minorities”) may oppose all multinational organization and will actively oppose struggles of other nations against imperialism by pitting their struggle against that of other nations. The compradors, national bourgeoisie and oppressed nation labor aristocracies will be the ones most likely to fight for their own nationality's supposed interests at the expense of other nationalities also fighting imperialism. The reason is that these classes are sometimes fighting to enter an alliance with the imperialists to share in the oppression of other nations.

Ordinarily, narrow nationalism stems from the bourgeoisie of the oppressed nation – either its comprador or independent elements that we call national bourgeoisie. The aspiring and existing bourgeoisie of the oppressed nations has a very mixed point of view. On the one hand it is tempted by the substantial benefits from the imperialists (compradors); on the other hand it resents the competition from foreign capitalists (national bourgeoisie) and, sometimes, as Mao points out, sections of the independent bourgeoisie (national bourgeois allies of the revolution) will realize that they can't get anywhere without mobilizing the masses to bring down colonialism and imperialism first.

In North America, the situation of narrow nationalism is

doubly complicated. There are substantial benefits for joining the empire and aiding with the exploitation and superexploitation of peoples from Latin America, Africa and Asia – the Third World. Great nation chauvinism is well suited for this purpose, but in North America, so is narrow nationalism.

The key to unmasking this narrow nationalism is a comparison of conditions and demands of the narrow nationalists of the “New Third World” in North America with conditions and demands of the oppressed in the Third World. By focusing on the oppression of one oppressed people within North America, narrow nationalists can wink at the imperialists' exploitation and superexploitation of the Third World. In this they are no different than ordinary integrationists who want a piece of the rock.

In North America, narrow nationalism is often the close-quartered twin of integrationism and social-reformism. Such nationalism can be a bargaining position for joining the empire.

Throughout the world. But especially in North America where the masses are closer to imperialist benefits, bourgeois nationalism is false nationalism. By itself in its pure form, bourgeois nationalism can never succeed in establishing national independence. True national independence requires the power to resist foreign imperialists and to set up cooperative and peaceful trade relations.

By itself, the bourgeoisie of an oppressed country can at most bargain for a neocolonial relationship to the imperialists, where it serves as the local puppet. The reason for this is very simple. The advanced economic strength of the imperialist countries makes it possible to bribe and pay the salaries of government officials in the neo-colonial government. In those cases when the puppet has the gumption to turn down the bribes, the imperialist military or CIA steps in to have him or her eliminated.(10)

The table shows that the long-plundered oppressed countries do not have the resources to pay their government officials to maintain an independent course. A single multinational corporation has greater revenue in a year than a whole oppressed country does, never mind its government. Hence, the heads of multinational companies can organize bribery of government, military and business officials. They can hire troops and spies and pay for weapons, and if they aren't strong enough by themselves or they want taxpayers to foot the bill, they can just ask the U.S. Government to help put the Third World countries in line.

Third World Gross Domestic Product: 1990*

Brazil \$388 billion

Malaysia (1991) \$48 billion

Zaire \$7 billion

*Total goods and services produced by a country in a year, not counting foreign trade.

Sales of Multinational Companies: 1992

1. General Motors \$132.8 billion

10. Texaco \$37.1 billion

20. Dow Chemical \$19.2 billion

Source: 1994 World Almanac & Book of Facts. Funk & Wagnalls: New Jersey, 1993.

[UPDATED NUMBERS added by MIM(Prisons)]

Third World Gross Domestic Product: 2017

Brazil \$2,140 billion

Malaysia \$310 billion

Democratic Republic of the Congo \$41 billion

Sales of Multinational Companies: 2017

1. Walmart \$500 billion

10. Apple \$234 billion

20. General Motors \$152 billion

Source: wikipedia.org]

Only a tiny handful of Third World countries have economies larger than GM's annual sales. That is comparing everything that is sold in those countries in one year with what is sold by GM in one year. Brazil's economy is bigger than GM, but Malaysia's is not. That is why even a single multinational company has a lot of clout relative to the independence -minded government and business leaders of the Third World.

The multinational corporations headed by the imperialists have many levers at their disposal. They can gang up with other multinational companies to obtain favorable policies from Third World governments; they can hire employees in the Third World that are favorable to their interests and they can otherwise pay the salary or bribes of government, business and military officials.

It is unrealistic to expect that puppets in Third World countries will turn down the bribery of the imperialists and risk

their lives to oppose them.(11) It's obvious that the rich and powerful countries can pay the price and get what they want. The puppets will serve the imperialists and not the interests of the oppressed nation. This is one of the most important reasons that only communism can assure national independence and international relations of peace and equality. The workers and peasants must rule, not the minority of compradors and their imperialist masters.

The only way to prevent such a neocolonial outcome and preserve genuine national independence is organizing the workers and peasants (if any) of the oppressed nations in armed struggle. They must fight the imperialists and the corrupted local puppets. The bourgeois nationalists can't do it by themselves; should they get the notion to try. They aren't powerful enough and they need an army of people opposed to imperialism. Only a people's army can defeat the bribery and other forms of economic and military power of the imperialists. (Saddam Hussein most recently proved that it is not possible to fight a bourgeois war to bring victory and liberation for the people from imperialism.) Fighting in any other arena guarantees the imperialists the upper-hand because they have the money to compete in elections, buy officials, etc.

What of the oppressed nation bourgeoisie that has any shred of independence? The imperialists will tolerate puppets, and puppets who enjoy their perks may be quite comfortable. Yet, even these puppets must take some cues from the progressive section of the national bourgeoisie. To be useful to the imperialists, the puppets called compradors must espouse some nationalist rhetoric every now and then to fool the masses into supporting the imperialist-comprador rule. Hence, narrow nationalism that isn't real nationalism is created all the time by lackeys of neocolonialism.

As for what we call the national bourgeoisie, that class for capitalists that has made its business on its own, it is also influenced by neocolonialism. On the other hand, it would like to toy with mobilizing the masses just long enough to oust the imperialists and put themselves in power as the ultimate exploiters of their own people.

Mao Zedong taught us to distinguish between "compradors" and "national bourgeoisie," and use the differences in their interests for our advantage. Mao taught us to entice the national bourgeoisie, or at least a vacillating part of it, to ally with the proletariat of the oppressed nation to oust the imperialists. This kind of alliance with a section of the oppressed nation bourgeoisie is one of the only ways we can distinguish between *national* struggle and *class* struggle – each specifically construed for the purpose of discussing principal contradictions

and strategy. Those "Marxists" who deny this aspect of national struggle in the name of one united proletariat are class reductionists, fundamentalists, Trotskyists or crypto-Trotskyists.

Indeed, it is only by mobilizing the workers, the petit-bourgeoisie, the peasants (if any) and the national bourgeoisie that there is any chance of genuine national independence. These classes will not be mobilized by a predatory landlord or bourgeoisie class that spends as much time fighting the people as it does fighting the imperialists. Nor will more than half of the people – women – fight very hard if they are fighting for a reinforced patriarchy.

Since real independence of oppressed countries requires the support of the people, we say that only communist-led revolutionary struggle is genuine nationalism. No other political weapon besides communism is capable of confronting imperialism, exposing imperialist bribery, uniting the people and

organizing armed struggle. Other approaches inevitably end in neocolonialism. Genuine nationalism of the oppressed nations is also the only genuine internationalism, because only by such a mobilization of the oppressed peoples can imperialism be defeated. When each nation has its own independence free of imperialist superexploitation and exploitation, we can then have a genuine equality of nations.

One way we can tell phony nationalism apart from revolutionary nationalism and genuine internationalism is that phony nationalism ignores certain issues of oppression, because the bourgeois nationalists don't really want to mobilize everyone all out to defeat imperialism. If the people get too strongly organized, the bourgeoisie fears it will never get a chance to exploit the people. Better for the bourgeois nationalists that the people fight amongst themselves.

A very common marker of phony nationalism is a total silence on feminism – the confrontation of male supremacy. The narrow nationalists don't want women to get too psyched for change, because then the bourgeois nationalists are afraid of the people, much as they need to use them. Hence, you won't see the bourgeois nationalists steering between phony feminism, the pseudo-feminism of the imperialists, and genuine feminism, which gives women an equal role in society and hence mobilizes them to their best ability to fight imperialism. The bourgeois nationalists just want to eliminate the imperialists and then quickly fill their role.

Another tell-tale sign of phony nationalism is silence toward the struggle of other oppressed nationalities. Now if someone really wanted the independence of a country, independence from the CIA, the U.S. Military, the banks and the companies, why

would they not see the other countries oppressed by U.S. imperialism as their friends? A genuine nationalist will celebrate every blow suffered by U.S. imperialism and every other kind of imperialism aiming to replace it. If a supposed nationalist isn't celebrating and facilitating the blows against imperialism, look out, because someone is looking to cut a deal with the imperialists.

These are examples of why Mao said the national bourgeoisie vacillates, because even when it decides to attack imperialism, it is very tenuous. It appears to stop half-way, because in reality it is stopping half-way. The national bourgeoisie does not want every ounce of energy dedicated toward national independence and world peace. It just wants its own pie, either consciously or unconsciously. Witnessing the national bourgeoisie in action, one would think the masses could afford to wait for centuries to get rid of imperialism.

The proletariat must lead genuine independence struggles. Only this class of people not bribed in one way or another – the class of people too big to bribe – will fight with all-out determination. They aren't looking out for their tax-collections, their salaries or their profits; hence they are best qualified to determine and achieve the national interest of oppressed countries.

Notes:

1. Eldridge Cleaver, *Post-Prison Writings and Speeches*. Random House, New York, 1969, p. 69.
2. Ibid., p. 187.
3. V.L. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, pp. 414-5. We credit the organizations that put forward "In Defense of the Right to Political Secession for the Afro-American Nation," for discussing this, even if incorrectly.
4. See Robert Scalapino's work on the early history of the Chinese communists, including in France.
5. E. Tani and K. Sern, *False Nationalism False Internationalism Seeds Beneath the Snow*: Chicago, 1985, pp. 16-21.
6. Kui T. Erikson, intro., *In Search of Common Ground: Conversations with Erik H. Erikson and Huey P. Newton* Norton: New York, 1973, pp. 42-3.
7. J.V. Stalin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, pp. 272-3. Again, we credit the organizations that put forward "In Defense of the Right to Political Secession for the Afro-American Nation," for discussing this, even if incorrectly.
9. Gillis, Perkins, Roenner, Snodgrass, *Economics of Development*, 3rd ed. Norton: New York, 1992, p. 379.
10. See the video "Inside the CIA: On Company Business: Subversion" in which ex-CIA officials tell how they overthrew various Third World government officials they didn't like.
11. See MIM Theory 5 for a few examples of democratically elected officials in the Third World being overthrown and even killed by the imperialists.

The National Question and Separate Vanguard Parties

June 1992

revised January 1994

from MIM Theory #7

by MC5

In the 1970s there were some groups that thought they were Maoist parties or pre-parties of the oppressed nations. They all dissolved or went in for revisionism. There was even a group of oppressed nationality Maoist parties and scattered whites called the Revolutionary Wing. This dissolution of student and oppressed nationality revolutionary organizations is a tragedy that people serious about revolution today must learn from.

People took a lot of lumps after the Black Panther Party demise and many felt they had no clear-cut place to go, no "shining path." The Maoist struggle in the United States has never been the same since the state smashed the Panthers. A key lesson to learn is the extent to which the state managed to split Maoist groups over non-fundamental questions. The combination of state repression and theoretical disunity proved deadly.

Today, Maoists need only look to the issue of Maria Elena Moyano's assassination by the Peruvian communists to see that the imperialists and their lackeys attempt to sow dissension within revolutionary ranks on questions of theory – in this case feminism.

In the mid-1970s, most oppressed nationals left the Revolutionary Communist Party, but some Blacks and other national minorities stayed with the RCP and October League. So the issue became "who is vanguard?" The Maoist forces failure to unite theoretically at the time caused a lot of individuals to degenerate politically.

The Revolutionary Wing, with its Black, Asian and Latino vanguards seemed to have the most momentum for a while and then it splintered, from ultraleftist bickering, liquidationism and bourgeois nationalist opportunism.

MIM'S POSITION FOR PRACTICE IN THE CURRENT PERIOD

1. Currently MIM is a multinational party. However, MIM recognizes that there are times when vanguard forces from the oppressed nationalities believe they must have separate, single nationality vanguard parties. MIM recognizes the right of

self-determination of such vanguard forces and hence would defer to such a party on the question of organizing the oppressed nationality in question and believes that the validity of single-nationality organizing has been proved in communist history.

MIM defines as vanguard those forces with a demonstrated experience of supporting the Cultural Revolution in China and opposing (post-Stalin) Soviet and (post-Mao) Chinese state capitalism. In 1994, these issues are more clear-cut than ever. Anyone who doesn't recognize the ex-Soviet Union or China as capitalist cannot be leading the masses toward classless society.

In North America, MIM has the added stipulation that an organization applying the science of Maoism must be able to recognize that the Euro-American working class is not a proletariat, but instead a labor aristocracy, which means that the masses of Euro-American people are not objectively allied with proletarian revolution. [editor's note 2017: MIM later updated this line to include the importance of all revolutionaries worldwide understanding that the vast majority imperialist country workers are part of the petty bourgeois class. See *Imperialism and Its Class Structure* in 1997.] The answers of any organization in North America to the three scientific questions just posed above are what separates those genuinely practicing the science of Maoism and those just claiming the Maoist science and mouthing the slogans.

Currently, and on the basis of these cardinal criteria, MIM is aware of no genuine Maoist single nationality party in the United States except those incipient in MIM circles; although, in the 1960s and 1970s there were many, so there is some basis to expect them to arise again.

MIM does not discount the possibility that single-nationality Maoist parties in North America will form outside MIM circles. On the other hand, the oppressed nationality comrades of MIM may find themselves in a position to form the single-nationality vanguard party of their nation. Currently, however, MIM is the vanguard organization of all the nations in North America.

Should a genuine Maoist single-nationality party form outside of MIM circles, MIM will determine whether or not the party is the vanguard of the oppressed nation in question. Yet, even should MIM recognize that new party as the vanguard, we will still recognize as Maoists those oppressed nationality members of MIM who refuse to join the new Maoist single-nationality party. Such may sound like a contradiction, but it is a contradiction in the struggle for self-determination that cannot be resolved until the completion of the new democratic stage, when self-determination is actual and not just ideological.

National liberation organizations that do not meet the conditions for being vanguards are nonetheless our allies.

Right now MIM is clearly the most advanced party for all nationalities within U.S. Borders. This is no doubt in large part because of its firm anti-imperialist history of struggle on behalf of Third World oppressed nations.

We encourage all oppressed peoples to join MIM, because joining is necessary to maintaining a vanguard orientation in this period when we are recovering from the state's destruction of our most class-conscious organizations. It is a period of regroupment and education of the youth for the creation of new Maoist forces.

2. MIM is aware from history that oppressed nationalities may themselves sharply divide on the question of multinational parties. Applying the spirit of this resolution will require arduous struggle. In the event of the formation of a Maoist single-nationality party, MIM will struggle to inform its members of the views of the single nationality party, remain on good terms with all genuine Maoist groups and leave party membership to the decisions of individual oppressed nationality comrades. Those oppressed nationality comrades who do not opt for a single-nationality party will always have a place in the organizations preparing for the day of the joint dictatorship of the oppressed nations over Euro-America.

MIM also advocates that any vanguard organization for Euro-Americans always accept members from other genuine Maoist vanguards, since there is no Euro-American proletariat, and the material basis for a revolutionary Euro-American party is weak. It is very possible that the best possible leaders for the eventual Maoist Internationalist Party of America may be non-American immigrants.

There may be enough John Browns to run a newspaper and other communications networks, which is crucial at this stage in the struggle, but MIM does not believe there are enough to run a whole government -- a true dictatorship of the proletariat. Currently we base our strategic plans on that existing shortage of white proletarian revolutionaries. (There is a general shortage of revolutionaries, but history has shown that the proportion of revolutionaries in the oppressed nations can rise very quickly.)

The form of organization is not a cardinal question. Whether oppressed nationality comrades favor multinational organizing or single-nationality organizing, it is not a dividing line question in the Maoist camp. This is something that anti-revisionist forces have failed to grasp in the past and it is a line that represents MIM's unique application of the universal science of Maoism to conditions in North America. The goal of self-

determination of nations is universal and the analysis of Maoist single-nationality organizing within U.S. borders is MIM's particular summation of conditions in North America.

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Similarly, the liberation of national territory by oppressed nations of North America is not a cardinal question. As Black Panther Party Minister of Information Eldridge Cleaver said, the point is not to force one thing or another down a people's throat. The point is to organize the people for the actual power to choose between alternatives. The oppressed nations will choose in a plebiscite whether or not they want a liberated territory. On the way to those plebiscites, successful completion of many lower stages of struggle will have to lead the way.

In the same way, we must favor self-determination of Maoist comrades. They must have a choice between multinational and single-nationality organizing or a combination of both. In the short run, MIM advocates multinational organizing.

For the long run, MIM advocates single-nationality organizing as the principal mainstay with an important complementary role for multinational organization in building the joint dictatorship of the oppressed nations over Euro-Amerikan imperialism. Yet MIM does not make the chauvinist or provincialist error of elevating this opinion to a dividing line question.

4. Given MIM's analysis of the current period, and the need for single-nationality parties, most glaringly in the First Nations where armed struggle is already fairly developed, it becomes necessary to identify a good point for MIM comrades to develop single-nationality parties. This will become apparent as the strength of MIM develops in practice, particularly as the MIM institutions and the independent power of the oppressed grow.

One good gauge of readiness of a group of comrades to form a party that would not degenerate or die right away (as so many organizations have in North America) is its ability to put out a regular newspaper and put forward the necessary Maoist line. MIM Notes only comes out monthly for the benefit of all

nationalities. MIM comrades looking to form single-nationality parties desperately need more comrades and funds.

MIM is not saying that vanguard parties require newspapers to be vanguard parties. If there were no MIM at all, then any group of two or more Maoist comrades in any nation would constitute the vanguard.

Now there is a MIM though, a MIM that is growing in order to facilitate the mutual development of revolutionaries in North America. At some stage, that development will entail the formation of single-nationality parties. When the struggle will take that form is principally a practical question, a question of when the struggle would be best served by its taking the single-nationality form. Once again, MIM must stress that while it voices these opinions on these questions, the line on these questions is not a dividing line among Maoists.

5. In the rest of the world, multinational parties have carried off successful Maoist revolutions. In South Africa and the United States, the world's most parasitic imperialist powers, the most advanced Maoist forces from the 1960s believed that national liberation required separate organizations for the different nations.

In the mid-1970s, the Revolutionary Wing and other groups were saying the parties should be separate. The Black Panther Party had said they should be separate. Others were saying that only a multinational vanguard can achieve the overthrow of imperialism and guarantee the right to self-determination.

A lot of groups supported self-determination in word, but divided on non-fundamental questions in deed – constituting a blow for self-determination.

All Maoist organizations that recognize that the history of the international communist movement must be summed up in favor of Mao's analysis of the Cultural Revolution and the Soviet Union should work together. All organizations in North America that see in addition that the genuine application of Maoist science requires the analysis that the Euro-Amerikan working class is a labor aristocracy, either in its majority or its entirety, are regarded by MIM as fraternal affiliates.

The Duality of Nations: Seize The Revolutionary Imperative

November 1993
from MIM Theory #7
by MC12

Since MIM developed its analysis of the white working class as a non-revolutionary worker-elite – a labor aristocracy – thanks to the work of Sakai in *Settlers: The Mythology of the White Proletariat*, it has moved to put into practice the analysis of the contradiction between imperialism and oppressed nations as principal for revolutionaries on a world scale under conditions of imperialism. This advanced with the publication of *MIM Theory 1: “A White Proletariat?”* With MIM's subsequent development of a parallel analysis of gender oppression in *MIM Theory 2/3*, the development of this practice has reached a conclusive point for now.

These theoretical attempts have circled around revolutionary nationalism itself, by developing an analysis of its opposite: the reactionary nationalist alliance of the labor aristocracy with the imperialist bourgeoisie on the one hand, and the gender alliance of First World pseudo-feminism with the imperialist patriarchy on the other. MIM exposes both of these alliances as both objective and subjective: as political alliances based in the material reality of life in Amerika. The underlying conclusion of both of these is the need in the United States for a communist/revolutionary-nationalist alliance led by a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist vanguard party. MIM has not thoroughly addressed the formations of the oppressed internal nations themselves, while it has constructed the skeleton of the analysis in relief.

As MIM's social base expands, reflecting the dual purposes of uniting oppressed nations behind Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and dividing susceptible elements from the Amerikan nation, the need for filling in that revolutionary center grows. That project will follow from expanded practice among the oppressed nations as well as a comprehensive review of previous and existing revolutionary nationalist movements, and the concrete theoretical analysis of both.

“When imperialism launches a war of aggression against a country, all its various classes, except for some traitors, can temporarily unite in a national war against imperialism. At such a time, the contradiction between imperialism and the country concerned becomes the principal contradiction, while all the other contradictions among the various classes of the country... are temporarily relegated to a secondary or subordinate position.”(1)

The nation, as a social and historical formation, exists in both objective and subjective reality. It is neither permanent nor unchanging: both its overall existence in human society and its specific manifestations are subject to the laws of material development. The nation rises and falls, is born and dies, as determined by the motion of forces both internal and external to

itself. Nations are not created solely by the drawing of state borders, any more than nation-states are the products of their official nations alone. Not all nations have developed nation-states, and not all states have been built around specific nations.

Nations are a phenomenon of class society. Class and gender contradictions pre-existed nations. Class and gender contradictions determine national contradictions in the same way that they underlay and determine the contradiction of capitalism. National liberation changes the conditions under which class and gender struggles take place; but national liberation cannot itself resolve the class and gender contradictions.

Dominant-nation theoreticians and their political followers have largely dismissed Marxist theories of nations (the objective structures) and nationalism (the political projects), and have instead settled upon a generalized conclusion that Marxism has simply failed to treat the issue successfully. Such an argument – as prevalent as it is in the dominant discourse – can never be credibly advanced with regard to the Third World. There Marxism has produced the only form of treatment of the issue possible within the consistent pedagogy of dialectical and historical materialism: the fusion of revolutionary theory and revolutionary practice.

The dominant-school pundits may be correct to point out that Marx himself failed to “resolve” the national question. But Marxism, the political and philosophical theory and practice, has developed and tested many approaches to the national question, producing in the process the most significant revolutionary movements in the twentieth century: the most significant revolutions, in fact, since the birth of Marxism. And yet First World intellectuals will apparently pour scorn on the legacy of Stalin and Mao on the national question as long as there are dominant nations left in the world to produce intellectuals.

Nations and national ideologies have a dual character, within which opposing characteristics exist in contradiction. As there are subordinate and dominant nations, so too are there progressive and reactionary forces within nationalism. Within the subordinate nations the revolutionary (emancipatory) character of nationalism is dominant; within the dominant nations the reactionary (exclusionary) character holds sway. Failure to recognize or acknowledge this dual character of nations leads to an inability to understand the changing place of nationalism in history and the political imperatives resulting from that motion.

Each nation has a beginning and an end, as does the

existence of the phenomenon itself. This is not a new preposition; rather it is an application and a development of the Marxist theory of nations begun by J.V. Stalin, who with the Bolsheviks advanced the first revolutionary theory and practice on the national question in the era of imperialism. That the outcome of that effort was history's first socialist revolution is testimony to the value of the theory and practice; that is with historical hindsight less-than-perfect is testimony to the dialectical relationship between theory and practice – and the truth of an old saying repeated by Mao Zedong: “a fall into the pit, a gain in your wit.” Or, more elaborately:

“The dialectical-materialist theory of knowledge places practice in the primary position, holding that human knowledge can in no way be separated from practice and repudiating all the erroneous theories which deny the importance of practice or separate knowledge from practice.”(2)

In the era of imperialism, the dual character of nations is thus: the principal contradiction on a world scale is between imperialism and the oppressed nations. This contradiction contains within it many other contradictions, principally the contradictions of class and gender oppression as well.

In “The Socialist Revolution and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination,” Lenin argued that the right of self-determination belonged “wholly and exclusively” to the sphere of political democracy.(3) But by 1920 he distinguished between “bourgeois democratic” and “national-revolutionary” forms of national struggle. This change was the result of political struggles between reformist and revolutionary forms of Social-Democracy. The result was the “cardinal idea” underlying the new thesis: “the distinction between oppressed and oppressor nations.”(4) And it was an idea made possible in the Bolshevik Party's eyes by the imminence of socialist revolution in Russia – without a developed capitalist stage – and the anticipated future alliance between national-revolutionary struggles and the dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia. Lenin further argued:

“In the same way as mankind can arrive at the abolition of classes only through a transitional period of the dictatorship of the oppressed class, it can arrive at the inevitable integration of nations only through a transition period of the complete emancipation of all oppressed nations, I.e., their freedom to secede.”(5)

Recognizing the conditions under which the national contradiction is principal is the result of a political practice and historical analysis which reveals that the classes and genders within the oppressed and oppressor nations have constructed

strategic national alliances for their class and gender interests.

National liberation struggles have been propelled by these forces. In the oppressed nations these alliances have led to the revolutionary struggles that have been the main threats to the existence of the imperialist system itself. This is the objective course of human history in the era of imperialism; it is not merely the political choice of nationalists eager to advance “their cause” over class and gender struggle.

Nationalism is the political theory and practice of the nation, and its dual character mirrors the motion of the contradictions between imperialism and oppressed nations on a world scale. In the dominant imperialist nations, the reactionary character of nationalism determines the overall shape of the movement; in the subordinate nations the revolutionary character is principal, propelling the revolutionary national liberation struggle. Historian Juan Gómez-Quiñones says Lenin saw two directions in the movement of imperialism. Immediately, imperialism's oppression of nations was a force for their galvanization into national resistance movements; but at the same time the world-wide dominance of capital also forced the integration of nations.

“As a result of both aspects, there is an increase in nationalism, both for the oppressed and the oppressors. Thus, there is a dialectic between the bourgeois nationalism of the oppressor and the mass nationalism of the oppressed. Consequently, imperialism is characterized as an era of rising mass national consciousness.”(6)

The people of the dominant nations construct class and gender alliances which use nationalism to advance their class and gender interests within dominant nations at the expense of the people of the subordinate nations. These strategic alliances are mainly two-fold: the alliance of the labor aristocracy and the imperialist bourgeoisie, and the gender alliance between dominant-nation women and dominant-nation men. The people of the subordinate nations, on the other hand, construct class and gender alliances which serve the interests of their nations and attack the foundations of imperialism. Their struggle is the revolutionary nationalist struggle, comprising an alliance of the working masses with the left-wing of the national bourgeoisie and sections of the petit-bourgeoisie, and an alliance between women and left-wing men of each class level in the subordinate nation. In the dominant nations, the bourgeoisie generally leads the class alliance, and the patriarchy leads the national gender alliance. In the oppressed nations, the level of leadership gained by the proletariat (or its ideology) in the national class alliance, and the level of leadership gained by feminism within the national gender alliance, determines the revolutionary potential

of the national liberation struggle. Class and gender struggles thus propel national liberation struggles: the class and gender contradictions between imperialism and the oppressed nations are prioritized over the internal contradictions (and the internal contradictions provide fuel for the fire of the overall movement).

Rather than merely a self-interested grasp at opportunity, then, the Chinese communists' participation in the national war against Japan was specifically internationalist in perspective, as articulated by Mao:

“[O]nly by fighting in defense of the motherland can we defeat the aggressors and achieve national liberation. And only by achieving national liberation will it be possible for the proletariat and other working people to achieve their own emancipation. The victory of China and the defeat of the invading imperialists will help the people of other countries. Thus in wars of national liberation patriotism is applied internationalism.”(7)

Engels said of the workers in Ireland and Poland in 1882 that they had “not only the right but even the duty to be nationalistic ... they are most internationalistic when they are genuinely nationalistic.” Ten years earlier, Engels had argued that Irish workers should have their own national organization, because to ask them to join the British Federal Council would have been an insult.”(8)

And Gómez-Quirón:

“Historically, when the working class has been led by Marxists and the class struggle linked with the national liberation struggle, there has been a progressive revolutionary development. When the two have been separated or driven apart, national aspirations are captured by the bourgeoisie and right-wing petty bourgeoisie, who use them for power and personal advantage.”(9)

Each of these alliances within nations – both dominant and subordinate – is by necessity also contradictory and highly imperfect, but their overall character is one of subordinated contradiction and strategic alliance. At various times their contradictions become antagonistic, which motion yields opportunities for opposing nations to make divisive inroads. The division of the oppressor nations is a revolutionary development, while the division of the oppressed nations represents a setback and loss for the people's struggle against imperialism.

Thus MIM has developed a dual purpose, which includes

on the one hand seeking to divide the dominant American nation by drawing of members of such potentially revolutionary elements as students and young people, and on the other hand developing united Maoist revolutionary leadership for the oppressed nations which stand in opposition to American imperialism.

Notes:

1. Mao Zedong, “On Contradiction,” *Collected Works* Vol. 1 Foreign Languages Press: Peking, 1975, p. 331.
2. Mao Zedong, “On Practice.” in *Selected Readings*, Foreign Languages Press: Peking, 1971, p. 67.
- 3 V.I. Lenin, “The Socialist Revolution and the Right of Nations to Self Determination,” January-February 1916. From *Selected Works*, One Volume Edition. International Publishers: New York, 1971.
4. From the 2nd Congress of the Communist International (1920). In *IBID.*, pp.602-605. Emphasis added.
5. Lenin, op cit. p. 160.
6. Juan Gómez-Quirón, “Critique on the National Question, Self-Determination and Nationalism.” *Latin American Perspectives*, Spring 1982, Issue 33, Vol. IX, No. 2, p. 70.
7. Mao, *Selected Readings*, op cit., p. 140.
8. Ian Cummins, *Marx, Engels and National Movements*. St. Martin's: New York, 1980, p. 104.
9. Gómez-Quirón, op cit., p. 77.

Dominant-Nation Gender Alliance

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from MIM Theory #7

by MC12

In 1906 a Kentucky suffragist wrote that the National American Women's Suffrage Association had,

“always recognized the usefulness of woman suffrage as a counterbalance to the foreign vote, and as a means of legally preserving White supremacy in the South. In the campaign in South Carolina, we ... never hesitated to show that the white women's vote would give supremacy to the white race.”(1)

More than a half-century later, historian Paula Giddings wrote, “As far as many Blacks were concerned , the emergence of the [1960s] women's movement couldn't have been more untimely or irrelevant.”(2) But beyond that, white women's movements have gone directly against the interest of Black women and men alike. The oppressor nation has constructed a gender alliance which parallels the class alliance between the labor aristocracy and bourgeoisie. The alliance is contradictory to be sure, but its character is unity, with strategic suppression of struggle. And it is ultimately led by the patriarchy; since the oppressor-nation women have not opposed “America” itself and joined forces with the oppressed, they have been forced to settle

for their advances at the convenience of their more powerful allies. The oppressor-nation's women's movement has sought equality and unity within the nation, in the process strengthening the nation and its dominance over its subordinates.

Ida Lewis wrote of the rising white women's movement in the 1960s:

“The Women's Liberation Movement is basically a family quarrel between White women and White men. And on general principle, it's not good to get involved in family disputes. Outsiders always get shafted when the dust settles. ... Suppose the Lib movement succeeds. It will follow since white power is the order of the day, that white women will be the first hired, which will still leave black men and women outside.”(3)

And she added, “If we speak of a liberation movement, as a Black woman I view my role from a Black perspective – the role of Black women is to continue the struggle in concert with Black men for the liberation and determination of Blacks.”(4) Kathleen Cleaver, who recognized the ultimate need for all women to fight patriarchy together, nevertheless insisted that, “Because the problems of Black women and the problems of White women are so completely diverse, they cannot possibly be solved in the same type of organization nor met by the same type of activity.”

The National Organization for Women (NOW) burst on the scene immediately following the explosion of the Black Power movement. In fact it was specifically spurred in part by the debates over the 1964 Civil Rights Act. In an attempt to *kill* the bill, one Congressman had moved to include “sex” to the provisions against employment discrimination. The bill passed anyway, and some of NOW's first actions were to gain enforcement of the new sex discrimination clause.”(5) The white women's movement boomed as it fought for better access to jobs for its middle class supporters – many of the same jobs which were the subject of years of Black reformist struggles.

In the summer of 1970, when the media shifted to giving more positive attention to white feminists, with Black revolution the only apparent alternative, a Black women's contingent at an anniversary march for the Nineteenth Amendment was told by a NOW official that their “Hands Off Angela Davis” signs had “nothing to do with women's liberation.” At the time Davis was on the FBI's most wanted list.(6) The spotlight was on NOW – its budgets had increased into the hundreds of thousands of dollars, and it wasn't about to be handicapped by the struggles of the oppressed internal nations. Third World Women's Alliance

leader Frances Beal asked:

“When white women demand from men an equal part of the pie, we say, 'Equal to what?' What makes us think that white women, given equal positions of white men in the system, wouldn't turn around and use their white skin for the same white privileges? This is an economy which favors whites.”(7)

Notes:

1. Quoted in Paula Giddings, *When and Where I Enter: The Impact of Black Women on Race and Sex in America*. Bantam: New York, 1984, pp. 125-26. The most common way for the white suffrage movement to guarantee white supremacy was by backing literacy and other restrictions on new voters. A similar pattern is seen in the fight for universal suffrage for white men years earlier. Those states which in the early 1800s had technically allowed free Blacks to vote simultaneously passed laws granting white men suffrage and barring further voting by Blacks. “Referenda repeatedly proved such regulations hugely popular among whites>” David Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class*. Verso: London, 1991, p. 57.

2. Giddings. Op cit... p. 299. In 1963 Betty Friedan declared: “I never knew a woman, when I was growing up, who used her mind, played her own part in the world, and also loved, and had children.” Ibid.

3. Ibid., pp. 308-9

4. Ibid., p. 309.

5. Ibid., p. 300.

6. Ibid., p. 305.

7. Ibid., p. 308.

The National Bourgeoisie's Role

August 1993
from MIM Theory #7
by MC5

After the question of the labor aristocracy, the most important question in the intersection of nation and class in North America is the question of the bourgeoisie of the oppressed nations. When we back the demands of the oppressed nation proletariat, all supposed “Marxists” will appear to agree. But some want to consider “class” all the time in a one dimensional way. In analyzing the role of the oppressed nation bourgeoisie all the way through the new democratic stage, Maoists see that this is impossible.

“We are exponents of the theory of the transition of the revolution, and not the Trotskyite theory of 'permanent revolution.' We are for the attainment of socialism by going through all the necessary stages of the democratic republic. We are opposed to tailism, but we are also opposed to adventurism and impetuosity. To reject the participation of the bourgeoisie in the revolution on the ground that it can only be temporary and to describe the alliance

with anti-Japanese sections of the bourgeoisie (in a semi-colonial country) as capitulation is a Trotskyite approach, with which we cannot agree. Today such an alliance is in fact a necessary bridge on the way to socialism.”(1)

In North America, where there is little feudalism, the progressive *economic* role of the national bourgeoisie in the Black nation in particular is not worth mentioning – unless of course that economic role is the be the bearers of new social relations which do not reflect national oppression. But we cannot simply reduce the national question away the way the Trotskyists do:

“When imperialism launches a war of aggression against a country, all its various classes, except for some traitors, can temporarily unite in a national war against imperialism. At such a time, the contradiction between imperialism and the country concerned becomes the principal contradiction, while all other contradictions among the various classes of the country... are temporarily relegated to a secondary or subordinate position.”(2)

Mao goes on to speak of conditions in pre-colonized and post-1949 China:

“But in another situation, the contradictions change positions. When imperialism carries on its oppression not by war, but by milder means – political, economic and cultural – the ruling classes in semi-colonial countries capitulate to imperialism, and the two form an alliance for the joint oppression of the masses of the people. At such a time, the masses often resort to civil war against the alliance of imperialism and the feudal classes, while imperialism often employs indirect methods rather than direct action in helping the reactionaries in the semi-colonial countries to oppress the people.”(3)

The oppressed nations of North America were invaded and are still occupied by imperialism. They are not “indirectly” ruled, except perhaps in the case of cities where there are mayors from the oppressed nationality. Even in those cities where there are Black mayors, the cops are often white, as is the general administrative power structure. In such cases, the city area should still be treated as an occupied territory, albeit with some especially famous “traitors” ruling.

While the oppressed nation is under occupation, the national question is principal. Trotskyists only decide which classes are progressive economically and ally with those classes. And for them it is only the working class that is progressive. For Mao

and Maoists, invasion changes the class forces:

“Japanese invasion has altered class relations in China, and it is now possible not only for the petty bourgeoisie but even for the national bourgeoisie to join in the anti-Japanese struggle.”(4)

In fact, during invasion the national contradiction expresses the class contradiction: “To sustain a long war by long-term co-operation or, in other words, to subordinate the class struggle to the present national struggle against Japan – such is the fundamental principle of the united front.”(5)

The national bourgeoisie transforms in invasion because it is threatened with bankruptcy and it prefers to set up a nation that it leads like the most advanced of the industrialized nations. The national bourgeoisie agrees with Mao that after the occupation is defeated, “as to the future of the democratic republic, though it may move in a capitalist direct, the possibility also exists that it will turn towards socialism, and that party of the Chinese proletariat should struggle hard for the latter prospect.”(6)

According to Mao, when the national question is principal, communists must ally with classes representing backward modes of production if they are of any help to the battle against national oppression:

“In order to end the internal armed conflict, the Communist Party is willing to discontinue the policy of forcible confiscation of the land of the landlords and is prepared to solve the land problem by legislative and other appropriate means in the course of building the new democratic republic. The first question to be settled is whether China's land will be owned by the Japanese or by the Chinese. Since the solution of the land problem of the peasants is predicated on the defense of China, it is absolutely necessary for us to turn from the method of forcible confiscation to appropriate new methods.”(7)

In China, the communists allowed the peasants to continue paying rent to landlords during World War II, and did not conduct complete land reform until after 1949.

You won't hear RCP Chairperson Bob Avakian or the Trotskyists address this quotation. They hate it because they hate stages and realistic strategy. If your job is to seize state power and the Japanese have it, then you have to concentrate on that first. The parallel for us in the United States is not landlords but the equally backward (relatively speaking) national bourgeoisie. We do not want a sharp class struggle against the national bourgeoisie. We want the national bourgeoisie to aid with ending the imperialist occupation of North America and the

world.

Beyond temporary with landlords during the battle against Japanese imperialists, Mao was willing to have temporary alliances with non-Japanese imperialists as well. Imperialists, by definition, never have a progressive economic character. They represent the decadent phase of capitalism.

Nevertheless:

“Confronted with Japanese imperialism, the bourgeoisie and the Kuomintang are temporarily forced to seek an ally in the proletariat, just as we are seeking an ally in the bourgeoisie. We should take this as our point of departure in considering the question. Internationally, for a similar reason, the French government has changed from hostility towards the Soviet Union to alliance with it.”(8)

Finally, Mao's party captured Goumindang leader and mass murderer Chiang Kai-shek during the Japanese occupation, Mao and Zhou Enlai ordered the release of this landlord and comprador, embarrassing Chiang's forces into a united front against the Japanese. Chiang Kai-shek promised and delivered a united front against the Japanese, albeit one with impurities.

According to Mao, in world war, life even gets complicated for compradors. During World War II, being a puppet of the Allied imperialists meant having to fight the puppets of the Axis imperialists. That means some compradors came around to friendly relations with the Chinese Communist Party.

“The comprador big bourgeoisie is a class which directly serves the capitalists of the imperialist countries and is nurtured by them; countless ties link it closely with the feudal forces in the countryside. Therefore, it is a target of the Chinese revolution and never in the history of the revolution has it been a motive force.

“However, different sections of the comprador big bourgeoisie owe allegiance to different imperialist powers. ... It becomes possible for the sections of the comprador class which serve other imperialist groupings to join the current anti-imperialist front to a certain extent and for a certain period. But they will turn against the Chinese revolution the moment their masters do.”(9)

This is an important factor that distinguishes the comprador from the national bourgeoisie. As inter-imperialist contradictions develop, compradors may contend or they may collude with other compradors backed by other imperialists. In contrast, the national bourgeoisie never saw any direct benefits from imperialist collusion, because the national bourgeoisie is

not a creation of the imperialists: “it is oppressed by imperialism.”(10)

“The national bourgeoisie in China, which is mainly the middle bourgeoisie, has never really held political power but has been restricted by the reactionary policies of the big landlord class and big bourgeoisie which are in power.”(11)

When there is a socialist bloc or Third World to rob, the imperialists and their compradors may decide to collude, but the national bourgeoisie will not respond to quick changes in imperialist directions the way the comprador class will.

“Is it correct to object to our view on the ground that China's national bourgeoisie is politically and economically flabby, and to argue that it cannot possibly change its attitude in spite of the new circumstances? I think not. If weakness is the reason for its inability to change its attitude, why did the national bourgeoisie behave differently in 1924-7 when it did not merely vacillate towards the revolution but actually joined it? Can one say that the weakness of the national bourgeoisie is a new disease, and not one that accompanies it from the very womb? Can one say that the national bourgeoisie is weak today, but was not weak in 1924-7? One of the chief political and economic characteristics of a semi-colonial country is the weakness of its national bourgeoisie. That is exactly why the imperialists dare to bully them, and it follows that one of their characteristics is dislike of imperialism. Of course, so far from denying it, we fully recognize that it is the very weakness of the national bourgeoisie that may make it easy for the imperialists, landlords and compradors to entice them with the bait of some temporary advantage; hence their lack of revolutionary thoroughness. Nevertheless, it cannot be said that in the present circumstances there is no difference between the national bourgeoisie and the landlord and comprador classes.”(12)

In North America, the Black nation and even the First Nations are not semi-feudal, but they are semi-colonies; hence what Mao says about fighting the occupation and seizing state power applies to their national bourgeoisie(s). A difference in conditions is that the U.S. Imperialists occupied the semi-colonies first and then sought to buy off large fractions of them through integration. Nonetheless, long before the settler labor aristocracy ever experiences a crisis sufficient to upend its sympathies, the occupation will heat up.

In the 1960s, the plurality of Blacks regarded the BPP as their leaders. In such circumstances, the national bourgeoisie has

no choice but to play within that framework. The national bourgeoisie has no special power to avoid the political climate. To get with the people to exploit them, the national bourgeoisie has to play along with proletarian leaders at times. We must expose their maneuvers to keep from getting confused, but we must also ally with them.

Mao also faced the problem of integrationism – the possibility for co-optation of some Chinese by the imperialists. Some anarchists became pro-Japanese government puppet administrators in China. In addition, the Japanese were able to buy off some members of the bourgeoisie. Such economic activity was also a material basis of ultraleftism according to Mao:

“Certain malicious propagandists, deliberately confusing these two distinct revolutionary stages, advocate the so-called theory of a single revolution. ... Their real purpose is to root out all revolution, to oppose a thorough-going bourgeois-democratic revolution and thoroughgoing resistance to Japan and to prepare public opinion for their capitulation to the Japanese aggressors. This is deliberately being fostered by the Japanese imperialists. Since their occupation of Wuhan, they have come to realize that military force alone cannot subjugate China and have therefore resorted to political offensives and economic blandishments. Their political offensives consist in tempting wavering elements in the anti-Japanese camp, splitting the united front and undermining Kuomintang-Communist cooperation. ... In central and southern China the Japanese aggressors are allowing Chinese capitalists to invest 51 per cent of the capital in such enterprises, with Japanese capital making up the other 49 per cent; in northern China they are allowing Chinese capitalists to invest 49 per cent of the capital, with Japanese capital making up the other 51 per cent. ... Some conscienceless capitalists forget all moral principles and itch to have a go. One section, represented by Wang Chin-wei, has already capitulated. Another section lurking in the anti-Japanese camp would also like to cross over. But, with the cowardice of thieves, they fear that the Communists will block their exit and, what is more, that the common people will brand them as traitors. So they have put their heads together and decided to prepare the ground in cultural circles and through the press. Having determined on their policy, they have lost no time in hiring some 'metaphysics-mongers' plus a few Trotskyites, who brandishing their pens like lances, are tilting in all direction and creating bedlam. Hence the whole bag of tricks for deceiving those who do not know what is going on in the world around them – the 'theory of a

single revolution', the tales that communism does not suit national conditions of China, that there is no need for a Communist Party in China ...”(13)

The Chinese who wanted to make money collaborating with the Japanese needed the Trotskyists, because the Trotskyists delegitimized the Communist Party. They said that China was too backward for socialist revolution and that the bourgeoisie could accomplish the same goals as Mao's party. By spreading such nonsense, the Trotskyists were undermining the organization most responsible for resistance to the Japanese.

But on the other hand,

“... there are other people, apparently with no evil intentions, who are misled... they do not understand that our revolution is divided into stages. ... Their approach is likewise very harmful because it confuses the steps to be taken in the revolution and weakens the effort directed towards the current task. It is correct and in accord with the Marxist theory of revolutionary development to say of the two revolutionary stages that the first provides the conditions for the second and that the two must be consecutive, without allowing any intervening stage of bourgeois dictatorship.”(14)

The ultraleft in North America misses that there is an anti-imperialist/anti-militarist stage of revolution. There are occupations to be ended and neocolonial puppets to be dealt with before we know which class owns what within oppressed countries.

Finally,

“The national bourgeoisie is less feudal than the land-lord class and not so comprador as the comprador class. The section having more ties with foreign capital and the Chinese landed interests form the right-wing of the national bourgeoisie; and we shall not, for the moment, consider whether it can change or not. The problem lies with those sections which have few or no such ties. ... On the one hand they dislike imperialism, and on the other they fear thorough revolution, and they vacillate between the two.”(15)

Mao carefully defined the national bourgeoisie as a potential vehicle of change. Even if it only vacillates, it helps us to smash the state in this stage of struggle.

Notes:

1. Mao Zedong, “Win the Masses in Their Millions ...” *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, Foreign Languages Press: Peking, 1975, pp. 290-1.
2. “On Contradiction,” *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, p. 331.

3. Ibid., pp. 331-2.
4. Ibid., p. 268.
5. Mao, "The Question of Independence and Initiative within the United Front: The Identity between the National and The Class Struggle," *Selected Works*, Vol. 2, p. 215.
6. Mao, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, op cit, 275.
7. Ibid., p. 272.
8. Ibid., p. 287.
9. Mao, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2, p. 320.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid., p. 321.
12. Ibid., p. 157.
13. Mao, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2, pp. 358-9.
14. Ibid., p. 360.
15. Ibid., p. 155.

Lenin's Method: Looking at The Labor Aristocracy

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from MIM Theory #7

by MC5

One of the distinguishing features of Trotskyism is its singular lack of concern for concrete analysis. When it comes to the labor aristocracy in the imperialist countries, Trotskyists will recite bits and pieces of Lenin that they remember reading, but they will never undertake any concrete analysis of the actual role of the labor aristocracy relative to the proletariat.

Here we examine Lenin's approach to this question in his day. We learn that he had a keen eye for staying abreast of developments and that he believed that the split in the working class internationally had become more profound in the few years between 1895, when Engels died, and 1916, when the Bolsheviks made speeches on the topic.

Unfortunately, we must undertake this exercise, because an incorrect attitude toward even examining the question has taken over the communist movement in the imperialist countries. At a recent conference of Maoist delegates mostly from the imperialist countries, MIM received a very sharp rebuke, heckling and loud jeering for explaining that the entire Amerikan working class had been bourgeoisified.

Outside the philistine stream in the workers' movement, it should not be possible to find jeering for this position. The position of Engels makes it clear that MIM's position is correct. He wrote to Marx on October 7, 1858:

"The English proletariat is actually becoming more and more bourgeois, so that this most bourgeois of all nations is apparently aiming ultimately at the possession of a bourgeois aristocracy and a bourgeois proletariat alongside the bourgeoisie. For a nation that exploits the

whole world, this is of course to a certain extent justifiable."(1)

Why is it that Engels could say that in 1858 and MIM's position seems out of hand to our supposedly Maoist comrades?

Further, many comrades calling themselves "Maoists" have not yet properly demarcated from the Second International. Here is what Zinoviev had to say while representing Lenin's party and undertaking fierce struggle against the social-chauvinists who backed World War I in 1916:

"These 'little bourgeois' – the labor aristocracy – served the big bourgeoisie as the best means of introducing the bourgeois ideas into the laboring mass. ... The 'little bourgeois' became the most reliable advance guards of the imperialist bourgeoisie in the camp of the working class."(2)

Lenin himself also spoke of "an alliance... between the workers of the given nation and their capitalists against the other countries."(3) Why did our comrades heckle us when we said that there was an alliance between the imperialist country working classes and the imperialists?

Zinoviev on Germany

Many Trotskyists should also note the careful distinction drawn between the 4,000 or more labor "bureaucrats" in Germany, who are union leaders, and the "labor aristocracy," which Lenin and Zinoviev said was also growing and much larger than the labor "bureaucracy." The Trotskyists, and other would-be perpetrators of international apartheid unity of imperialists and their working classes, are always begging for one more chance to use oppressed nationality workers for their benefit. They keep saying that the Euro-Amerikan workers have "false consciousness" because of their "bureaucrat" leaders, but if you just give the Euro-Amerikan workers one more chance, they will come around to revolution.

But Zinoviev and Lenin disagreed with today's Trotskyists, neo-Trotskyists and crypto-Trotskyists. Zinoviev in 1916 said, "We do not at all wish to contend that the entire crisis can be explained by the treachery of the leaders. The treachery of the leaders in itself can only be explained by more profound causes inherent in this period."(4) There is nothing like a world war to clarify who the fakers in the socialist movement are. Too bad many comrades today still haven't learned their lesson on the Second International.

As for the obsession with size of parties instead of quality of political line that is also common today, Zinoviev again took the

appropriate view: “Better twenty deputies who are really Socialists than a hundred deputies of whom half are still deeply immersed in the petty bourgeoisie.”(5) When it came time for World War I, the communists learned a priceless lesson: the vast majority of those claiming to be socialist sided with their governments in the war. It was a simple choice: sizeism or opposition to imperialism's mass carnage. To have large membership numbers at the beginning of World War I, it was necessary to support the war for colonies. Lenin and Zinoviev drew the proper conclusions about membership size.

Even in Germany, where colonialism was not yet deeply developed in 1916 relative to its state in England or the United States or later Germany, Zinoviev and Lenin had some remarkable things to say. According to Zinoviev, “The predominant mass of the membership of the Social Democratic organization consists of the better-paid strata of labor – of those strata from which the greatest section of the labor aristocracy arises.” According to Zinoviev, the socialists of the Second International, the Social-Democrats, were not more than 15% proletarian in Germany. A huge portion of the population was hence labor aristocracy, judging merely from the number of Social-Democrat voters on which Zinoviev got figures.

What is more shocking is the extent of the petit-bourgeoisie in Germany: “Even in Germany's biggest cities, in the chief fortresses of the Social Democracy, more than a third of its voters do not belong to the working class but to the bourgeoisie. To the petty-bourgeoisie, for the greatest part... but in any case, to the bourgeoisie.”(6)

According to Zinoviev, the German Social-Democrats were a majority workers, but only a small minority was proletarian. Later at the Fourth Congress of the COMINTERN Zinoviev succeeded in obtaining unanimous approval for a thesis distinguishing workers' governments from proletarian dictatorships. At root was the distinction between labor aristocracy workers and proletarians.

LENIN & MIM ON THE EXPANDING LABOR ARISTOCRACY

Unlike dogmatists today who wink at the labor aristocracy and ignore an analysis of today's conditions, Lenin kept himself up to date on the relevant facts and figures. In one edition of his pamphlet “Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism,” he cited a figure of 5 to 8 billion francs a year in superprofits in the imperialist countries – the United States, England, France and Germany. In later editions he just said 8 billion francs. According to Lenin, a “Great Power” typically spent a billion

francs a year bribing its workers.(7) Today when communications and economic statistics are more thorough and advanced, the apologists for the labor aristocracy have much less excuse for knowing less than Lenin did about such matters.

Unlike lazy dogmatists stuck in a certain section of Capital, vol.1, which refers to only one case of class relations that Marx sought to describe, Lenin very carefully made an historical analysis:

“Between 1848 and 1868, and to a certain extent later, only England enjoyed a monopoly: that is why opportunism could prevail there for decades. No other countries possessed either very rich colonies or an industrial monopoly.

“The last third of the nineteenth century saw the transition to the new imperialist era. Finance capital not of one, but of several, though very few, Great Powers enjoys a monopoly. ... This difference explains why England's monopoly position could remain unchallenged for decades. The monopoly of modern finance capital is being frantically challenged; the era of imperialist wars has begun. ... [now] every imperialist 'Great' Power can and does bribe smaller strata (than in England 1848-1868) of the “labour aristocracy.”(8)

Zinoviev likewise spoke for the party when he said, “Until very recently the question of the labor aristocracy and its conservative role in the labor movement has been treated as a problem almost unique to the British labor movement. The epoch of modern imperialism and the events in the labor movement of the entire world in connection with the World War have posed this question on a much wider scale. It has become one of the most basic questions of the labor movement as a whole.”(9) If that's what Lenin's party was saying in 1916, why isn't it one of the most basic questions today? Has there been any less monopolization by the imperialist powers? Of course not. There has in fact been increasing penetration of imperialism throughout the world.

The most important thing that we can get from this last Zinoviev quotation is a sense of the attitude toward method from the Bolsheviks at the time. According to Zinoviev things had changed “very recently.” Zinoviev and Lenin did not fear to change what Engels said. They pointed out the spread of the labor aristocracy throughout the imperialist world. This should prove to our comrades everywhere that they must undertake a current analysis of the size of the labor aristocracy and petit-bourgeoisie relative to the proletariat. We ask our fraternal parties to adopt the principles in this document from Lenin and

Zinoviev as their own, and at the very least join MIM in declaring the necessity of studying the labor aristocracy question. We do not think it will take long for our comrades to see that there is no proletarian class within the imperialist nations, only the bourgeoisified labor aristocracy.

Notes:

1. V. I. Lenin, "Imperialism and the Split in Socialism," John Riddell ed., *Lenin's Struggle for a Revolutionary International*, Monad Press: New York, 1984, p. 488.
2. Gregory Zinoviev, "The Social Roots of Opportunism," in John Riddell ed., *Lenin's Struggle for a Revolutionary International*, Monad Press: New York, 1984, p. 488.
3. Ibid., p. 499-500.
4. Ibid., p. 486.
5. Ibid., p. 480.
6. Ibid., pp. 477-8.
7. Ibid., pp. 497, 500.
8. Ibid., pp. 500-1.
9. Ibid., pp. 486-7.

Defining and Measuring the Lumpen Class in the United States: A Preliminary Analysis

MIM(Prisons) July 2016

MIM(Prisons) began to draft a book on the lumpen class a few years ago. We found a gap in the theoretical material on this subject and realized that our observations about this class are a unique contribution to Marxist theory. A lot of research was done, particularly on defining the lumpen class within U.S. borders, but due to competing projects and limited time, the book was put on hold. We began distributing the chapter with our research in draft form, but are not yet close to completing the book, nor do we currently have the funds or resources to print another book. As a result, we are turning to the pages of *Under Lock & Key* to sum up some of our key findings and further develop and apply our theory of the First World lumpen. This article is just a summary of the more extensive pamphlet on the lumpen class which is available from MIM(Prisons) upon request for, \$5 or equivalent work trade.

U Can't Sell Dope Forever

"Power is the ability to define a phenomenon and make it act in a desired manner." - Huey P. Newton

Marxist socialism is based in the idea that humans, as a group, can take charge of the natural and economic laws that determine their ability to meet their material needs. Taking charge does not mean that they can decide these laws, but that they can utilize them. In doing so they develop a scientific

understanding of the world around them.

Under capitalism, the anarchy of production is the general rule. This is because capitalists only concern themselves with profit, while production and consumption of human needs is at the whim of the economic laws of capitalism. As a result people starve, wars are fought and the environment is degraded in ways that make human life more difficult or even impossible. Another result is that whole groups of people are excluded from the production system. Whereas in pre-class societies, a group of humans could produce the basic food and shelter that they needed to survive, capitalism is unique in keeping large groups of people from doing so.

In the industrialized countries like the United States, the culture and structure of society has eliminated opportunities and knowledge to be self-sufficient. Production is done socially instead. Simplistically this might look like: one company produces bread, another produces shoes, and everyone working for each company gets paid and uses their pay to buy things from the other companies. Everyone gets what they need by being a productive member of the larger society.

The problem is that there are not enough jobs. At first this might seem like a good thing. We are so advanced that we can get all the work done for the whole group with only a portion of those people having to work. But under capitalism, if you're not in an exploiter class, not working means you do not get a share of the collective product. So when whole groups are not able to get jobs, they must find other ways of getting the goods that they need to survive. And we all know various ways that people do this.

So first capitalism has separated people from their need to provide everything for themselves. In doing so the capitalists alienate the worker from their product, because it becomes the property of the capitalist. But those without jobs are also alienated from the whole production process. People often turn to the illegal service economy of selling drugs or sexual favors, or robbing and fencing stolen goods. Many also turn to the state for social services to get a distribution of the social product, without participating in production.

All of these solutions are even more alienating than working for the capitalists. Being a shoemaker or a baker are productive tasks that people can find pleasure in, even if they do not have a say in how the product of their labor is then distributed. Given the option, people generally don't want to poison their community, deal with the threat of violence every day, sell their body, steal from people or even take handouts without being able to participate in producing. All of these endeavors require

the individual to justify actions that they know are wrong, to dehumanize other people and themselves, and to just live under a lot of stress.

These activities, and the justifications that come with them, contribute to what then becomes the consciousness of this group of people excluded from the economy. Marx wrote about the alienation of the proletariat resulting from them not having a say in how the product of their labor is utilized. But there is a deeper level of alienation among the lumpen in that they must alienate themselves from other human beings, even those who are in similar situations to themselves. Capitalism promotes a dog-eat-dog mentality that is alienating for all people because we are encouraged to look out for ourselves and not trust others. But this is most pronounced for the lumpen, who are in turn demonized for their disregard for other people.

The demonization that the lumpen faces by the rest of society is one reason that none of these endeavors have futures. You can't sell dope forever. You certainly can't be a prostitute forever. Robbing and scamming is dangerous to say the least. And there are strong policies today to keep people from being on public assistance for too long. So there is a strong interest among the lumpen class to choose another path, one that addresses the alienation and lack of control they have over their own lives, including a limited ability to meet their own needs.

While we recognize that the leading force for revolution is the proletariat, our analysis clearly shows that the proletariat is virtually non-existent within U.S. borders, limited primarily to the small migrant worker population. The predominance of the labor aristocracy within imperialist countries today makes the lumpen a more important element than in times and places where the proletariat is the overwhelming majority. Just as Mao had to apply Marx's analysis to Chinese conditions and understand the key role the peasantry plays in revolution in countries where that group is large, we must apply dialectical materialist analysis to the world today to understand the role that will be played by each significant class in American society.

The lumpen are a more important class in imperialist society today than in the past, and as a result we must identify those who fall in this group and analyze whether they are friends or enemies of the revolution. This essay attempts to identify the lumpen in the United States by looking at several potential indicators of economic and social position in society.

First World vs. Third World lumpen

The lumpen is defined as being excluded from the capitalist system; excluded from production and consumption. Of course,

everyone must consume to survive, and the lumpen lives on as a class. But their consumption is outside the realm of capitalist relations. The lumpen must take from others what it needs to survive. And in an exploited country the lumpen takes from working people, the petty bourgeoisie and other lumpen who surround them. It is much harder and therefore more rare to take from the bourgeoisie, so the bourgeoisie doesn't much care that the lumpen exist. The lumpen in the Third World is a parasite class, but primarily a parasite on the masses of the oppressed nations.

In the United States, we have no significant proletariat, so the lumpen class must be a parasite on the petty bourgeoisie. Historically that petty bourgeoisie has been white, while the lumpen have been concentrated in the New Afrikan ghettos, the reservations of First Nations, and the inner city oppressed communities in general. The national contradiction meant that the lumpen posed a threat to the stability of the country.

The history of social services in the United States comes from the Great Depression of the 1930s. As socialism and fascism were expanding to address the problems created by the anarchy of production, U.S. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt had to take drastic measures to preserve bourgeois democracy. The New Deal recovery program was that measure. It brought a system of social safety nets that live on to this day, though they were reformed and reduced starting in the 1980s with the Reagan administration.

This system allowed the emerging lumpen class to participate in the system of distribution and consumption without participating in production. They could do so in a way that was less precarious, less dangerous and better paying than their counterparts in the Third World. In addition to the federal government's services, there is infrastructure in the First World to provide clean water and sanitation to people of all classes. There is rampant overconsumption and waste that makes acquiring basic needs like food and clothing a snap, and there is enough wealth in the country that many non-governmental organizations can fund their own programs to provide food and other materials and services to those in need. For all these reasons, the First World lumpen are a qualitatively different class than the Third World lumpen proletariat in that they do benefit from living in an imperialist country.

Some claiming Marxism tell us that those we call lumpen are really part of the proletariat; they are just part of the reserve army of labor that Marx talked about being necessary to keep wages down among the workers that were employed via competition. But as has been demonstrated, there is no significant proletariat in the United States (request our Labor

Aristocracy study pack for more on this topic). And while there is a contradiction between employers and employees over wages, this has not been an antagonistic contradiction in post-WWII U.S.A.

To the extent that there is a proletariat in this country, they are migrant workers. And therefore the reserve army of labor is found south of the Rio Grande and elsewhere in the Third World.

The First World lumpen are the remnants of a long history of national oppression. The question that they face is whether the oppressor nation is willing and able to continue to integrate them into the Amerikan petty bourgeoisie, or if racism and economic crisis will lead to an increased lumpenization of the internal semi-colonies as Amerika pushes its problems off on them.

The white nation in North America has always been a predominately petty bourgeois nation. Therefore petty bourgeois class consciousness is overwhelmingly dominant among white people of all classes. Where there is potential for revolutionary white lumpen, it will be more common when in close proximity or integrated with oppressed nation lumpen. And these will be the exception to the rule. It is for this reason that we say the principal contradiction is nation in the United States, while spending much time discussing and addressing the lumpen class.

Therefore, in the analysis that follows, we will be defining the First World lumpen as a distinct class that is only evident in the United States within the oppressed nations.

Contemporary Class Analysis

In the last few decades we can already point to an expanding prison population, and the cutting of welfare roles, without an increase in employment, as some evidence to support lumpenization at the margins. As expected, this lumpenization has been disproportionately suffered by the oppressed nations. To the extent that whites have lost (or will lose) their class status, this concerns us as a likely trigger for growing fascist currents in Amerikkka, due to their historical consciousness as a settler nation and more recently as the most powerful

nation on the planet. As we get into the numbers below, we'll see that the white "lumpen" population could arguably outnumber that in the internal semi-colonies. But percentage-wise they are a smaller minority within their nation, and their national identity pulls them much more strongly towards fascism. For this reason, we will disregard poor whites in most of the analysis below. Of course there are exceptions to every rule. And in particular, among youth and where poor whites are more influenced by oppressed nation culture there could certainly be some splits in the white nation.

While we have not seen a massive de-linking of the exploited populations, the internal contradictions of imperialism have brought significant economic downturns in recent years. In 2009 there was a steep rise in the percent of long-term unemployed (greater than 26 weeks), which has not yet declined significantly. It has hovered around 40 and 45% of all unemployed people; this is about double other high points dating back to 1960. [As of June 2016, over the 3 years since the original writing, this figure has declined to around 25%, which is still higher than the 17-18% rates that were normal before 2008.] While this could be a sign of a growing de-classed population, the U.S. economy is so rich that this unemployment has only resulted in modest increases in poverty rates.

Yet, even in the recent recession, government-defined poverty rates have not yet reached the levels they were at prior to 1965 when they were around 20%, give or take. In 2011 the



poverty rate was recorded as 15%. Even this rate is inflated since assistance in the form of tax credits and food stamps is not counted as taxable income. If this income was included in their calculations it would pull 9.6 million people above the poverty line and bring the percent below the poverty rate to less than 12%.(1) So it is only a small group at the margins that may be seeing a shift in their material conditions such that they could arguably be seen as not largely benefiting from imperialism.

In order to paint a clearer picture of who is in the First World lumpen class, the following sections look at the empirical evidence both historically and today to figure out where to draw the line between lumpen and petty bourgeoisie within the United States. Above we defined the lumpen class as those who are excluded from the production and distribution of goods under capitalism. If you translate this into U.S. census statistics, this group would fall into those who are not participants in the civilian labor force.

Lumpen Defined by Employment Status

Employment is counted as working at least 1 hour of paid time, 15 hours of unpaid time in a family business, or being off of work (such as vacation or maternity leave) during the week referenced. The civilian labor force includes everyone defined as employed or unemployed (looking for work). Therefore the lumpen would be found in the group that is outside the civilian labor force. In the following graph we can see that this excluded group has grown in size only slightly since 1960, whereas the labor force has grown much more.(2)

Not everyone in the middle group in this figure is part of what we would consider the lumpen. We have subtracted out housewives, students, and the elderly (detailed calculations for this subtraction are included in the full pamphlet).

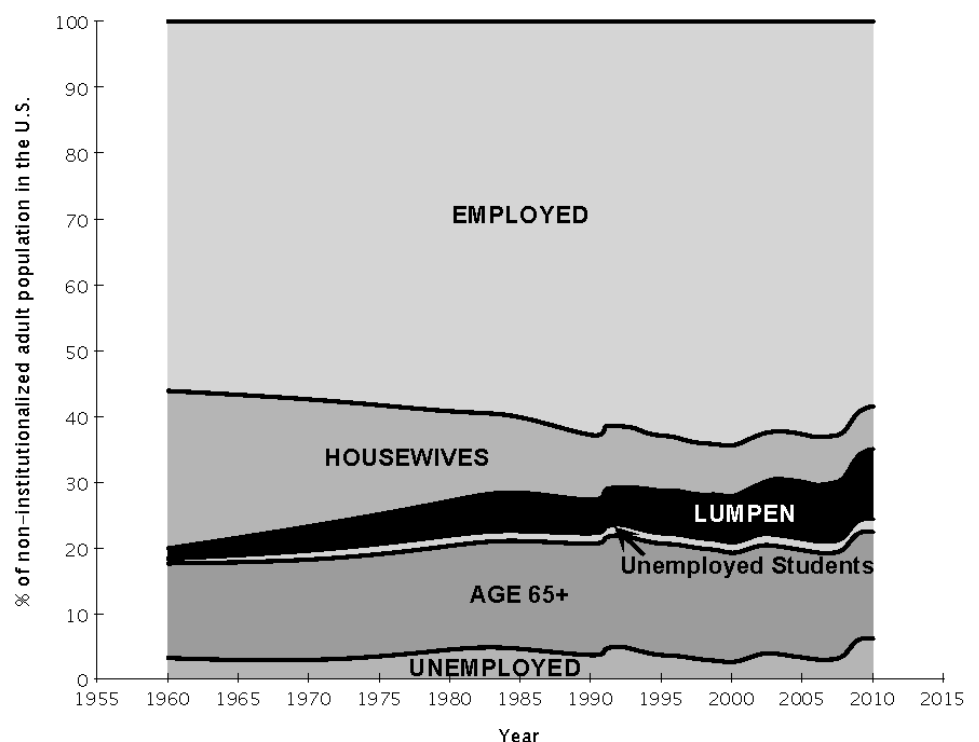
In this graph we see the biggest changes being the increase in the lumpen (from 1.5% in 1960 to 10.6% in 2010) and the decrease in the housewives category. While this is completely feasible, the direct relationship between these two groups in the way we did the calculation leaves us cautious in making any conclusions from this method alone. In order to confirm that our big picture

estimate of the lumpen here is in the ballpark we will look at this a couple of other ways, including trying to break down the lumpen via its constituent parts to see how they add up.

Also, keep in mind that we are concerned with the oppressed nation lumpen as a progressive force for national liberation struggles. The above method does not differentiate between nations, and we can assume that somewhere around half of that 10.6% is white Americans.

Gaps in employment rates between New Afrikan males and white males are quite large, and they have increased over the period of 1970-2010. Further, the unemployment rate does not include those in prison or those on public assistance programs. So when "unemployment" rates are reported as being twice as big as for New Afrikans compared to whites, this is an understatement because those rates are only calculated on the civilian labor force who is looking for work. Austan Goolsbee, former economic advisor to U.S. President Barack Obama has stated that since the mid-1980s "the government has cooked the books" on unemployment rates "because government programs, especially Social Security disability, have effectively been buying people off the unemployment rolls and reclassifying them as not 'in the labor force.'"(3) This is a prime example of what we call the First World lumpen.

From this analysis of employment status we conclude that the 10.6% of the population that is unemployed and not housewives, students or elderly is principally lumpen. Conservatively we can assume that whites as 65% of the



population are that same portion of the lumpen. This means that the oppressed nation lumpen defined by employment status constitutes about 10% of the oppressed nation population.

Lumpen Defined by Income

One thing that jumps out when looking at income data is the difference between individual income levels and household incomes. Some 39% of households had two or more income earners in 2010, so that over 20% of households made six figure incomes, while only 6.61% of individuals did.

Because individuals do tend to live in small group households, we will mostly look at that data below. Another thing that such an approach captures is the difficulties faced by many single-parent households. Single-parent households are the exception in that they do not benefit financially from having many members in their house because one earner must provide for many people. While this is very doable on a labor aristocracy wage, the demands of child-care and also keeping a job make it difficult for many single mothers who end up on public assistance. As a result there is a strong gendered component of the poor and lumpen that we will look at more below.

Before jumping into the numbers, let's look at the definition of employed. While some in the unemployed group (defined as those who have been looking for work) may fall into the lumpen class, probably even more in the employed group do, seeing that you only have to get paid for one hour of labor per week to be considered employed. Those who are marginally employed, but are dependent on public assistance or the criminal underground to meet their needs, might reasonably be considered part of the First World lumpen class, especially in the context of the oppressed nation ghettos, barrios and reservations.

Here are some numbers to keep in mind as we look at income levels. A person working full-time for minimum wage will make at least \$14,000 per year, depending on the state they work in. An estimate of average value produced per hour is between \$3 and \$5 based on global GDP and global workforce. (4) At that rate, working 40 hours a week year-round, one would produce almost \$10,000 per year, which may be a good cut off point for saying whether a full-time worker is making more or less than the value of their labor.

From this we can assume that a person earning \$14k or more is participating full time or nearly full time in the labor force. They are, therefore, not a candidate for the lumpen. Since wages for Amerikan citizens are all above the global average wage, any legally employed worker will be making more than the value of their labor. Those making less than \$14,000 per year will be in 3

main categories: part-time employed youth, migrants making proletarian or semi-proletarian wages, or marginally employed people who depend on public assistance and other sources of income.

Around 30% of those with an income, and over age 15, were under the \$15,000 per year mark in 2010, while 15% were under \$10,000 per year.(5) This excludes people with no income, especially youth under working age who are a special case. But it includes people who are part of households with others who also have incomes. For example, a housewife who works one day a week for extra income and has a husband who makes \$50,000 a year could be in this group. But this 15% gives us one more reference point to think about when estimating the First World lumpen.

Almost 50% of those earning at or below minimum wage are 16 to 24 years old, and 23% are just 16 to 19 years old.(6) This is a case where we would not necessarily see income defining class status. Most of these youth know that they are likely to make more money when they get older by looking at the adults around them. To eliminate the effect of these temporarily low-paid youth, who are still making more than the value of their labor, we will now look at household income and break it down by nationality.

Quintiles break up a population into five different equal-sized groups defined by a range, such as income level. Looking at the lowest quintiles of the population in terms of income is one way to tease out the size and composition of the lumpen. The average income of the lowest quintile is dramatically different between whites and New Afrikans/Latin@s with the poorest whites earning more than double the poorest New Afrikans/Latin@s.

Income for lowest quintile of earners in the U.\$, 2011

Race	Upper limit of lowest quintile	Avg income, lowest quintile
New Afrikan	\$15,996	\$7,816
white	\$33,514	\$19,887
"Hispanic"	\$18,944	\$9,821

(7) *The upper limit of income for the lowest quintile shows further these differences by nation, but also suggests that quintiles alone are not sufficient to define the lumpen as the upper limit of the lowest 20% of New Afrikans (the lowest earning of the nations) is still \$16k per year, a solid labor aristocracy income at an \$8/hr full time job.*

One problem with just looking at income in defining lumpen is that it may be a temporary state of someone being in a low

income group. Youth definitely fall in this category. Some older folks who are retired, who are clearly not lumpen, also fall in this category. Among the 20-55 age group there are good reasons why some people have temporarily lower income but still are part of the labor aristocracy, such as short-term unemployment.

Family Income by Race

Income	Numbers in 1000s			Percent		
	white	New Afrikan	"Hispanic"	white	New Afrikan	"Hispanic"
Under \$2,500	680	409	308	1.2	4.4	3.0
\$2,500 to \$4,999	273	152	146	0.5	1.6	1.4
\$5,000 to \$7,499	382	180	197	0.7	1.9	1.9
\$7,500 to \$9,999	525	321	264	1.0	3.4	2.5
\$10,000 to \$12,499	664	319	362	1.2	3.4	3.5
\$12,500 to \$14,999	658	301	311	1.2	3.2	3.0

(8) This table shows that a relatively small percent of families are earning less than \$10k annually: 3.4% of whites, 11.3% of New Afrikans and 8.8% of Latin@s. This table includes those not participating in the workforce since it is at the family level and so should be counting non-working spouses and children among others.

Clearly there are significant differences between single individuals earning \$10,000 per year and a head of household with 4 children earning that same income. Looking at income by size of household gives us more detail on the total economic situation of a family. And we can use this data to calculate the maximum possible income per persyn for each group. This underscores the dramatic difference in financial situations faced by families based on the number of kids they have. We might use this data to create cut-offs for families whose kids are falling in the lumpen. While parents earning minimum wage and working close to full time are not part of the lumpen by definition, their income puts their kids basically outside of traditional economic financial participation and likely on the streets hustling for extra cash.

Again, the First World lumpen are not dying of starvation or water-born diseases that the Third World masses face. But they do suffer malnutrition, temporary states of lacking housing, water or electrical service, and exposure to environmental pollutants that most Amerikans do not have to deal with. And youth growing up in a family with a total income of less than \$20,000 provides a standard of living relatively outside of the economic participation of the majority of Amerikans. An

average of \$5k per persyn per year in a family of 4 may provide for survival needs but nothing beyond that. In this country, youth who can not find a job to supplement their family's income are likely to end up on the streets working outside of the traditional labor force, as a part of the lumpen. This data suggests that children of the lowest 15-20% of oppressed nation workers are good candidates for lumpen who may work their way out into the labor aristocracy as they get older.

Included in the calculations above are individuals making minimum wage or above at a full-time job, so we discard the two highest income categories for single people and, just to be conservative, the highest income level for 2 people. Using the rest of the categories to define either lumpen or migrant proletarian households, we get the following summary table.

Lumpen or Migrant Proletarian Families Defined by Income Categories

	New Afrikan	white	Latin@
# of families	3489	11,220	2596
% of nation	22%	13%	17%
% of nation <\$10/family	16%	5%	10%

(9)

We do an additional calculation for only families making less than \$10k per year, since one full-time worker making \$10k would be making above our value of labor estimate. While at both levels, there are more white families than other nations, the rates are obviously higher for New Afrikans and Latin@s. The migrant proletariat population is of course much larger in the Latin@ category. So we could say that the New Afrikan lumpen defined by income is around 20% of the population, even though the maximum for the lowest quintile was given as \$16,000/ year above. One report puts the migrant workers earning less than minimum wage in 2002 at 2 million people. (10) With some 80% of immigrants in the U.S. coming from Latin America and just 2.5 million Latin@ families in these low-wage categories above, it would seem that the Latin@ poor were dominated by working immigrant families and not lumpen. If true, this is one reason nation-specific parties are needed to lead the revolutionary movements in the different oppressed nations. The class content and interests of the lowest quintile of Latin@s and New Afrikans may look similar based on income level, but have very different relations to the means of production and to other nations.

Summing up the income data for defining the lumpen population, we can conservatively use the cut off of \$10k/year for family income to say that 16% of New Afrikan families are lumpen and 10% of Latin@ families are lumpen or migrant

proletarian. Further, youth in families earning less than \$5k per persyn fall in the lumpen even though their parents are still working full time and are not part of the lumpen. That is the children of the lowest 10-15% of oppressed nation workers. So conservatively we can say between 15-20% of New Afrikan families are lumpen and between 10-15% of Raza are lumpen or migrant proletarian.

Lumpen defined by education level

There is a strong connection between educational background and what people end up earning financially later in life. There is a clear linear association between higher degrees attained and higher earnings. We do not care so much about the distinction between college graduates and those with advanced degrees, as this is the difference between levels of labor aristocracy, petty bourgeois and bourgeois income (all enemy classes). What is potentially interesting to a study of the lumpen in the United States is the population not even graduating from high school. Those without a high school degree earn significantly less than people who complete high school or college, and this group includes a much higher proportion of people who earn little to no money from legal employment. Therefore we look to educational attainment as a good candidate for a proxy to measure socioeconomic status in the United States.

Looking at educational achievement by nationality, we see that youth not getting a high school degree are disproportionately New Afrikan and Raza. Further, looking at unemployment rates for those without a high school diploma by nationality reveals interesting differences. New Afrikans who did not complete high school had a 22.5% unemployment rate compared with whites at 13.9% and Raza at 13.2%. The rate of employment among Raza probably reflects the large migrant population working low paying jobs such as farm workers, who are fully employed but earning very little.

As discussed above, while the unemployed may be part of the lumpen, this population includes some who are temporarily out of work but are actually participating in the workforce overall as part of the petty bourgeoisie. In addition, these statistics are only collected on people who are considered to be part of the labor force.

Combining income with education level reveals significant differences between whites and oppressed nations. However, the mean earnings for those without a high school diploma are not so low that we can lump everyone without a high school degree into the lumpen, even among oppressed nations.(11)

Gender	Race	Mean Income
Male	white	\$22,353
Female	white	\$15,187
Male	New Afrikan	\$18,936
Female	New Afrikan	\$15,644
Male	"Hispanic"	\$21,588
Female	"Hispanic"	\$16,170

These numbers reinforce the theory that lack of a high school diploma in and of itself does not define the lumpen. There are plenty of people entering the ranks of the labor aristocracy without much education, pulling the average income for this group up into the labor aristocracy range. It appears that there is a split among high school dropouts where some are able to join the labor aristocracy and others are pulled down into the lumpen.

MIM has argued that youth are the most revolutionary group among the white nation because of their special status outside of the class to which they were born and because of the way that capitalist society puts youth in a position of disempowerment. A key to the labor aristocracy's attitude as a class is the fact that individuals who may not be making much money at the moment can look around at their peers and see that they should anticipate improving their position. This is especially true for whites. Oppressed nation youth without a high school diploma, on the other hand, receive a mixed message. They look at their peers of their age group and see that they truly can not expect to get a job any time soon. On the other hand they can look at older folks around them and see a large percent having joined the labor aristocracy. This may result in a split in the oppressed nations by age where youth are part of the lumpen class for a period of time but eventually are pulled into the labor aristocracy by the wealth and decadence of imperialist society, even if they exist at the low end of the labor aristocracy. [See "Age as Gender: The Third Strand Shaping the Oppressed Nation Lumpen" for more on this.]

The education analysis doesn't give us a definitive calculation of the lumpen but we can conclude that a sizable portion of the group with no GED or high school degree is part of the lumpen, and this group is 15% of New Afrikans and 35.7% of Raza. These numbers will overlap with unemployment and family income numbers as many people will fall into all three groups.

What About First Nations?

The First Nation populations within the United States remain decimated from the history of settler genocide and continued

oppression. As a result, the native people of this land, not including Chican@s, is less than 1% of the total population. An estimated one third of them live on reservations, totaling about 700,000 people.

Despite their decimation, First Nations tend to have a greater consciousness as nations separate from Amerika with rights to their own land, compared to the oppressed nations in the United States as a whole. And there remain concentrations of the indigenous population in certain regions that provide a base for significant resistance. On a number of these larger reservations, the percentage of families with incomes less than \$3000 per persyn ranges between 15 and 25%. For New Afrikans as a whole that figure was 10%, though in regions such as south central Los Angeles it may be similar to First Nations.

Similarly, labor force participation rates on many of the larger reservations are lower than the average for other nations in the United States by as much as 23%. In San Carlos Indian Reservation 31% of people were receiving cash assistance in 2000, about 15 times the average for the country. About 34% received food stamps. Five of the ten largest reservations had almost a third of the population on food stamps and six had at least 15% receiving cash assistance.

One disadvantage that First Nations face on reservations is the lack of infrastructure benefits that virtually everyone else in the United States enjoys, which factors into our class position and perspective in this country. On reservations 14% of homes lack electricity, 18% lack adequate sewage, 18% lack complete kitchen facilities, and 20% lack indoor plumbing. These are unique conditions that First Nation vanguards must address that will not be of concern for the general U.\$. population.

We present these numbers separately because the First Nation population is so much smaller than the other nations we focus on here, and because data on people living on reservations overall is not very complete.(12)

Groups within the Lumpen

Above we looked at employment status, education level and income to estimate the size of the lumpen class in the United States. A third approach is to look at the individual groups that make up the lumpen class as a whole. The main categories of people we will discuss below are the population that is imprisoned and under correctional supervision, the homeless, those dependent on public assistance and those involved in the underground economy.

1) Lumpen in prison and under correctional supervision

The imprisoned population is one segment of the lumpen

that is excluded from the methods previously discussed since they are part of the "institutionalized population" in the U.S. Census data. For that reason, we might think that the above calculation underestimates the size, as well as the growth, of the lumpen class in the United States.

In 2011, there were 6.98 million adults under the supervision of the state via imprisonment, probation or parole, in the United States. This was 2.9% of the overall population, with just those in prison being slightly less than 1%. The overall percentage increased at a decreasing rate between 1980 and 2008.(13).

Focusing on the oppressed nations, over 3% of New Afrikan men are in prison. That number is about 1.3% for Latin@s, and less than 0.5% for whites. Rates for First Nations were not given in this report, but tend to be even higher than those for New Afrikans. If we extrapolate imprisonment statistics to all adults under supervision, we get about 8.7% of New Afrikan men and 3.8% of Raza men under some form of state supervision. With recidivism rates as high as they are, we are comfortable saying that those 1 million Raza men and 1.6 million New Afrikan men are part of the lumpen class. The same calculations put around 56,000 Raza wimmin and 73,000 New Afrikan wimmin in this group, plus a significant, but uncertain number of First Nation and Asian lumpen under state supervision. As a result, we suggest that 2.5 million is a safe estimate of those who'd fall in the group of imprisoned/formerly imprisoned lumpen, excluding whites. This would add less than one percentage point of the overall U.\$. population to our total, but would include another 4.5% of New Afrikans and another 4% of Raza. Note that these numbers can't be added to the totals from the unemployed or income-based lumpen groups above because those out of prison will overlap greatly with this group.

White men in this group number about 1.3 million, but are much more likely to find employment and join the labor aristocracy after release from prison. While in prison white men do fall into the lumpen class but lack the oppressed nation outlook and so often join white supremacist groups rather than supporting revolutionary organizing. This is just one factor contributing to a national outlook that leads us to exclude whites overall when discussing the revolutionary potential of the First World lumpen.

On any given day, nearly 23 percent of all young New Afrikan men ages 16 to 24 who have dropped out of high school are in jail, prison, or a juvenile justice institution in the United States.(14) So there is a significant overlap between those without a high school diploma and the prison population. This reinforces the lack of a high school degree as an indicator of the lumpen, but as we showed above, it's not sufficient alone to

identify the lumpen as plenty of labor aristocracy people come from this group as well.

2) Underground Economy

The underground economy parallels the legal economy, and has a parallel class structure. While the economy is capitalist and therefore dominated by bourgeois ideology, the majority of the people in this economy could be considered part of the First World lumpen in that they live at the margins, often with a parasitic relationship to the greater economy. While all communities have people who work "off the books," just as they all have drug dealers, there is a qualitative difference between communities where that is the exception and where that is the rule.

We divide the underground economy into the following categories:

- a. illegal national bourgeoisie in drugs
- b. illegal labor aristocracy
- c. parasitic hustlers (thieves, scammers, pimps)
- d. illegal service workers (prostitutes, corner boys)
- e. small-time service workers (food prep, car repair, reselling)

Mao saw the national bourgeoisie as a class that can be an ally in the anti-imperialist war, but cannot liberate the nation itself. Due to the parasitic class nature of the internal semi-colonies in the United States today, we do not see the traditional Black and Brown bourgeoisie playing this role. Instead they are some hybrid of petty bourgeoisie and comprador bourgeoisie economically benefitting from the empire. Where we see a parallel to the national bourgeoisie of the exploited nations is among the marginally employed and illegally employed lumpen who rise within the illegal economy. Just as Mao's national bourgeoisie was disadvantaged by imperialist control of their nation, it is the lumpen alone that is excluded from participating in the spoils of empire as the majority of oppressed nationals within U.S. borders do today. And when they do tap into those spoils through illegal enterprises, they remain in a precarious position.

The underground economy includes many small-time service workers who provide food preparation, car repair, vendor and small maintenance services in oppressed communities. The work performed is no different than any other service worker in the legal economy, but their work is usually irregular in such a way that they are part of an underclass that we consider close to the lumpen as they are excluded from the legal economy.

The illegal economy can be looked at separately from the service workers providing legal services off the books. The

illegal economy is where we find those traditionally considered the lumpen. It would include the obviously-parasitic hustlers who rob, scam, fence and pimp. But the biggest sector of the illegal economy, and one of the most important sectors of the global economy, is the drug trade. The drug trade, while largely in the realm of the lumpen class, is successful enough to support a well-defined class structure of its own including a full-on bourgeoisie, a stable group earning what would be the equivalent of labor aristocracy wages, and a workforce that receives a more marginal income. The small-time drug dealers in oppressed communities could be grouped with the, largely female, sex workers as a group of illegal service workers who make incomes that are marginal in terms of global wage distribution.

Much of the illegal drug economy in the oppressed communities is carried out by lumpen organizations (LOs). These organizations historically were more dependent on extortion, and this still plays a large role in the economics of LOs. Extortion would be another example of clear parasitic relations of the lumpen with the rest of the community.

LOs are often formed along national lines, bringing with them a legacy or ideology of nationalism. Where these organizations are successful enough to create a bourgeoisie, or even an aspiring bourgeoisie, we see the basis for a national bourgeoisie in the internal semi-colonies.

3) Public Assistance Dependents

While 8% of the U.S. population receives some form of assistance from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, about 1.7% of the population receives more than half of their income that way. That translates to about 5.34 million people we could say are dependent on public assistance. Of those, about 3.25 million (61%) are not white and 2.13 million (40%) are New Afrikan.

Approximately 90% of U.S. citizens receiving cash assistance benefits are single mothers.(15) Just as the imprisoned lumpen is mostly men, the population on certain forms of public assistance is largely made up of women with children, most of whom are actually white.(16)

4) Homeless

Up to 3.5 million people are homeless in the United States, about 1% of the population each year.

First Nations are overrepresented in the homeless population by a factor of 4, while New Afrikans are by a factor of 3.25. Youth under 18 are overrepresented by a factor of 1.65. Whites and Asians are underrepresented in the homeless population.

nation	homeless pop	welfare pop	overall pop
white	39%	39%	64%
New Afrikan	42%	40%	13%
Latin@	13%	16%	15%
First Nation	4%	2%	1%
Asian	2%	3%	6%

We would put the homeless squarely into the lumpen category, although some of these people are only homeless temporarily and have a support structure that will enable them to move back into the labor aristocracy relatively quickly. Further, many of the homeless will also be on some form of public assistance and are unemployed, therefore groups can not be summed up without double counting a lot of people.

Conclusions

The table below sums up the conservative estimates we have made with regard to who constitutes the lumpen within U.S. borders. Our best total estimate for New Afrikans and Raza comes from the sum of the people identified based on family income and those actively in prison or jail. First Nations are calculated separately. All other methods of calculation are going to double count people we identified by family income and so can not be added to our totals.

Non-Bourgeois Populations by National Groupings				
	% Lumpen	# Lumpen	Semi- Proletariat	Non-Bourgeois Classes
New Afrikan	20%	8,160,000	0	8,160,000
Latin@	5%	2,620,000	8,500,000	11,120,000
First Nations	30%	700,000	0	700,000
Total	-	11,480,000	8,500,000	19,980,000

We conclude that conservatively we can count 20-25% of the New Afrikan nation as part of the lumpen. Among Raza we calculate between 15-20% as part of the lumpen or migrant proletariat.

To separate out the lumpen from the migrant proletariat among Raza we need to look at the number of migrant Raza in the United States. A Pew Hispanic Center 2005 report estimated 11.5 to 12 million total "illegal immigrants," 56% from Mexico, and 22% from other Latin American countries. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security in 2009 estimated 10.7 million "illegal immigrants," 62% from Mexico, and at least

15% from other Latin American countries. These numbers give us an estimate of between 8 and 9 million Latin American migrants in the United States. If the census accurately counts Latin American migrants, 17% of this population (based on 8,500,000 migrants) is not in the U.S. legally and most of that group would be migrant proletariat. That leaves a rather small group of lumpen. We can probably assume, however, that the census undercounts migrant workers because of both the transitory nature of the population and the fear around filling out government paperwork. Based on this reasonable assumption, we can perhaps estimate that the lumpen population among Raza is between 5-10% of the total population.

Given the volatility of the people who are still young and are excluded from the system economically and along national lines, the imperialists have no interest in an expanding lumpen class. And the only internal contradiction that would force an expanding lumpen class in the imperialist countries is extreme economic crisis.

As a baseline we can say conservatively that around 2010 the lumpen class represented about 20% of New Afrika, 5% of Raza and 30% of First Nations. This population represents about 4% of the overall population of the United States, and there is no strong evidence of the First World lumpen increasing in a significant way in recent years.

One example MIM had cited in support of the Panther theory of an expanding lumpen due to mechanization was the skyrocketing prison population centered around the 1990s, but spanning the time between the demise of the Panthers and today. While the numbers are staggering, this is still a tiny proportion of the oppressed nations. And rather than being the product of shifting economic conditions, we argue that they are primarily a product of the open conflict between the white nation and oppressed nations in the United States via the white power structure of the state.

The police and prisons were the white nation's stick and the economic opportunities and integration were the carrot presented to the oppressed immediately following the strong liberation movements of the 1960s/70s. Therefore, if we see oppressed nation prison populations shift into a downward trend, that would support the idea that the carrot is increasing in effectiveness in integrating them into Amerika.

The flip side of that is as long as oppressed nation prisoners keep increasing, we have strong evidence of an antagonistic contradiction along the lines of nation in the United States. Of course we have seen the trend level off a bit in recent years, ironically, largely in response to economic crisis. But it is too

soon to say what that means.

Notes: 1. Poverty in the United States, Urban Institute, 12 September 2012 2. sources for figure: employment, labor force participation and unemployment numbers from 1. Table 588. Civilian Population—Employment Status by Sex, Race, Hispanic Origin, and Ethnicity: 1960 to 2010. Housewife population estimated from differential between males and females in this table. Age 65 and up population from U.S. Census data. Unemployed students estimated as 22% of all college students based on data from 1995 -2008. From Profile of Undergraduate Students: Trends From Selected Years, 1995-96 to 2007-08. U.S. Department of Education, September 2010, NCES 2010-220. Total student population numbers from Source: U.S. National Center for Education Statistics, 1900-1985, 120 Years of Education, A Statistical Portrait; beginning 1986, Digest of Education Statistics, annual; National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, Fall Enrollment Survey (various years); and National Science Foundation, National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics, Integrated Science and Engineering Resources Data System (WebCASPAR), <http://webcaspar.nsf.gov>. 3. Levine, 2012 4. Serve the People, IRTTR 5. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Personal_income_in_the_United_States 6. <http://www.bls.gov/cps/minwage2009tbls.htm#10> 7. Tables F-1 and F-3, <https://www.census.gov/hhes/www/income/data/historical/families/> 8. Table 695. Money Income of Families — Number and Distribution by Race and Hispanic Origin: 2009 9. https://www.census.gov/hhes/www/cpstables/032012/hhinc/hinc01_000.htm HINC-01. Selected Characteristics of Households, by Total Money Income in 2011 10. <http://www.urban.org/publications/310880.html> 11. 2012 Statistical Abstract, US Census Bureau Table 232. Mean earnings by highest degree earned: 2009 12. all taken from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reservation_poverty 13. Correctional Populations in the United States, 2011, U.S. Department of Justice, November 2012 14. <http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/black-male-dropouts-lead-nation-in-incarceration-63870242.html> 15. <https://womenslawproject.wordpress.com/2010/11/02/debunking-the-myth-of-the-%E2%80%9Cwelfare-queen%E2%80%9D-who-actually-receives-tanf-benefits/> 16. <http://www.huppi.com/kangaroo/L-welfareblack.htm>, <http://theobamacrat.com/2012/01/05/welfare-recipients-which-race-gets-more-benefits/>

Racism: A Product of National Oppression

Ehecatl of United Struggle from Within
November 2013

Much has been said recently about the overtly racist remarks made by one of the contestants on the "Big Brother" reality show. Viewers were shocked at the nerve of some of the show's participants, not only in the fact that they would say such things, but in the contestants' blatantly unapologetic attitude afterwards. After all, this is the 21st century, and according to some, we have moved beyond those inconsistencies in Amerika's past which had previously kept her from fulfilling the promise of its ethos. Most Amerikans (white people in particular) like to believe that although things like slavery and segregation are all a part of our nasty past we should all just forget and move on

from this shameful hystory. Surely the United States has made great strides when it comes to "race relations," and Amerikans of all colors have never experienced a more collective prosperity than they do today, never mind the previously unthinkable: a Black man in the White House.

So why then does racism continue to exist? More importantly, how do we eradicate it? To properly answer these questions we must take it back to where it all began, and for this we'll have to revisit some ugly truths.

Origins of Racism: Connections to Capitalism

People forget that Amerika is a nation of settlers founded on genocide, slavery and annexation. This oppressive nation-building formula includes the more subtle forms of national oppression and the many different ways they are institutionalized and manifested in our society. One particularly malevolent form of national oppression, which most of us are all too familiar with, is of course racism and the more pernicious racial ideology from which it stems. But racism isn't simply some oppressive philosophical dogma utterly disconnected from the real world. Rather, racism and racial ideologies are direct products of national oppression, which is engendered by society based on property relations and the division of labor produced therein, which in turn has influenced how humyn beings have come to interact with each other in the struggle between the global "haves" and "have nots." In short, racism has not been around forever. As a matter of fact, the very concept of "race" didn't even exist prior to the 16th century. Racism and racial ideologies have only been around so long as capitalism itself has been around. The concept of "race" developed alongside the rise of modern society and not as usually believed as a remnant of the irrational and dark Middle Ages. What's more, the concept of "race" has been directly linked back to the primitive accumulation phase of capitalism, which is itself grounded in the first rape and plunder of Africa and the Americas. This primitive accumulation phase is clearly explained by radical eco-feminist and author Maria Mies when she stated that:

"Before the capitalist mode of production could establish and maintain itself as a process of extended reproduction of capital - driven by the motor of surplus value production - enough capital had to be accumulated to start this process. The capital was largely accumulated in the colonies between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Most of the capital was not accumulated by merchant capitalists but largely by way of brigandage, piracy, forced and slave labor."(1) And furthermore, "One could say that

the first phase of the primitive accumulation was that of merchant and commercial capital ruthlessly plundering and exploiting the colonies' human and natural wealth..."(1)

What should be kept in mind here is that as feudalism disintegrated and capitalism came on the scene the common people, the peasants and the soldiers, needed to be reassured that what they were doing to the people of the colonies was not only in the beneficiary population's interest but the interest of the colonized as well. The European masses also needed to be taught that the colonized were less than humyn so as to discourage any feelings of solidarity amongst the oppressed. Hence, the racial ideology was borne, which wasn't just about the innate ignorance and stupidity of the colonized, but of their innate treacherousness and savagery as well.

Examples of Racism in National Oppression, Yesterday and Today

Racism as a building block for the rise of the modern western world was as indispensable for that society as it is to the continuing subjugation of nations and the integrity of the First World today. Testimony to this is the way that the people of Islam have been demonized as "dark" and "backward" by the "civilized" west who sees itself as "exceptional." Thus the role that racism has played in gaining public support for the current wars of conquest is undeniable. One need only examine how Muslims, who were Amerikan citizens, were vilified and attacked by settler violence following the retaliatory attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon under the guise of "Amerikan Patriotism." The conscious connection of these actions to the collective white history of colonialism in Africa is manifested in the term "sand nigger." What this "Amerikan Patriotism" really translates into is a special brand of oppressor nation chauvinism, and a vehicle for white power in the 21st century. It is particularly popular and appealing to Latin@s and New Afrikans who think they can fully integrate into Amerika by becoming agents of imperialism and uniting with the oppressor against the people of the Third World.

Therefore the revolutionary character of militant Islam, seen when it is waging war for the independence of Muslims from U. \$. imperialism, should be supported by the oppressed nation lumpen as it is objectively an anti-imperialist struggle despite the reactionary views of those leading the struggles, whether it's Al Qaeda or Bashar al-Assad and their associates, for it weakens, disintegrates and undermines imperialism. The struggle of the West and their "democratic" running dogs in the

region strengthen the victory of imperialism. Real communists know that there are only two sides to a battle, therefore it is our duty to unite all who can be united in the camp of the oppressed and build a United Front against the imperialists and their racist backers! In his day, Stalin had to combat those promoting a "third way" between the socialist camp and the imperialists, pointing out that those who broke away from the Soviet Union inherently joined the imperialist system, becoming victims of it. The lack of a socialist camp today does not change the bankruptcy of the third-way idealists. Revisionists today point to the forces waging war in the Middle East and call them the "Two Outmodeds" and are peddling a third way out for the oppressed. However, this third way out is itself reactionary and anti-revolutionary, and if upheld will in fact reinforce the very same imperialist structure it pretends to be against, by weakening national unity of the oppressed. This is one lesson we take from the theory and practice of United Front in the Chinese war of liberation against Japan.

Racism as Pseudo-Science and Glossing Over of the National Question

Purveyors of racial ideology fancy themselves as being backed by science, and indeed there is a "science" to racism, it's called eugenics and it stresses the genetic makeup of people as determinant of their "natural" abilities and inclinations. Eugenics was developed as justification for the oppression and enslavement of non-white people and outlaws alike. It was, however, thoroughly criticized and debunked by the wider scientific community for, among other things, not being an objective and quantifiable method of analysis of the humyn species. While most people today have hardly heard of eugenics it was certainly popular back when England had stretched the tentacles of the British empire (forerunner to U.\$ imperialism) all over the Third World, while here in Amerika the slave owning south was likewise using it for the continuing oppression and enslavement of the New Afrikan nation.

1. The lack of scientific relationship to biology since there is only the human race.
2. The creation of categories of inferior and superior based on arbitrary characteristics and definitions.
3. The creation and perpetuation of a system of oppression of the "inferior" group in all aspects.
4. The re-enforcement of a relative differential in treatment - and it's ideological justification between those considered inferior and those considered superior.
5. The use of race as a principal means for social

control.

6. Rendering irrelevant the experience and viewpoint of the subordinated population except and insofar as interpreted by dominant populations. This specifically has been applied to African descendants, Indigenous peoples, Asians, and Latinos, those usually referred to as "people of color." (2)

Author Bill Fletcher, to whom the above is attributed, explains: "Race is, then, not a state of mind, but a socio-political reality. Even though there is no scientific basis for race, it occupies a real space and the institutions of the racial-capitalist society reinforce this reality every day." (2)

We'd also add that the false concept of "race" is a social construct originally based on power struggles between humyns in the pre-capitalist era of slavery, and it has done much to gloss over the fact that the oppressed internal nations of Chican@s and New Afrikans are separate nations from the Amerikan nation (white settler-state), with separate hystories distinctly their own. Therefore we speak of nations and nationalities where most people speak of "race," in order to refer to a group of people who share a common language, culture, territory and economy. The concept of nations is thus more accountable to hystory and is firmly grounded in material reality. (See "Marxism and the National Question" by J.V. Stalin.)

Methods for Resolving the Principal Contradiction

Despite the fact that the concept of race has been repeatedly disproven, proponents of racial ideology and the national oppression it engenders (and vice versa) hold steady to their unscientific beliefs. And to a certain extent this is fine. They have their beliefs and prejudices, but we have science! We know where they stand and we know that the oppressed people of the world will not sit idly by but will take up armed struggle against the imperialists to impose the will of the people on today's oppressor nations. What isn't fine however are the so-called allies of the oppressed nations within the Amerikan "Left" who mistakenly call themselves communist yet go about espousing the concept of "race." Whether they are speaking about the common cause of all the "races" that are equally oppressed by capitalism-imperialism, or whether they are agitating around the "race issue" here in Amerika, they're of no great help. They are immediately caught in the irrevocable trap of idealism, and that is no attitude for a communist to have. First, these idealists objectively hurt the revolutionary movement within U.\$. borders by elevating the problem of "race" to that of principal contradiction when in fact there is no problem of race. There is a

problem of imperialism and national oppression. Secondly, they deny that the principal contradiction is imperialism vs. the oppressed nations by emphatically denying that there are any other nations in the United States besides Amerika. Some have opportunistically come to acknowledge New Afrika, while denying other nations' existence, not because they are dialectical materialists, but because they're focused on pulling numbers to their side. Lastly, by denying the concept of nations and national liberation and instead focusing on multi-racial unity they deny the theories and practice of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao, as well as the revolutionary movements they spearheaded and the many national liberation movements that followed in their traditions.

Racism in the United States or any other place in the world will not be wiped from the earth solely by educating it out of existence, but by getting rid of the many material conditions and relations from which it springs. Racism is a product of national oppression, hence we must focus on uniting the oppressed nations for their own liberation from this jailhouse of nations that is the United States. Only then will we seriously be able to talk about combatting racism as a backward idea from another period of history.

Notes:

1. Patriarchy and Capital Accumulation on a World Scale, Maria Mies

2. Race, the National Question, Empire, and Socialist Strategy, Bill Fletcher Jr.

Class Nature of the Internal Semi-Colonies

Reprinted from Chican@ Power and the Struggle for Aztlan

While our definition of nation lists language, culture and economy as necessary defining factors, we have already established that determining whether a separate nation exists or not is not a matter of the nation having all of these completely distinct from any other nation. Going back to the thesis of Forbes who exposed the oppressive ideology of racism and so-called Mestizo and "mixed-bloods":

"Both assimilation and proletarianization would demand that the native Anishinabe (or African) cultures and tribes be destroyed. Both would demand that the conquered groups learn new skills, learn European language, and become part of the cash economy. But there the similarity ends. An assimilation policy would require the liquidation of racism, color consciousness, and resistance to intermarriage. Clearly, the white ruling groups of the Americas (even in the so-called relaxed Latin countries) have had no intention of doing that." (21)

Historically, we would agree that proletarianization of the internal semi-colonies, coupled with genocide, was the main strategy of Amerika's conquest and expansion. For Chican@s today, there is still a significant proletarian element. However, the majority of the internal semi-colony populations are no longer sources of wealth for Amerikans. Joining the labor aristocracy and petty bourgeois classes, they have become a competitor for the distribution of stolen wealth in this country. This is the material basis for a fear of competition that reinforces national distinctions within U\$. borders. In addition, the Chican @ people, as well as various national minorities from the Third World, are still identified as Third World people in the racialized thinking of Amerikans. Therefore integration of some Mexicans, and some Chinese and some Indians, while continuing to oppress and exploit those nations poses a difficult contradiction.

This is why we use the term semi-colony to describe the distinct oppressed nations within the United States. The internal semi-colonies are still colonized by Euro-Amerikans – their land is occupied, their culture suppressed, their self-determination denied. However, for the most part, these nations no longer serve as the source of value that they have historically, so we cannot treat them the same as the neo-colonies of the Third World.

Despite the class transformations that have led to New Afrikans, Chican@s, Boricuas and at least some First Nations being bought off over the last few decades, the national question is still pronounced. Integration is occurring at the margins, but that is almost unavoidable. In the most favorable conditions, it would still take many generations to see the disappearance of the national identities of the oppressed nations within U\$. borders. And the contemporary struggles of the Chican@ people against repression explored elsewhere in this book speak to the potential of the national contradiction becoming stronger, not weaker, in this country.

Nationalism: Idealism vs. Materialism

from MIM Theory #7

by MC5

J.V. Stalin and Mao Zedong put forward the definitive line on nationalism in general. This article is not intended to substitute for a concrete analysis of the situation in the United States, especially not of programs of various national groups. We treat specific nations concretely throughout this issue of

MIM Theory.

What stands out in regard to much of the struggle between Maoism and other supposedly communist trends in the United States is the issue of integration – working for equal rights within white society and in white terms. The integration strategy is very attractive because large sections of the oppressed communities have derived some benefit from it. The U.S. Imperialists try to dangle that carrot of co-optation to oppressed nationalities, while throwing carrots wholesale to the white working class.

The integration strategy is so strong that many people do not recognize it when they see it. Some people unconsciously take it for granted. Call the integration strategy “Trotskyism” and suddenly people think they are fighting for communism.

It reminds one of the struggle with the better feminist lines. Glorifying women's deprivation of power in society takes many forms. Sometimes well-meaning feminists give up and just accept that women have some inherent biological difference that makes them incapable of being dictators like the bourgeois men.

Another form of feminism that eroticizes the oppression of women is anarchist feminism. In the politics of anarchist feminism, the goal is simply to wipe out power instantly by denying its existence in a fantasy of the anarchists' construction. (1)

The strategy of Trotskyism in the United States and elsewhere for oppressed nationalities is like that of anarchist feminism in one sense: It's a different name for an old and failing strategy. Trotskyism is another name for the integration strategy.

It is the Trotskyists everywhere, whether it be the Spartacist League or Spark that tell oppressed nationalities: “unite with the white working class to overthrow capitalism. That is the solution to racial oppression.”

It was Lenin, Stalin and Mao who developed the line and strategy that credited revolutionary nationalism, not the important anti-racist movement, as the most important ally of the international communist movement.

Here MIM defines its terms:

1. Line – The general political orientation and ideology of the communist movement. In this case the line is to uphold internationalism – the goal of nationless society.
2. Strategy – What to do to achieve the single most important practical goal on the way to

communism. At this time, seizing state power is the most important goal. Note that a strategy is not always the same thing as line.

The gain of national liberation from occupying imperialists is important in itself. However, it is also important in the strategy of the international communist movement. Imperialism could not survive if all nations ran their own affairs. The defeats handed to imperialism by Maoist and revolutionary nationalist struggles make it possible for the Maoists to seize state power within imperialist countries, the ultimate and likely final blow to the system of capitalism.

3. Tactics – What communists do at any given moment on their way to achieving the larger strategic goal which itself is only a stage in the advance toward a real society of internationalism. Tactics are not strategy. Tactics are constructed to help toward the achievement and implementation of strategy.

Of course, MIM does not oppose the integration strategy when it can succeed in limited circumstances – for example, gaining more “minority” students entrance in traditionally white colleges. On the other hand, MIM has the duty to point out that overall, and historically, revolutionary nationalism (the nationalism of the oppressed nations) has a better record than integrationism in moving to the goal of a world of equality between nations and races and a world without borders.

What the Trotskyists must erase from people's memory is the fact that the major blows to imperialism in this century have combined class struggle with national liberation, as in the cases of China, Albania, North Korea and Vietnam.

These revolutions did not achieve ultimate success, and they had their own problems; however, the question is always relative. Trotskyists like to kid people into thinking that the struggles of the white working classes for “30 for 40” or some wage hike or just another VCR is somehow more significant than the heroic struggle of the Vietnamese people against U.S. Imperialism.

Even more strictly nationalist struggles have done more to shake imperialism than the white working class efforts to buy more televisions. Trotskyists efforts to rewrite the history of national liberation in the 20th century and the struggles of oppressed nationalities in the United States as failures compared with Trotskyism are nothing but conscious and unconscious racism and white supremacy. (See MT6 for more on Trotskyism

and Stalin.)

So when comrades say that revolutionary nationalism is a failure, as one ex-comrade recently did, they must ask themselves, compared with what? Compared with Martin Luther King? Compared with non-existent Trotskyist revolutions in the world? The ideas or poetry of the Trotskyists and reformist integrationists may sound momentarily pleasing but what did they produce compared with the ideas of revolutionary nationalism?

To all those interested in state power for communists, Trotskyism reveals itself to be one of the best allies of imperialism. Trotskyism and its strategy of integrationism have brought no defeats to U.S. Imperialism or other imperialisms. They have not brought the final classless and nationless society one step closer.

Let no one mistake: MIM's line is internationalism – the real kind of internationalism, effective internationalism. Maoism does not make the Trotskyist mistake, however, of deeming all struggles short of worldwide communism “failures.” Numerous defeats of U.S. and other imperialisms will be necessary on the way. No rewriting of history can change the fact that it has been the national liberation struggle which has handed imperialism so many military defeats.

Notes: 1. MIM Notes 50 and MIM Theory 2/3.

The New Afrikan Nation

History & Economy Show The Imperative of Liberation

from MIM Theory #7

by MC44 & MC5

In this section MIM explores the material basis for a Black nation, applying Stalin's theories of nation-building to the United States and reviewing the economics, politics and culture of the Black people. Political history shows the continuity of a Black nation in North America. Black struggles have taken the form of national liberation to varying degrees since before the United States was even formally a nation. Political economy reveals the material basis for this political expression.

We begin with theoretical and historical articles and move to concrete analysis of the 1960s vanguard Black Panther Party and into more contemporary organizations.

Civil rights leaders such as Martin Luther King, Jr. and more recently Jesse Jackson have worked under the assumption that it is possible to appeal to the conscience of white people and hence integrate Blacks into the United States. Similarly, Trotskyists (and neo-Trotskyists and crypto-Trotskyists) all believe the white nation working class has a revolutionary interest of its own that can be tapped for the benefit of all oppressed peoples.

MIM challenged this integrationist perspective by exposing the non-revolutionary character of the white nation working class, and promoting true self-determination by promoting communist-led national liberation struggle.

Terminology Debate: Black vs. New Afrikan

MIM(Prisons) November 2013

The African continent has long been a symbol of Black nationalism in the United States. However, New Afrika is named such because it is a new nation with its own territory within the United States. We must combat cultural nationalism, which does not address the need to liberate this new nation here and now. MIM(Prisons) took up the debate over the use of the

term "New Afrikan" at our January congress this year. We have historically used the term "Black" interchangeably with "New Afrikan," but had received a proposal from a comrade to use the term "New Afrikan" to the exclusion of "Black," only using "Black" like we would "Hispanic," when context requires.

MIM took up this question of the terms "Black" and "New African" back in 2001 in *MIM Theory 14* when it published a letter from a RAIL comrade (RC) proposing use of "New African." In that letter, the RC proposed that "Use of the term New African is waging ideological struggle to establish a national identity." S/he goes on to explain that "New African implies the identity of a national territory - the Republic of New Africa" while the term "Black" "cannot and will not be distinguished from integrationist, assimilationist, and other petty bourgeois reactionary agendas." MIM responded to this pointing out that the term "African-American" has emerged to distinguish the petty bourgeois integrationists. MIM's main complaint with the term "New African" was cultural nationalism:

"What makes including the word 'African' in the term relevant? Culture. That is, it is not the land in Africa that makes Blacks in North America a nation, nor the economy, language, and so on. It is the cultural history that survived the genocidal purges of the Middle Passage and slavery that links Blacks to a historical African culture. This is completely true, and this connection is obviously important. However, for the definition of the nation it plays into cultural nationalism to give this aspect too prominent a role. In fact, as MIM has argued, this term has been used most often by people with cultural nationalist tendencies. All the arguments for stressing the African link are cultural, and therefore the tendency of this term is toward cultural nationalism, which is a serious danger from the petty bourgeoisie and comprador bourgeoisie as well."(2)

MIM(Prisons) has researched the use of the term "New Afrikan" and concluded that while there may be cultural nationalism associated historically with some who use the term, overall today it is being used by the most progressive elements of the revolutionary nationalist movement within the United States. While we have some reservations about the ties to Africa promoted by some, we have concluded that "New Afrikan" is a better term to represent the Black nation than "Black," which has strong racial connotations and is generally not associated with a nation. "New Afrikan" is a term specific to the historical context of African-descended people in North America and so better represents our line on this oppressed nation within U.S. borders.

Black Order Revolutionary Organization (BORO), New Afrikan Maoist Party (NAMP), New Afrikan Black Panther Party (NABPP), New Afrikan Collective Think Tank (NCTT) and the New Afrikan Independence Movement (NAIM) all use the term "New Afrikan." Except for NAIM, these are all prison-based organizations. NAIM was the progenitor of the term "New Afrikan."

NAIM has written: "to call oneself New Afrikan, at this early stage, is to be, by and large, about what We in the NAIM are about: Land, Independence and Socialism." They lay claim to the term: "We are the ones who led the ideological struggle for the usage of New Afrikan as our national identity (nationality) over 'black' as a racial identity." (1)

One argument NAIM uses for the term New Afrikan is: "...colonized Afrikans, who evolved into New Afrikans here, were stolen to be used as a permanent proletariat. The New Afrikan nation was born as a working-class nation of permanent proletarians. The fact that We weren't paid does not preclude the fact that We were workers. What do they think so-called 'slavery' (colonialism) entails if not work?" (1)

On this last point, MIM(Prisons) disagrees that New Afrikans are a permanent proletariat. As MIM laid out and we continue to expand on, the vast majority of U.S. citizens are part of the labor aristocracy, not the proletariat. This does not necessarily negate the use of the term "New Afrikan," but we want to be clear where we differ with NAIM on the class makeup of the nation today.

The NABPP promotes Pan-Afrikanism, promoting the common interests of the various oppressed nations of Africa and extending it to the so-called African diaspora of New Afrikans in the United States and other imperialist countries. This is one of the pitfalls of the term New Afrikan: it can lead people to associate imperialist-country Blacks with the oppressed nations of Africa. While most Blacks were originally brought over as slaves and certainly were strongly connected to their home continent at first, we see a very distinct oppressed nation that has developed within U.S. borders in the hundreds of years since the slaves were first forced to North America.

We do not use the term "New Afrikan" to promote pan-Africanism among U.S.-resident peoples. New Afrikans have historical ties to Africa, but today New Afrikans have far more in common with, and are more strongly connected to, other nations within U.S. borders. New Afrikans are closer to Amerikans in economic interests and national identity than they are to Egyptians or Somalis, and will certainly lead any pan-African movement astray and likely sell out the African

oppressed nations.

We have not seen a clear rationale for the distinction between "New African" and "New Afrikan," but some use the letter "k" in "Afrika" to distinguish themselves from the colonial spelling. According to a writer in *MIM Theory 14*, the term "New Afrikan" originated in 1968 when the First New Afrikan government conference was held by the PGRNA (Provisional Government of the Republic of New Afrika). (3) We have adopted this spelling, as it is used by the progressive elements of the nation, but welcome input on the relevance of this spelling distinction.

Notes:

1. Get up for the downstroke: a response to "Black Liberation in the 21st Century, a revolutionary reassessment of Black nationalism," Sanyika Shakur, NAIM, August 20, 2012.
2. *MIM Theory 14*, 2001, p10-11
3. *MIM Theory 14*, 2001, p12-13

Historical Overview: National Approaches to Liberation

May 1993

from *MIM Theory #7*

by MC12

"The fact of the matter is that the Afroamerican wants and has been seeking brotherhood with the white masses since his enslavement in the New World. A people as brutally oppressed as American Negroes cannot wait forever for the support of mythological and theoretical allies. Most white workers in the USA today have a vested interest in the status quo. The present system grants them special privileges in a jungle society. The cow of production may be lean and diseased but the Negro is the only herdsman limited to the cutlets of feet and tail." (1)

- Robert F. Williams

"1. We believe that black people will not be free until we are able to determine our own destiny." (2)

- Black Panther Party

In one important sense, the history of autonomous Black political organizing – movements which in practice recognize

implicitly if not explicitly the existence of an essential Black commonality (i.e. "nation") - encompasses that which J.V. Stalin referred to as "psychological makeup." These struggles, as part of the shared history and experience of Black people, are an inseparable component of a collective identity; they are also part of the basis for a Black culture, which is itself the most obviously visible aspect of Black commonality.

Black people within U.S. Borders are as much "American" as communists are pro-capitalist – that is, the two are fundamentally opposite constructions but based on the reality of each other, existing in a relationship of temporary dialectical unity – because "America" is the white nation, the nation MIM refers to as "Amerika," its extensive population of excluded "minorities" notwithstanding. That understanding follows from the recognition of "America" itself as a nationalist project of Euro-American settlers,(3) with a nationalism that predated the nationalist movements which would oppose it. Political economist Norman Girvan said of this relationship:

"White nationalism generated, as a dialectical response, non-white nationalism. The one was essentially pro-capitalist and pro-imperialist; the other one structurally anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist. The one was politically reactionary, the other politically revolutionary."(4)

Historian Vincent Harding argued, of the demand advanced by emigrationist James T. Holly at the North American Convention of Colored Men in Toronto in 1851, "In essence, it was a call for a black peoplehood, along with a black assembly to represent a people who were steadily *being driven to declare their independence* from a racist, persecuting American government."(5) Holly's call succeeded David Walker's Appeal (1829), as well as Martin Delaney's 1836 call for a national Black assembly to govern over the affairs of Black people.(6) Early proponents of Black nationalism made clear that their struggle for self-determination existed only in opposition to the Amerikan social order. H. Ford Douglas declared in 1854:

"There is as much force in a black man's standing up and exclaiming after the manner of the 'old Roman' – 'I am an American citizen,' as there was in the Irish man who swore he was a loaf of bread, because he happened to be born in a bake oven. ... I can hate this Government without being disloyal, because it has stricken down my manhood and treated me as a saleable commodity. I can join a foreign enemy and fight against it, without being a traitor, because it treats me as an ALIEN and a STRANGER, and I am free to avow that should such a contingency arise I should not

hesitate to take any advantage in order to procure indemnity for the future. I can feel no pride in the glory, growth, greatness or grandeurs of this nation."(7)

Black liberation struggles have represented the motion of a social whole, comprising conflicts of class and gender. At its most progressive, the struggle has been proletarian- and feminist-led, and its worst, bourgeois and patriarchal; usually it has been a combination of them all. The mix is never satisfying to the idealist, who will not understand the necessity of strategic class alliance within national liberation struggle, or the basis for feminism as practiced by revolutionaries countering more than "just" gender oppression.

Historian Elsa Barkley Brown has noted that the feminist struggles of Black women have been overlooked or distorted to fit into the definitions of white (self-identified) feminists. These interpretations "fail to consider ... that women's issues may be race issues, and race issues may be women's issues ... Such a framework assumes a fragmentation of black women's existence that defies reality." She notes for example that the (all white) American delegation at the 1985 U.N. Decade for Women conference sought to exclude national political issues (such as apartheid), because that would in their minds make them political pawns of men's politics, and therefore of men.(8) [MIM holds that right now the principal way to advance the position of women is the struggle for national independence against imperialism. See the proof in MT2/3 - MC5]

Barkley Brown offers the history of early-twentieth-century activist Maggie Lena Waler, who led the Independent Order of Saint Luke, a mutual-aid organization, originally including only women, which grew to claim 100,000 members in 28 states and found the St. Luke Penny Savings Bank, of which Walker was president.(9)

"Walker was determined to expand opportunities for black women," Barkley Brown writes. "In fulfilling this aim she challenged not only the larger society's notions of the proper place of blacks but also those in her community who held a limited notion of women's proper role."(10) In such a role, Walker made history, but a history which has not been included in "feminist history" because of the national character of her efforts.

For example, when in 1906 women in Richmond, Virginia were attempting to start a Black department store in the city, Walker called a meeting exclusively for the town's Black men. "Hasn't it come to you," she implored them, "that we are being oppressed by the passage of laws which not only have for their

object the degradation of Negro manhood and womanhood, but also the destruction of all kinds of Negro enterprises?”(11) And she added, “I am asking each man in this audience to go forth from this building, determined to do valiant deeds for the Negro Women of Richmond,” which included supporting their right to choose a vacation, as well as other economic, political and social opportunities.(12) Finally, Walker acknowledged that “the expansion of opportunities for white women did not mean a corresponding expansion for black women; instead, this trend might actually lead to an ever greater limitation on the economic possibilities for black women.”(13)

If Walker's nationalist feminism was partly bourgeois in character, there have also certainly been revolutionary nationalists (and of course bourgeois nationalists) whose efforts were patriarchal in character. This is the motion of contradictions within a national movement. But critics of the patriarchal approach of some revolutionary nationalists often make the same error as blinded historians criticized by Barkley Brown. Angela Davis, for example, noted that “the unfortunate hallmark of some nationalist groups [in the Black power movement] was their determination to push women into the background.”(14) But while feminism has had to struggle to exert leadership within the liberation movement, to say that the “groups” hampered the progress of women is to deny the history and contribution of the revolutionary nationalist feminists within those groups themselves; it is essentially to call those women – often the majority of the organizations and their followers – the pawns of men's politics.

The history of Kathleen Cleaver's leadership within the Black Panther Party is an excellent example of the struggle for feminist leadership of the movement. Cleaver has noted critically that within the Party, “The fact that the suggestion came from a woman gave it some lesser value.” But to generalize from the sexism of men in the Party to the patriarchal nature of the *movement* itself is to deny the rest of the story, as told by Cleaver herself (in the sentence immediately following the above quotation):

“I know that the first demonstration that we had at the courthouse for Huey Newton which I was very instrumental in organizing, the first time we met out on soundtrucks, I was on the soundtrucks, the first leaflet we put out, I wrote, the first demonstration, I made up the pamphlets. And the members of that demonstration for the most part were women. I've noticed that throughout my dealings in the Black movement in the United States, that the most anxious, the most quick to understand and quick to move are women.”(15)

Ultimately, the question of what is better for the interests of “women,” the privileged and exclusionary “feminism” of the white nation, or revolutionary nationalism with male-dominated leadership, depends upon which women are under consideration. In either case, revolutionary nationalism feminism has to fight for leadership, but it is only from the latter that a movement against both imperialism and patriarchy can be wrought, in the interests of the oppressed everywhere.(16)

Huey Newton's description of the struggle over setting the direction of national movement referred to both the existence of oppressor- and oppressed-nation nationalisms as well as conflicts within oppressed-nation movements themselves:

“There are two kinds of nationalism, revolutionary nationalism and reactionary nationalism. Revolutionary nationalism is first dependent upon a people's revolution with the end goal being the people in power. Therefore to be a revolutionary nationalist you would by necessity have to be a socialist. If you are a reactionary nationalist you are not a socialist and your goal is the oppression of the people.”(17)

One defining characteristic of revolutionary nationalism among the internal colonies of North America was the mutual dependence of various oppressed nations and in their liberation struggles. Girvan notes the historical alliance of African slaves and former slaves with the people of the indigenous nations in the Americas, forged out of the similarities of their oppression – which lasted beyond the end of slavery and the Indian Wars. “In other words,” he writes, “in spite of the abolition of race-slavery, Indian and Black nationalism would remain not only 'emotionally satisfying' but also *objectively relevant* ideologically in the struggle against exploitation.”(18)

And when Garveyism spread in the United States, therefore, we should not be surprised to learn that it also took hold in the “Latin” republics of Central America and the Caribbean, and the Anglophone colonies of the Caribbean and some of the non-British colonies as well.(19)

The alliance between revolutionary nationalism within the United States and movements in the Third World continued to predominate through the Black Power period. A statement by the national office of the Black Panther Party in 1970 stressed that “Our program is not much different from any liberation front's program in the third world. Because we are victims of U.S. Imperialism (community imperialism) just as the people of the third world are, we see our struggle as one and the same.”(20)

Notes:

1. Robert F. Williams, 1964, in August Meier, Elliot Rudwick, Francis L. Broderick, eds., *Black Protest Thought in the Twentieth Century*, Second Edition, Macmillan: New York, 1971. p. 367. Williams, a former NAACP official, was expelled and denounced by the organization for his militancy.
2. From the "Program of the Black Panther Party," Ibid., p. 492.
3. The most comprehensive and incisive treatment of this history is by J. Sakai (*Settlers: The Mythology of the White Proletariat*, Morningstar Press: Chicago, 1983) who also writes, "[I]n the U.S. Empire the Revolution is the liberation struggle of the Third-World oppressed nations and national-minorities." p. 3.
4. Norman Girvan, "Aspects of the Political Economy of Race in the Caribbean and in the Americas: A Preliminary Interpretation." Institute of Social and Economic Research: University of the West Indies, 1981. p. 24.
5. Vincent Harding, *There is a River: The Black Struggle for Freedom in America*, Vintage: New York, 1983. pp. 168-69. Emphasis added.
6. Walker's "Appeal ... to the colored citizens of the World But in Particular and very Expressly to those of the United States of America" "was the first clear, widely publicized call for pan-African solidarity," but it was also a call for self-determination on a piece of land in the USA. Harding, op cit., p. 87. On Delaney's proposal see pp. 129-31.
7. Douglas's analogy was re-used by Malcolm X: "Because a cat has kittens in an oven, it don't make them biscuits." Ibid., pp. 188-89.
8. Elsa Barkley Brown, "Womanist Consciousness: Maggie Lena Walker and the Independent Order of Saint Luke," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, Vol 4, no. 3, 1989. pp. 611-12.
9. See also Stephanie J. Shaw, "Black Club Women and the Creation of the National Association of Colored Women," *Journal of Women's History*, Vol. 3, No. 2, Fall 1991. p. 13. In 1838 there were 119 Black mutual-aid organizations with 7,372 members in Philadelphia alone. Black women were the main catalysts of these organizations, which numbered in the thousands across the country. p. 12.
10. Barkley Brown, op cit., p. 621.
11. Ibid., p. 626.
12. Ibid., p. 629.
13. Ibid., p. 622.
14. Quoted in Giddings, op cit., p. 317.
15. Ibid.
16. The Panthers also struggled heavily over feminism. Huey P. Newton, for example, criticized Eldridge Cleaver for hindering the leadership of his wife Kathleen Cleaver, and setting back the movement as a result. See for example *Revolutionary Suicide*, Ballantine: New York, 1973. p. 332.
17. "Huey Newton Talks to the Movement" (Students for a Democratic Society: Chicago, 1963), in Meier et al, op cit., p. 495.
18. Girvan, op cit., p. 21.
19. Ibid. The actual membership in Garvey's United Negro Improvement Association is disputed. Garvey claimed six million member in 1923, and "even his harshest critics admitted that there were perhaps half a million members of the UNIA." But it is also reasonable to suppose the many followers were not official members of the organization. John Hope Franklin, Alfred A. Moss, Jr., *From Slavery to Freedom: A History of Negro Americans*, Sixth Editions, McGraw-Hill; New York, 1988. p. 321, and Meier, et al, op cit, p. 101.
20. From The Guardian, Feb. 1970, in Philip S. Foner, ed., *The Black Panthers Speak*, Lippincott: Philadelphia, 1970. p. 220. This aspect of Black liberation was also a key source of radicalism for young white revolutionaries at the time, whose rebellion at best included a rejection of the American nation itself. Newton believed that "They [white radicals] see the people who are really standing for justice and equality and peace throughout the world. They are the people of Vietnam, the people of Latin America, the people of Africa, and the black people in the black colony here in America." Meier, et al, op cit., p. 498.

Labor aristocracy: A History of Reaction

May 1993

by MC12

"We cannot – nor can anybody else – calculate exactly what portion of the proletariat is following and will follow the social-chauvinists and opportunists. This will only be revealed through struggle, it will be definitely decided only by socialist revolution."(1)

--V. I. Lenin

As practice historically leads theory, so does experience out-distance prediction. Lenin's formulation means: time will tell which way the labor aristocracy will go during the inevitable downfall of imperialism, and what their numbers will be. Whereas Lenin asked a hypothetical question, we can now answer it: there is no case of socialist revolution breaking out in advanced capitalist countries with a mass industrial base. First World workers have never made revolution.

In the United States, Malcolm X summed up the relationship between working classes across oppressor-oppressed nation lines:

"The history of America is that working class whites have been just as much against not only working class Negroes, but all Negroes, period, because all Negroes are working class within the caste system. The richest Negro is treated like a working class Negro. There never has been any good relationship between the working class Negro and the working class whites. I just don't go along with – there can be no worker solidarity until there's first some black solidarity. There can be no white-black solidarity until there's first some black solidarity. We've got to get our own problems solved first and then if there's anything left to work on the white man's problems, good, but I think one of the mistakes Negroes make is this worker solidarity thing."(2)

Radical settler historian David Roediger, in *The Wages of Whiteness*, write that white workers themselves contributed to the construction of racist ideology in the process of their consolidation into a "working class." To that extent, his approach is a useful antidote to those who say subordinate whites were simply dupes of racist ruling-class ideology. But his argument collapses when he takes for granted that white

workers themselves suffered as a result of their racism.

Citing W. E. B. Du Bois's reference to the "public and psychological" wages of whiteness, Roediger adds: "But there were costs as well, not only in terms of race relations but also the wedding of labor to a debased republicanism." As if bad "race relations" was itself a "cost" to white workers, or "a debased republicanism" was not exactly what they were clamoring for!

Roediger further speaks of "the pay-offs of whiteness and the tendency of those payoffs to prove spurious – spurious, that is, if we regard an attack on life-long wage labor to have been a legitimate goal of labor republicanism." (3) The key words there are "if" and "we." The U.S. white working class went on to become the richest working class in the world. History shows the choice they made: there is no evidence yet that they have regretted their decision to side with imperialism and feed off the spoils it yields.

But Roediger offers some useful stories:

"That Blacks were largely noncitizens will surprise few, but it is important to emphasize the extent to which they were seen as anticitizens, as 'enemies' rather than the members of the social compact.' As such they were driven from Independence Day parades as 'defilers' of the body politic and riven from their homes by Sons of Liberty and Minute Men." (4)

After the Columbia, Pennsylvania "race" riot of 1834, Roediger notes that:

"defenders of the white rioters modeled their appeal directly on the Declaration of Independence, charging a plot by employers and abolitionists to open new trades to Blacks, and 'to break down the distinctive barrier between the colors that the poor whites may gradually sink into the degraded condition of the Negroes – that, like them, they may be slaves and tools.'" (5)

After the Montgomery, Ala., bus boycott, historian Robert J. Norrell writes:

"Working class whites were integral to the so-called 'massive resistance' to desegregation that followed these events. Wherever they could, white workers used their union organizations to help their cause ..."

That movement would translate into support for George Wallace's electoral campaigns. "To most white unionists," Norrell adds, "Wallace was a good labor man defending the

position of the white working class from incursions by blacks who intended to take away whites' superior status position." And he concludes:

"But working class whites were hardly ignorant of the class realities of their circumstances. Their support of Wallace was based on his empathy for their class interest in maintaining a racially discriminatory society." (6)

Lenin and Engels specifically raised the issue of a privileged strata of workers, but their warnings are often passed off with easy references to "labor leaders," as if these materialists would have argued that entire social movements were made or broken by single or scattered individuals. As seen above, Lenin carefully stressed that the extent of opportunism (not fundamentally based on any misunderstanding – i.e. "racism" – but based on the concrete "bribes" raised through the reaping of superprofits) within the working class would only be fully realized in the process of political struggle.

And Engels went out of his way to describe the phenomenon in sweeping terms. "The English proletariat is actually becoming more and more bourgeois," he wrote in 1858, "so that this most bourgeois of all nations is apparently aiming ultimately at the possession of a bourgeois aristocracy and a bourgeois proletariat alongside the bourgeoisie. For a nation which exploits the whole world this of course is to a certain extent justifiable." (7) Engels followed, in a letter to Karl Kautsky in 1882, "the workers gaily share the feast of England's monopoly of the world market and the colonies." (8)

As the conditions described briefly by Engels and Lenin have grown progressively more extreme, their warnings have been continuously papered over by news of the latest First World crisis, colored by the wishful thinking of theorists who want to see the revolution directly in front of them – and so simply make it up. (9) The reality they have missed is summed up by J. Sakai in *Settlers: The Mythology of the White Proletariat*, who writes that, within the oppressor nation:

"The masses share a way of life that apes the bourgeoisie, dominated by a decadent preoccupation with private consumption. Consuming things and owning things, no matter how shoddy or trivial, is the mass religion. The real world of desperate toil, the world of proletarians who own nothing but their labor power, is looked down upon with contempt and fear by Euro-Americans ... The most exploited Euro-American workers live whole levels above the standard of the world proletariat, since they may be on the bottom but they are on the bottom

of a privileged nation of oppressors. Nation is the dominant factor, modifying class relations.”(10)

Lenin introduced the concept of “superprofits,” which led to the corollary concept – superexploitation of oppressed laborers by oppressor nations. In the simple capitalist model, workers were exploited: they were paid the value of their labor power, or the cost of keeping them as employees – the cost of their reproduction as a class of workers. They were paid less than the value of their labor: that is, the value of what they produced as measured by socially-necessary labor time. The gap between the value of their labor power and the value of their labor was surplus value, or profit, for the capitalists.(11)

In the oppressed nations, the system of superexploitation means that workers are paid less than the value of their labor power. That is, their wages alone are not enough to allow them to reproduce themselves as a class. Their survival is insured only by their ability to supplement their incomes with outside work, principally farming or “domestic” pursuits – or they die. The labor forces in the oppressed nations are also largely “unemployed,” and when they do sell their labor they therefore are not “required” to do so for their whole adult lives. They are expendable, from the imperialists' perspective: their subsistence need not be covered by their wages; their imperialist-subservient governments may provide social welfare, medical care. Education, etc. to keep them in the workforce, if this is deemed necessary. These national economics are characteristically *disarticulated*: the economy is not geared toward internal consumption; the workers are not paid to be consumers.

The workers of the oppressor nations, on the other hand, are paid, based on the superprofits reaped from superexploitation, more than the value of their labor power and their labor. Not only are wages many times greater for the workers of the oppressor nations, but they are also subsidized by other inputs: their level of health care, education, welfare support and social security, unemployment insurance, and the vastly underpriced imported consumption commodities made available to them by the system of superexploitation. This is the economic underpinning of the political alliance which makes the oppressor nation strong, and pays white workers in the United States to be “racist.”

Notes:

1. At the 2nd Congress of the Communist International. Quoted in J. Sakai, *Settlers, the Mythology of the White Proletariat*, Morningstar Press: Chicago, 1983, p. 154.

2. Malcolm X, *By Any Means Necessary*, Pathfinder: New York, 1970. pp. 12-13.

3. David R. Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the*

American Working Class, London, 1991. p. 55.

4. Ibid., p. 57.

5. Ibid., p. 58.

6. Robert J. Norrell, “Labor Trouble: George Wallace and Union Politics in Alabama” in Robert H. Zieger, ed., *Organized Labor in the Twentieth Century South*. University of Tennessee Press: Knoxville, 1991. p. 250, 263, 269. This supports the findings of Aldon D. Morris, who was told by white supporters of civil rights told that they “attempted to reach the white working class, but the Klan and the White Citizens' Councils had far more access with that group ...” See *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement*, Free Press: New York, 1984. p. 172.

7. Quoted by Lenin in “Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism,” in *Selected Works*, International Publishers: New York, 1971. p. 247.

8. But he still thought socialist revolutions would come first in advanced countries, even while (rightfully) admitting ignorance in that regard: “But as to what social and political phases these [semi-civilised] countries will then have to pass through before they likewise arrive at socialist organization, I think we today can advance only rather idle hypothesis.” Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works in One Volume*, International Publishers: New York, 1968. p. 688. Such colonial conquests as coffee, sugar and cotton were staples in the English working class profit-taking.

9. Edwards writes that looking at economic crises and recession as strictly national phenomena means missing “the fact that *systematic crises are absorbed internationally* through constantly deteriorating conditions in the ‘hinterlands.’” H. W. Edwards, *Labor Aristocracy, Mass Base of Social Democracy*. Anrora: Stockholm, 1978. p. 103. “Hinterlands” should also include the U.S. Ghettos and other occupied lands.

10. Sakai, op cit., pp. 147-9.

11. The economics of the labor aristocracy is explored in greater detail in MIM Theory 1.

Oppressed Nation Labor Aristocracy Addendum

by MIM(Prisons)

The article above fails to include the oppressed nation labor aristocracy, a topic that MIM talked about more in later years and that MIM(Prisons) has expanded upon. The reality of life in the United States is that all citizens benefit from the economy of this imperialist country and this includes the internal oppressed nations. So the class interests of oppressed internal nations already lie with imperialism. We see internal oppressed nations as potentially revolutionary because of their national interests. But for the most part their class interests are aligned with imperialism. See *On the Internal Class Structure of the Internal Semi-Colonies* by MC5 for a more in depth discussion of this topic. Also see subsequent articles in this section, and our class analysis of the First World lumpen from the first section for more on our class analysis of the internal oppressed nations.

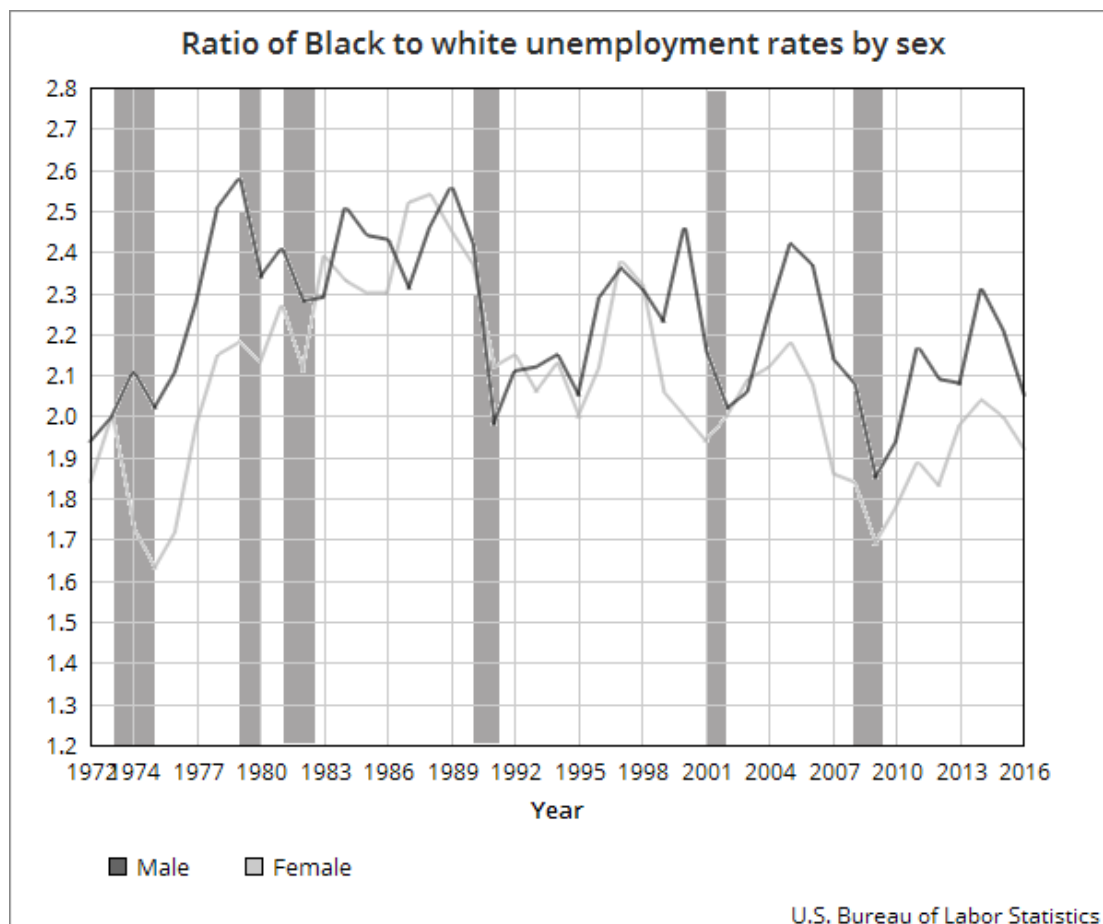


Figure 1: This graph was remade with updated data by MIM(Prisons). When the ratio is 2, Black unemployment rate is twice the rate for whites. Gray bars show recessions. After each recession, during the "recovery," the gap between Black and white unemployment increased.

“Community of economic life”: 1980s Point To National Differences

from MIM Theory #7

May 1993

by MC12

Political history shows the continuity of a Black nation in North America. Black struggles have taken the form of national liberation to varying degrees since before the United States was even formally a nation. To Maoists, that is good evidence that a Black nation exists in North America. But we also look for the material basis for that nation, to better understand it and the political imperatives we face in seeking its liberation.

To show that the economic divisions within U.S. Borders are national in character requires the demonstration of

qualitative differences. Black people do not constitute a nation simply because they are in general more poor and more unemployed; they are on average more poor because they are an historically constituted oppressed nation.

Crucial to this is location within the economy in a more substructural way – in terms of ownership, industrial location and job type (and subsequent unemployment and job status). That economic reality is both cause and effect of superstructural oppression and resistance in the political and social arenas. To show this phenomenon as substructural means it is not the mere product of racist attitudes of contemporary people, but the outcome of

a dual historical process of national creation. This article will examine employment, unemployment, and job displacement specifically in relation to economic crises and in the overall economy (and in New York City as a specific example) and Black-owned businesses.

STRUCTURAL INEQUALITY

A survey of unemployment data by year shows the overall pattern. In the post-WWII period, after each recession, during the “recovery,” the gap between Black and white unemployment increased.(1)(See Figure 1)

Figure 1 provides one way to examine the structural relationship of Blacks to (Euro)Amerikans on the one hand, and the relationship of that structure to the U.S. Economy as a whole on the other. Without exception, every recession since World War II has reflected this movement: each period of decline is followed by an increase in the unemployment gap between “minority” and white workers.(2) *The process of economic*

“recovery,” then, is structurally linked to an increase in the relative subordination of Black workers in the labor market. The relevance of this is heightened because the figures are for black and white workers overall, across the country and in all industrial and job classifications. In essence, this overarching structural link reflects a condensed image of a unity of micro-processes tied together by what is often called “race,” but here reflects a much deeper reality than that shallow term implies.

This overall structural relationship is reflected clearly in New York City, and described in a study conducted by Walter W. Stafford, who considered job placement and displacement in the 1970s and early 1980s, paying careful attention to changes during and after economic recessions, Stafford summarized:

“Historically, lower-paying or lower prestige jobs held by blacks and other minorities have been appropriated by whites during periods of economic downturn. ... The salient point is that, during periods of major industrialized restructuring, dominant groups have utilized whatever means were necessary to expand their opportunities.”(3)

And with particular reference to economic crises, “The growing gap between white and black unemployment rates in New York City is particularly relevant since it occurred during the period of job growth between 1977 and 1981.” By 1980, then, Black people made up 55% of all unemployed workers in New York City, and three years later Black college graduates had higher levels of unemployment than white people with only high school educations.(4)

But how was this achieved?

Stafford found that “During the period of job growth, racial and ethnic groups tended to expand their representation in those industries where they already had established a firm employment base.” Job growth after the 1974-75 recession largely benefited white workers, as white unemployment dropped but Black and Latino unemployment actually increased. (5) In response to the crisis, some white workers were forced to move into nonsupervisory positions, increasing their dominance in these areas, which nevertheless remained core jobs for Black and Latino workers. Black and Latino workers were more concentrated in job categories, especially government and service industries; and within those industries which were integrated, Black and Latino workers were clustered in low-paying jobs. Those industries which had high concentrations of white employees (70-90%) experienced the highest growth rates, and offered “Better pay, benefits, and job security as well as established procedures for mobility.” Almost half of these

industries saw increasing concentrations of white employees between 1978 and 1982.(6)

Job concentration was a pivotal factor in these changes. After determining the 20 most popular job types for each group, Stafford found that Black women had three profession job types among their top 20 (nurses, social workers, and elementary school teachers.) Black and Latino men had no professional positions in their top 20. White men had four well-paid professional positions in their top 20 (salaried lawyers, physicians, elementary school teachers and designers). And white women were clustered into seven professional jobs out of their top 20, most of them traditional women-dominated positions. White and Black women both had high concentrations in clerical positions, but white women were much more likely to be employed in industries which provided better opportunities for advancement. Overall, Black women were more concentrated than any other group, and had the highest percentage of non-supervisory jobs.(7)

Black and Latino men were heavily represented in manufacturing jobs, but largely excluded from those high-growth, advanced potential industries Stafford termed “core industries.” Black men in this period were largely absent from the highest paying craft and manufacturing jobs, and Latino men were most likely to be in peripheral nondurable goods industries, with few chances for advancement. In 1980 Latinos filled 53% of all nondurable good manufacturing jobs in the city.(8)

White men's total share of private sector jobs decreased, but they became more concentrated in the areas they dominated, especially key craft jobs in high-paying industries. At the same time, white women notched the largest total increase in private sector employment. After the 1970s recession, unionized core-industry workers and employers generally struck a deal: employers agreed to increased job security, and guarantees of jobs during hard times, in return for the right to transfer workers to different positions within the industry more easily.(9)

The changes in New York City are broadly reflected for the U.S. economy as a whole. From 1983 to 1989 the white share of all jobs declined slightly, from 85.4% to 82.5%, but white people became more concentrated in managerial or professional specialty jobs.(10) During this time Black people increased their share of the managerial and profession specialty categories to 6.1% from 5.6%, increasing the total number of Black people in these categories by a striking 40%. Still, the percentage of all working Black civilians in these categories increased to only 15.5% from 14.1%, while the percentage of working white civilians in these jobs increased to 28.3% from 25.2% between

1983 and 1989. (Note that these are extremely broad categories, containing job descriptions from school teacher to astrophysicist; the further breakdown reveals greater discrepancies.)(11)

In the U.S. Economy as a whole, wide discrepancies have been noted in the effects of economic crises on Black and white workers. “Black workers bore a relatively heavier burden of widespread job displacement during the 1980s.” writes Lori Kletzer, *“because of the industries and occupations in which they were concentrated; they also were less likely to be reemployed and were out of work longer.”*(12)

Kletzer's study goes a long way to dispel predominant myths on the effects of crises on white workers: there is little evidence to support the popular image of a white manufacturing worker with years of union experience being laid off and taking a minimum-wage job at McDonald's:

“Following displacement, the proportion of blacks employed in manufacturing industries and production-related occupations fell by more than did the proportion of whites employed in the same industries and occupations. In addition, among employed men, whites were more likely to regain employment in a similar industrial or occupational group.”(13)

Reemployment figures for displaced workers favored white people overall, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Reemployment rate for workers displaced 1979-83(14)

	White	Black
Men	77.9%	63.1%
Women	62.9%	53.8%

Table 2 shows that while reemployment figures were worse for everyone within unskilled and semi-skilled positions (operators, fabricators and laborers), the gap between Black and white remained.

Table 2: Reemployment rate for workers displaced from jobs as operators, fabricators and laborers, 1979-83(15)

	White	Black
Men	72.5%	61.6%
Women	59.9%	51.0%

Those discrepancies are further seen in evidence of where displaced workers who were not reemployed ended up. The Kletzer study divided 1979-86 into two periods, the decline years of 1979-83, and the growth years of 1984-86. Between the two periods. Black men and white men showed movement in opposite directions. Unemployed workers made up 46.8% of the Black men who were not reemployed in the first period, compared to just 26.3% among white men. In the “better” years of 1984-85, the percentage of unemployed Black men in this group rose by 10 points. Equally striking was the great percentage of white men who retired if they were not reemployed after job displacement. In both periods more than half of all white men in this group simply retired, significantly higher than the rate for Black men.(16)

Similarly, between the “good” period and the “bad” period the average number of weeks without work for those displaced white men who were reemployed decreased by 22.8%, while Black men in the same category spent an average of 17.3% *more* weeks without work after displacement in the “good” period. The percentage of those reporting almost no time off work between displacement and reemployment was more than twice as high for white workers; meanwhile the percentage of workers who spent more than 26 weeks before finding work was twice as high for Black men as for white men, and one-third higher for Black women as for white women.(17)

Finally, the gap in (official) unemployment among young people must be acknowledged, as it reflects a host of social and economic conditions including not only racism and educational issues, but also economic conditions in the ghetto versus the suburbs, and the social location of urban youth with regard to the state and “crime” in particular.

In October 1991, unemployment for those aged 16-19 was 43.4% for Black women and 35% for Black men, compared to only 15.6% and 16.6% for white women and men respectively. (18)

BLACK-OWNED BUSINESS

The nature of the development of Black-owned businesses provides further insight into the economic composition of the Black nation. Considered an important barometer for measuring the mythological improvements of Black people in the United States, Black-owned businesses are a highly-touted route for integration into Euro-Amerika.(19) Black-owned business are not only on average much smaller than white-owned businesses, they also are likely to employ mostly Black workers and serve mostly Black clientele.

Table 3: Growth for businesses, by “race,” 1982-1987

	# of Businesses	Total sales
Total	14.2%	106.2%
Blacks	37.6%	105.5%
Hispanics	80.5%	110.3%
Asians	89.3%	161.8%

Table 3 shows the relative growth of Black-owned and other business. While the *number* of Black-owned businesses grew at more than twice the rate of all businesses, their *sales* grew more slowly than the total, indicating the dominance of smaller businesses. In fact, the average Black-owned

business in New York City takes in only \$44,000 in revenue; even among the top 25 Black-owned businesses (discounting Beatrice International, a multinational corporation with sales of \$1.5 billion in 1990), the average sales for 1990 were only \$72 million.

The U.S. Census also found that, in 1982, 45% of Black-owned firms had a customer base which was “at least 75% minority,” about 20% higher than other national minorities and four times higher than white-owned businesses. The Wall Street Journal also found that those areas which had relatively high concentrations of Black-owned firms had governments which were taking an active approach to encouraging their development, principally through guaranteed loans, on terms the state seeks to encourage. Noted Timothy Bates, chairman of the urban policy analysis program for the New School for Social Research, on how Maryland had achieved the greatest concentration of Black-owned enterprises: “States lose money by making piddling loans in the inner city. It’s very popular politically, but it’s one thing that Maryland does none of.”

Black entrepreneurs who will leave unprofitable ghettos and cater their business to the Amerikan market – who leave the Black nation and strike out for class status within the metropole – may be rewarded by government-backed financial aid; a policy which also has desirable political implications for the state.(20)

Notes:

1. Unemployment data are from Dollars and Sense Collective, “Real World Macro,” 8th edition, 1991. pp. 91, 94. Business cycle data are from 1991 *Statistical Abstract of the United States*, p. 545.

2. Data from World War II to 1970 are not included in the figure because

available data were for “minorities” instead of for Blacks in particular; but the pattern was the same when all “minorities” were included.

3. Walter W. Stafford, “Closed Labor Markets: Underrepresentation of Blacks, Hispanics and Women in New York City’s Core Industries and Jobs.” Community Service Society of New York: New York, 1985. p. 21.

4. Ibid., p. 1, 7.

5. Ibid., vii-xvi.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid., p. 122; pp. Vii-xvi.

8. Ibid., p. 202.

9. Ibid., p. 18.

10. Employment data, 1991 *Statistical Abstract of the United States*, pp. 395-7. These data are only relevant for comparison, since “white” was not included in the government table. “White” here merely represents the total minus Black and “Hispanic,” the only group breakdown listed.

11. For example, the New York Times reported on 4/21/92, p. A1 that Black people received less than 2% of all PhDs conferred in the United States in 1991.

12. Lori G. Kletzer, “Job displacement, 1979-86: how blacks fared relative to whites.” U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Monthly Labor Review, July 1991, p. 17. Emphasis added.

13. Ibid., p. 17.

14. Ibid., p. 19.

15. Ibid., p. 19.

16. Ibid., pp. 20-1.

17. Ibid., pp. 21-3, When considering the overall effects of displacement, it is also interesting to note that only 32.4% of Black women who were displaced were married, compared with 60.6% of displaced white women. p. 18. In 1987, 79% of Black children below the official poverty line lived in female-headed households, compared to less than half of white children. Sara E. Rix, ed., *The American Woman 1990-91: A Status Report*, Norton: New York, 1990. Shifts in economic location during recessions reflect the process of collapse and adjustment, a motion which is visible in both oppressor and oppressed nations. During the 1990 recession, certain movements (although at this writing preliminary) are instructive. For example, the percentage of employed white people who work in managerial and professional specialty jobs increased during the recession (Oct. 1990-Oct. 1991) to 27.7% from 27.1%. During the same period the percentage of Black people working in these areas decreased slightly, to 16.5% from 16.8%. Conversely, the percentage of white people working in those jobs classified as technical, sales and administrative support decreased (31.1% to 31.0%), while increasing for Black workers (27.7% to 28.6%). “Employment and Earnings, U.S. Department of Labor,” Bureau of Labor Statistics, November 1991. p. 11. [During the “recovery” time of October 1993 to October 1994, the ratio of Black to white official unemployment rates rose from 2.0 to 2.3. For youth aged 16-19, the ratio rose from 2.2 to 2.7 during the same time. (Bureau of Labor Statistics November 1994 report.) -MC12]

18. Ibid., pp. 10-11. Note also that unemployment for white women is lower than for white men, in contrast to the wide disparity in the reverse for Black people.

19. The special section of the Wall Street Journal from which these figures came was promoted for months, and featured dramatic full-page ads by some of the USA’s most influential corporations, promising commitments to Black entrepreneurship. In an attempt to make the best of a grim situation, and avoid disappointing advertisers, the lead article was titled, “Short-term despair, long-term promise.” See “Black Entrepreneurship,” Wall Street Journal, 4/3/92, section R. There is a dialectical tension between Black-led efforts for integration as a progressive demand, and the role of integration in weakening national cohesion and political power. This is certainly also seen in relation to the function of Black-owned businesses, desired by both bourgeois nationalists and Euro-Amerikan integrationists, for different reasons; the struggle then is over the form of these enterprises and their role in the overall economies versus Black

economies.

20. Maryland created a state development bank for minority business lending, and guaranteed a certain percentage of government contracts to business which met stringent and highly selective criteria for qualifications. The resemblance to an International Monetary Fund program here is inescapable.

Building United Front, Surrounded by Enemies: Case Study of the U\$. Housing Market Decline

Wiawimawo of MIM(Prisons) August 2010

United Front is the theory of uniting different groups across class lines for a common goal or interest, while maintaining independence where those groups disagree. The application of united front theory is about recognizing different contradictions in society and utilizing them in the interests of the international proletariat. The primary united front is the Anti-Imperialist United Front, which is made up of the majority of the world's people whose material interests lie in defeating imperialism. This is a strategic united front based on the principal contradiction.

In this article we will address a couple of contemporary issues in the United States and analyze their potential for united front work. We'll see that many of the big conflicts in a First World country are between the enemy classes, but that does not always mean we sit on the sidelines. Some forms of united front are tactical and require fast action based on thorough knowledge. To successfully navigate the potential for united front in the First World that serves the interests of the Third World proletariat we must first have a correct analysis of our conditions. The first section of this article provides a quick background to get us started.

Land, Housing and the Settler Nation

One of the arguments made against the labor aristocracy thesis is that corporations have no interest in sacrificing profit to pay First World workers more, and there is no corporate conspiracy to enforce such a policy. This is based in the theory of free market capitalism, or only reading the beginning chapters of Marx's *Capital* and treating that as an accurate model of reality in all places for all time. As a class, capitalists do depend on the labor aristocracy, not just politically, but economically as consumers and cogs in their growing pyramid scheme of finance capital. And there is at least one place where the U\$. imperialists can exert their will as a class (more and more these days) - it's called the U\$. government. The

promotion of home ownership by the feds is one of the biggest examples of the imperialists consciously building a labor aristocracy within the heart of the empire.

Home ownership has been a staple of American wealth since the settlers stole this land from the First Nations and built their homesteads on it. The net worth of American families compared to First Nations and those descended from slaves in the U\$. is one legacy of this form of primitive accumulation. While land ownership among the earliest European invaders was 100% (that's why they came to the Americas), by the 1775 War of Independence, land ownership was still at 70% for the Euro-American nation.(1) Arghiri Emmanuel pointed out that American wages were able to stay so high in this early period of capitalist development, even as land ownership ceased to be universal, because the abundant "free" land stolen from the First Nations provided a fallback plan for European settlers.(2) This primitive accumulation through genocide was the basis for wealth that the American labor aristocracy enjoyed as industrialization transformed more of the settlers into wage laborers.

Following the inter-imperialist struggles of WWI, the United States became the dominant imperialist power. The influx of wealth that came with this allowed for the integration of southern and eastern European immigrants into the white nation leading up to the Great Depression.(1) From 1900 to 1950, home ownership rates in the United States averaged about 45%, with the lowest rates in the Black Belt South and the highest in European dominated northwest states.(3) After the economic recovery that came with the spoils of WWII, the United States embarked on the suburbanization of America with numerous incentives from the federal government to bring home ownership above 60% again.

Since 1960, home ownership has stayed above 60% for U\$. citizens as a whole.(4) This rate was above 70% for white Americans in recent years, but the census does not have comparable statistics by race going back very far. Blacks and Latinos are just under 50% for rates of home ownership, even though national oppression has ensured that they currently face foreclosure disproportionately.

Emmanuel's theories in *Unequal Exchange* demonstrate how the significantly higher incomes of people in the First World actually transfer wealth to the imperialist countries from the Third World, reinforcing their economic advantage. Similarly, the oppressor nation has equity and is able to increase wealth in ways that the internal semi-colonies have not been able to do despite access to exploiter level jobs. All of this fits with the general trend of capitalism, which is the accumulation of capital.

The more you have, the more you tend to get.

Collapse of the U\$. Housing Market

The left wing of white nationalism (whether self-described anarchists, socialists, Maoists or Democrats) has been saying that the increase in home foreclosures is an indication of the heightening contradictions between the Amerikan proletariat and the capitalists. These people defend the stolen land that was the foundation of wealth for settler Amerika, and the modern home ownership pyramid scheme that is the foundation of the Amerikan dream today.

Not only have millions of people lost their homes to foreclosure in recent years, but fear-mongers point out that the "2008 sub-prime mortgage market resulted in the disappearance of \$13 trillion in American household wealth between mid-2007 and March 2009... on average, U.S. households lost one quarter of their wealth in that period." (5) Such alarmists ignore that Amerikans gained \$10 trillion from 2006 to 2007 to reach an all-time high, and that net worth of the country's citizens has generally gone up at increasing rates since WWII. (6) The bigger ups and downs in all financial markets are certainly signs of crisis, but to act like Amerikans are being sunk to Third World conditions in 2010 is ludicrous. If only these activists would cry so loud for those who really have had to live in Third World conditions for their whole lives and for generations!

Most, if not all, of the loss in Amerikans' net worth is accounted for by stock portfolios and values of homes (which are bought and sold like stocks these days); in other words losses in finance capital. Traditionally, the petty bourgeoisie in Marxism was not exploited, nor did it significantly exploit others. To claim that those who reap profits from investments of finance capital are anything less than petty bourgeoisie is a rejection of Marxist definitions. With home ownership around 68% in recent years, that is a solid two thirds of people in the United States who fall squarely into the category of petty bourgeoisie or higher, including 50% of Blacks and Latinos (minimum). This group is 210 million people, or only 3% of the world's population in 2010, yet they hold more net wealth than the total market capitalization of all publicly traded companies in the world. (7)

Our critics point to the great wealth inequalities within the United States as reason to organize Amerikans for revolution. So let's just look at the bottom 80% of Amerikans, who owned 15% (a mere scrap from the table if you will) of the net wealth in the United States in 2007 (and this was a 15-year low for them). (8) While their share has decreased a few percentage points since 1983, total net worth in the United States has increased by

almost 5 times. Therefore the lowest 80% of Amerikans went from about \$2.2 trillion in net worth in 1983 to almost \$10 trillion in 2007. (Two trillion dollars could eliminate world hunger for the next 66 years, until 2076. (9)) "Middle class" Amerika has assets that are greater than the GDP of China, (10) the world's industrial powerhouse representing about 20% of the world's population. That's comparing just the Amerikan "middle class" and "poor" to the whole nation of China, including its well-developed capitalist class.

Since the proletariat, by definition, has negligible net worth in the form of assets, let's look at their income. (11) Income generally increases proportionately with net worth across the globe. (12) Almost half of the world's population lives on less than \$1000 per year. That is 3.14 billion people living on less than \$3 trillion in a year. (13) Now before we condemn Amerikans' huge assets, let's make sure that they just aren't better at saving and investing their money than the proletariat. In 2005, the wealthiest 20% of the world accounted for 76.6% of total private consumption. The poorest fifty percent accounted for only 7.2% of consumption. (13) A conservative estimate leaves us with Amerikans, on average, consuming at least 27 times the average person in the poorest half of the world. (14) So money management skills cannot explain Amerika's huge net worth.

A just, sustainable human society requires the Amerikan labor aristocracy to be brought down to consumer levels much closer to the Third World. But this little exercise demonstrates that this is far from happening, despite the alarmists' cries.

Ultimately, the contradiction we're describing is between the labor aristocracy and the imperialists. The imperialists, in particular finance capital, are a dynamic, opportunist class. In contrast, the labor aristocracy benefits from stability of the status quo. The finance capitalists were able to make quick profits by selling the labor aristocracy short, so Amerikans are pissed. While perhaps pushing the labor aristocracy towards fascism, the finance capitalists are also undercutting the consumerism of Amerikans that their system depends on so much. What we are witnessing is an internal contradiction in the imperialist system playing out. Both groups control trillions of dollars in super-profits from the Third World, and the Anti-Imperialist United Front has no interest in one of them getting more than the other. We need to keep sitting this one out.

Migration to the United States

As discussed above, high wages and ballooning housing values reinforce themselves in our current economic system, making the rich richer. However, neither could be maintained

without erecting a border outside of which these two things cannot flow. Therefore, keeping wages and housing values high is directly linked to the battle over increasing repression of migrant laborers within U.S. borders. The contradiction in this struggle is between oppressed nations who are trying to gain access to jobs in the United States and the oppressor nation that is trying to keep them out. This challenge to imperialist country privilege indicates that the battle for migrant rights is part of the anti-imperialist struggle.

While Third World people and some Amerikan youth faced Amerikan labor aristocrats on the streets, it was the U.S. District Court that put in place an injunction on most of the provisions of Arizona's Senate Bill 1070 (SB1070), in light of a lawsuit filed by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) against the state of Arizona. The DOJ held that immigration was under federal jurisdiction, and that they had a plan for the whole country to balance its various interests related to immigration that Arizona would not be allowed to mess up.

The interest of the bourgeois internationalists is in having free access to markets and labor, not to mention international relations. This camp includes the federal government and their finance capitalist backers as well as smaller businesses that only operate in the United States, but depend on migrant labor. Their conflict is with other bourgeois interests and the bourgeoisified majority of Amerikans whose position of privilege stems from the elitism of who is allowed to enter their fortress of jewels.

There is effectively a united front between the internationalism of the mass resistance to SB1070 on both sides of the Mexican border and the U.S. government acting on behalf of bourgeois internationalism. And for now, it is the imperialists who are really throwing a wrench in the works for Amerikans, even though the contradiction at its base is between oppressed nations and the oppressor nation.

A majority of Amerikans in a number of polls supported SB1070 or a similar law. The highest percentage listed in one article, 79%, did not agree that "illegal aliens are entitled to the same rights and basic freedoms as U.S. citizens."⁽¹⁵⁾ This is the definition of Amerikan chauvinism. At best, one fifth of U.S. citizens don't think they deserve more than other humyn beings by virtue of being born in the United States. This is why we even keep an eye on the imperialists for glimmers of internationalism in the First World.

With Latinos, we can see how quickly this consciousness develops by tracking the percentage of coconuts in the population over time. A *Latino Decisions* poll found that 12% of second-generation Latino voters in Arizona supported SB1070.

By the fourth generation it had increased to 30% supporting the coconut position.⁽¹⁶⁾ Amerikanism is an insidious disease that has claimed significant portions of the internal semi-colonies of the United States.

Unite All Who Can Be United

While many dogmatists still criticize Mao for allying the Chinese Communists with the national bourgeoisie, we can take united front theory even further and come up with examples of progressive forces allying with the government of the imperialist superpower of the world against an oppressor nation. This goes to show that we cannot let ultra-left ideas of purity prevent us from allying with those who might help our cause.

The rightist errors in applying united front theory happen when we have incorrect lines elsewhere. Not recognizing a united front as working with an enemy class, or becoming convinced that other contradictions have been resolved, and not just pushed to a secondary position, are the main forms of rightism to guard against. Mao had to fight much rightism from other communists who thought the communists and national bourgeois forces should merge into one, where inevitably the reactionary bourgeoisie would lead because of their relative power. Rightism in the United States looks like people getting caught up with legislative battles over migrant rights. Without national liberation, there is no freedom for oppressed nations under imperialism. The imperialists will always oppose that, just as the Nationalists fought the Communists in civil war once the Japanese were forced out.

We do not seek unity for the sake of unity. We seek unity that utilizes all the forces possible to tackle the principal contradiction, or battles that push the principal contradiction forward. When we find strategic unity with others, the united front also provides a basis for unity-criticism-unity, which advances the struggle and deepens the unity of revolutionaries and all oppressed people for a better future.

Notes:

1. J. Sakai, *Settlers: The Mythology of the White Proletariat*, Chicago: Morningstar Press, 1983, p. 10.
2. Arghiri Emmanuel, *Unequal Exchange: A Study of the Imperialism of Trade*, Paris: Monthly Review Press, 1972, p. 337. His theory of Unequal Exchange is greatly simplified in this article.
3. U.S. Census Bureau, Housing and Household Economic Statistics Division
4. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Homeownership_in_the_United_States
5. Arianna Huffington, *Third World America*, Crown Publishing, 2010.
6. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Graphic.png>
7. This is the theoretical price to buy all publicly held companies. It was as low as \$40 trillion in September 2008.
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Market_capitalization Meanwhile, Amerikan homeowners went from \$65.5 trillion in 2007 to \$54.2 trillion in 2009.
<http://srph.it/csOWKd>

8. *Wealth, Income, and Power*, UC Santa Cruz, August 2010.
9. Munir Daya, Commendable Philanthropy. *The Citizen*, 7 August 2010.
10. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_GDP_%28PPP%29
11. According to Wikipedia citations even the bottom quartile of U.S. citizens have no net wealth.
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wealth_in_the_United_States#cite_note-GWUS-2
12. Davies, James B. The World Distribution of Household Wealth. 5 December 2006.
13. Anup Shah, *Poverty Facts and Stats*, March 28, 2010.
14. While most Americans fall into the top 10%, all of them are in the top 20%, so to be conservative we will take 76.6 over 20 and compare to 7.2 over 50. We get a ratio of 3.83 : 0.144 or the average American consumes at least 26.59 times the amount of the average person in the bottom 50%.
15. Daniel B. Wood, Opinion polls show broad support for tough Arizona immigration law. *The Christian Science Monitor*, 30 April 2010.
16. Peter O'dowd, Some Latinos Support Arizona's New Immigration Law. *NPR*, 25 May 2010.

The Meaning of National Territory

May 1993
from MIM Theory #7
by MC12

"I'm not going to sit at your table and watch you eat, with nothing on my plate, and call myself a diner. Sitting at the table doesn't make you a diner, unless you eat some of what's on the plate. Being here in America doesn't make you an American. Being born here in America doesn't make you an American. No, I am not an American. I'm one of the 22 million black people who are the victims of Americanism. I don't see any American dream; I see an American nightmare."(1)

- Malcolm X

Regarding "territory," there is no contiguous Black nation within the United States, but whereas territory has not been contiguous, there has always been strong spatial cohesion, i.e. segregation. This arrangement has continued through the periods of great migration, and the settling of urban ghettos. It also crosses class lines to an extent, although, as in the case of language, a "place" in the dominant nation may be bought at a high economic and cultural price. But economic and cultural identities cross geographic distances through the media of mass communications and mass culture; social stimuli are filtered through the lenses of shared history and lived experience, producing a level of commonness in responses which is more dependent upon actual and perceived similarity of experience than it is upon direct territorial contiguity. Hence there may

be such a "territory" as "the ghettos," which has common elements identified by the people, despite variations of actual conditions and separations of geographic space.

The sociologist Aldon Morris noted that urban segregation in the South:

"facilitated the development of black institutions and the building of close-knit communities when blacks, irrespective of education and income, were forced to live in close proximity and frequent the same social institutions. ... In the typical Southern city, the black professional stratum constituted only about 3 percent of the black community, and its services had no market outside the black community. Skin color alone, not class background or gender, locked blacks inside their segregated communities. ... Cooperation between the various black strata was an important collective resource for survival."(2)

[The greatest levels of segregation are now in Northern urban areas. The top 10 segregated cities are all former industrial centers. In Gary, Ind., the most segregated city, 91% of Blacks would have to move for Blacks and others to be evenly mixed. Overall, levels of segregation have declined slightly since the 1960s, largely as a result of greater mobility by middle class Blacks.(4) These urban centers provide the basis for Black territories or separate Black nations. -MC12]

Here Stalin's rationale for the component of "territory" is instructive:

"A nation is formed only as a result of lengthy and systematic intercourse, as a result of the fact that people live together from generation to generation. But people cannot live together for lengthy periods unless they have a common territory."(3)

This is in a sense both a positive and negative definition. Most obviously, a strong argument can be made that Blacks in the United States, while obviously not completely homogenous, have lived "together" and conducted a systematic intercourse amongst themselves from generation to generation. This is the positive definition. But are we also to believe that because Blacks and Euro-Americans have also had a "systematic discourse" with each other, that neither could be considered a nation on its own? This latter insistence is only relevant if we are taking "territory" to be the factor which itself determines the development of a nation. Given the weight of other factors, the commonality of experience *within* the Black nation predominates.

Notes:

1. Quoted in J. Sakai, *Settlers: Mythology of the White Proletariat*, Morningstar Press: Chicago, 1983, p. 177.
2. Aldon Morris, *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement*. Free Press: New York, 1984. p. 3.
3. Ibid., p. 10.
4. Reynolds Farley & William Frey, "Changes in the Segregation of Whites from Blacks," *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 59, No. 1, 2/94. pp. 23-45.

Notes on Black English: Community of Language

May 1993

from MIM Theory #7

by MC12

At the beginning of Amerikan slavery, Euro-Amerika and its African laborers spoke different languages altogether, and African slaves spoke different languages amongst themselves. The colonies developed a new language amongst themselves. The colonists developed a new language partially distinct from the English motherland. The slaves would eventually learn to speak "English." In the process, however, they maintained aspects of the languages of their motherlands, and ultimately developed an "English" which was substantially different from that of their oppressors, with its own rules and structure.

Neither form of English - Black or "white" - was or is a completely unified whole. Within Euro-Amerika the variations of regional dialects are relatively minor, and certainly speakers from various parts of the country understand each other. Yet the hegemony of Northeastern dialects has persisted, a product of the continued political and economic hegemony of that region over the country as a whole. "Good" English, in that context, is English with "no" accent, i.e. Northeastern dialect (without the lower classes adaptations in urban centers like Boston or New York). White Southerners may no more use "y'all" in their academic papers than a strongly accented Georgian is permitted to anchor the CBS Evening News.

Within Black English, Southern and Northern differences have evolved, as have urban and rural differences. There is a class division in which those Black people entering the petit-bourgeoisie or intelligentsia adopt an English which is closer to white English – which is, simply, "more correct."

The hegemonic language is the tool for advancement and power, the competing dialects defined as objectively worse – less accurate, less expressive, less articulate, and (crucially)

oral as opposed to written. Thus, in order to advance within Amerikan society, Black people must abandon the spoken language of their ancestors, if not of that of their immediate families. This is an obvious handicap, one faced by national minorities within dominant nations throughout the world – Kurds in Turkey, Palestinians in Israel, speakers of Quechua in Peru.(1) Such as use of hegemonic language is rooted in colonialism itself, the origin of modern national oppression, in which at first a minority of subjects were taught the language of the metropole in preparation for their service to their oppressors. (2) The rapid integration of European immigrants has included to a great extent linguistic integration and acceptance – a product of access to integrated education, employment and cultural structures which were largely made unavailable to Blacks.(3)

Any question of language with regard to the Black nation within U.S. Borders must not be hampered by constraints on thinking overly determined by geopolitical borders. A Black Southerner and a white person from Vermont speak languages more different than a Swede and a Norwegian, yet rarely does anyone seriously question the distinction of Sweden and Norway as two nations.

Notes:

1. Peruvian Jose Carlos Manategui, who wrote theories of internal colonialism in the 1920s and 1930s, wrote: "The term gamonalismo designates more than just a social and economic category: that of the latifundistas or large landowners. It signifies a whole phenomenon, Gamonalismo is represented not only by gamonales but by a long hierarchy of officials, intermediaries, agents, parasites, etcetera. The literate Indian who caters the service of gamonalismo turns into an exploiter of his own race." (Emphasis added.) The key word there is "literate," signifying those Indians who abandoned Quechua and learned Spanish. See Critobal Kay, *Latin American Theories of Development and Underdevelopment*, Routledge: London, 1989. pp. 58-87.

2. In some cases, colonial authorities attempted to seize control of existing languages among the colonized. In Indochina, the French adopted and taught a romanized phonetic script to help enforce a cultural and political break with China. See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, Verso: London, 1991. p. 126. But Anderson makes the colonial languages the basis for new anti-imperialist nations, without recognizing that the languages only represented the superstructural reflections of colonial reality (as opposed to "imagination"....).

3. Between 1980 and 1988 ten U.S. States adopted some form of "English only" laws, four of them by popular vote over the objections of legislators, for a total of twelve states with such laws in effect. (In California, despite the objection of almost all mainstream politicians and all the major newspapers, 73% voted for official English, winning a majority in every county, 84% voted for an English language amendment in Florida.) The proponents of these laws, threatened by increased Asian and Latino immigration, demand: commit the ultimate act of assimilation or face exclusion from public life and therefore power. See Jack Citrin, Beth Reingold, Evelyn Walters and Donald P. Green, "The Official English' Movement and the Symbolic Politics of Language in the United States." *Western Political Quarterly*, Vol. 43, No. 3, Sept. 1990.

Black Panthers: Revolutionaries or Welfare Workers?

Reprinted from MIM's pamphlet "Maoism and The Black Panther Party"

April 1992

revised November 1994

by MC5

The legacy of the Black Panther Party (BPP) is becoming more and more obscure thanks to those who have an interest in rewriting Panther history. Some make the BPP out to be a group tailored to be an historical antecedent for currently harmless political groups – a group with a purely nationalist bent that merely sponsored free breakfast and other survival programs.

For example, former Black Panther Chairperson and number two leader Bobby Seale is interviewed in the documentary *Berkeley in the 60s* saying that he did not understand anything about Mao while he was selling Mao's books in the 1960s. Another example is an Oakland newspaper dedicated to commemorating the Panthers which focuses on social work programs and government workers.

As time goes on, with the efforts of the bourgeoisie and sometimes the old born-again Christian Eldridge Cleaver (the ex-third-ranked Panther leader) or cookbook writing ex-Panther leader Seale, it becomes more important to understand the historical period in which the Panthers arose in order to understand just how revolutionary they were.

Here it is important to address the historical connection of the Panthers to Mao Zedong, the leader of the Chinese Communist Party, who was still alive when the Panthers formed and died. Whatever people may say now about the Panthers from the vantage point of the 1990s, the Black Panther Party of the young Huey P. Newton, Bobby Seale and Eldridge Cleaver was the Maoist party of the United States in the late 1960s.

MAO AND THE BPP

People who go back and read what the Panthers printed will find in their words: "The Black Panther Party is a Marxist-Leninist party."(1)

Here are the Panthers' "points of attention":

1. Speak politely
2. Pay fairly for what you buy

3. Return everything you borrow.
4. Pay for anything you damage.
5. Do not hit or swear at people.
6. Do not damage property or crops of the poor, oppressed masses.
7. Do not take liberties with women.
8. If we ever have to take captives do not ill-treat them.(2)

Here are the "Eight Points for Attention" of Mao's People's Liberation Army:

1. Speak politely to people.
2. Pay fairly for what you buy.
3. Return everything you borrow.
4. Pay for anything you damage.
5. Replace all doors and return all straw on which you sleep.
6. Dig latrines away from houses and fill them with earth when you leave.
7. Do not take liberties with women.
8. Do not ill-treat captives.(3)

The Panthers also adopted "3 Main Rules of Discipline" wholesale from Mao's People's Liberation Army:

1. Obey all order in all your actions.
 2. Do not take a single needle or a piece of thread from the poor and oppressed masses.
 3. Turn in everything captured from the attacking enemy.
- (4)

The very title of Huey Newton's book, *To Die for the People*, is literally from a Mao saying. Newton's statement dedicating the book says "To die for the ... racists .. is lighter than a feather. But to die for the people ... is heavier than any mountain and deeper than any sea."

Here Newton was paraphrasing a saying of Mao that was widely circulated in China: "In significance, to die for the interests of the people is weightier than Mount Tai, but to work hard and die for the fascists, for those who exploit and oppress the people, is lighter than a swan's down.(5)

Note here as well Mao's often used slogan "Serve the People." "Serving the People" is a chapter in Mao's "Little Red

Book,” circulated in the hundreds of millions throughout the world.

The introduction to Newton's book points out how Huey Newton wanted to be in tune with this chapter of Mao's “Little Red Book:”

“The lesson of the Chinese Revolution shows that it was the Communist Party which revolved a revolutionary vision for all mankind. ... The Black Panther Party being led by Huey P. Newton is now developing along similar lines with vision, practice, and struggle. Representative of this development is the change in Newton's title: he is no longer the Minister of Defense, but the Servant of the People.”(6)

It's not that Newton was a plagiarist. He pointed out his admiration for Mao Zedong as often as he could. It's just that some people chose not to listen to him.

“Huey made it a point that the revolutionary principles so concisely cited in the Red Book should be applied whenever they could. ... Where the book said, 'Chinese people of the Communist Party,' Huey would say, 'Change that to the Black Panther Party. Change the Chinese people to black people.’”(7)

Citing Mao Zedong was quite courageous on Newton's part. Many people supported Huey Newton as a Black leader. They liked his standing up to cops, racism and national oppression. But many people did not like to think of Newton's ideas as coherently linked together in an ideology of communism, as they were in reality. Even Bobby Seale, the number two leader in the Black Panther Party was publicly and outspokenly opposed to communism for quite some time, even after meeting Huey Newton.(8)

However, while Seale seemed to follow Newton's theoretical lead, other Panther leaders at their height had admiration for Mao as well. A white Students for Democratic Society (SDS) leader explains the lesson he learned from Eldridge Cleaver the Panther's third ranked leader:

“I was working with the Black Panther Party – this was 1967 – and I was for revolution and I respected the Black Panther Party. ... It took me two weeks to work up the nerve to finally ask Eldridge Cleaver why he had that poster in his house. ... he said, 'We've got that picture of Mao Tsetung up on the wall because Mao Tsetung is the baddest motherfucker on the planet Earth!'

“I respected the Black Panther Party. ... I

thought they were pretty heavy, and if Eldridge Cleaver was saying this was the baddest motherfucker on the planet Earth, I better go look into it!”(9)

When SDS was at its peak and just about to split in 1969, the Black Panthers advocated resolving their conflicts this way: “pick up the telephone and call Chairman Mao Tsetung' if they doubted that the Panthers were the vanguard organization in the U.S.”(10)

Seale had this to say about Huey and other people in his party:

“Huey was ten motherfuckers. He would say, 'Bobby, you and I know the principles in this Red Book are valid, but the brothers and the black folks don't, ... so what we have to do is to get the white radicals who are intellectually interested in the book, sell the book, make the money, buy the guns. ... and protect the community from the racist cops. And in turn we get brothers in the organization and they will in turn relate to the Red Book.’”(11)

The anti-communist turned communist Bobby Seale further pointed out

“You couldn't get around Huey. He knew the Red Book sideways, backwards and forwards. There are brothers in the Party that got to know the Red Book catty-corner. ... 'The Red Book and what else? The guns! The Red Book and what else? The gun!' That's what Huey would say.”(12)

To be true to the spirit of the Black Panther Party of 1966-1969, one should read Mao Zedong's work. The same could be said of the Philippines's New People's Army. Vietnam's revolutionary movement, the Eritrean People's Liberation Front and to a lesser extent the FMLN in El Salvador and countless other groups. In the twentieth century there is simply no greater influence in Third World liberation struggles than Mao Zedong, who set the example by liberating China from imperialism in 1949.

Notes:

1. Huey Newton, *To Die for the People*, Random House: New York, 1972. p. 25.
2. Philip S. Foner, ed. *The Black Panthers Speak*, J. B. Lippincott: New York, 1970. p. 6.
3. Roger Howard, *Mao Tse-Tung and the Chinese People*, Monthly Review: New York, 1977. p. 78. These points of attention were added to other rules already existing in 1928.
4. Foner, op cit., p. 6.
5. Mao Zedong, “Serve the People,” *Selected Works*, vol. IV Lawrence and Wishart: London, 1956. p. 219.

6. Newton, op cit., p. xviii.
7. Bobby Seale, *Seize the Time*, Random House: New York. 1970. p. 82.
8. Bobby Seale, *A Lonely Rage: The Autobiography of Bobby Seale*, Times Books: New York, 1978. p. 126.
9. Bob Avakian, "Summing Up the Black Panther Party," RCP Publications: Chicago, 1980. p. 3.
10. Jim O'Brien, "American Leninism in the 1970s," *Radical America*, p. 9.
11. Seale, op cit., p. 83.
12. Seale, op cit., p. 84.

THE BLACK PANTHER PARTY

Ten Point Platform & Program

October 1966

WHAT WE WANT
WHAT WE BELIEVE

1. WE WANT freedom. We want power to determine the destiny of our Black Community.

WE BELIEVE that black people will not be free until we are able to determine our destiny.

2. WE WANT full employment for our people.

WE BELIEVE that the federal government is responsible and obligated to give every man employment or a guaranteed income. We believe that if the white American businessmen will not give full employment, then the means of production should be taken from the businessmen and placed in the community so that the people of the community can organize and employ all of its people and give a high standard of living.

3. WE WANT an end to the robbery by the CAPITALIST of our Black Community.

WE BELIEVE that this racist government has robbed us and now we are demanding the overdue debt of forty acres and two mules. Forty acres and two mules were promised 100 years ago as restitution for slave labor and mass murder of black people. We will accept the payment in currency, which will be distributed, to our many communities. The Germans are now aiding the Jews in Israel for the genocide of the Jewish people. The Germans murdered six million Jews. The American racist has taken part in the slaughter of over fifty million black people; therefore, we feel that this is a modest demand that we make.

4. WE WANT decent housing, fit for the shelter of human beings.

WE BELIEVE that if the white landlords will not give decent

housing to our black community, then the housing and the land should be made into cooperatives so that our community, with government aid, can build and make decent housing for its people.

5. WE WANT education for our people that exposes the true nature of this decadent American society. We want education that teaches us our true history and our role in the present-day society.

WE BELIEVE in an educational system that will give to our people knowledge of self. If a man does not have knowledge of himself and his position in society and the world, then he has little chance to relate to anything else.

6. WE WANT all black men to be exempt from military service.

WE BELIEVE that Black people should not be forced to fight in the military service to defend a racist government that does not protect us. We will not fight and kill other people of color in the world who, like black people, are being victimized by the white racist government of America. We will protect ourselves from the force and violence of the racist police and the racist military, by whatever means necessary.

7. WE WANT an immediate end to POLICE BRUTALITY and MURDER of black people.

WE BELIEVE we can end police brutality in our black community by organizing black self-defense groups that are dedicated to defending our black community from racist police oppression and brutality. The Second Amendment to the Constitution of the United States gives a right to bear arms. We therefore believe that all black people should arm themselves for self- defense.

8. WE WANT freedom for all black men held in federal, state, county and city prisons and jails.

WE BELIEVE that all black people should be released from the many jails and prisons because they have not received a fair and impartial trial.

9. WE WANT all black people when brought to trial to be tried in court by a jury of their peer group or people from their black communities, as defined by the Constitution of the United States.

WE BELIEVE that the courts should follow the United States Constitution so that black people will receive fair trials. The 14th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution gives a man a right to be tried by his peer group. A peer is a person from a similar economic, social, religious, geographical, environmental,

historical and racial background. To do this the court will be forced to select a jury from the black community from which the black defendant came. We have been, and are being tried by all-white juries that have no understanding of the "average reasoning man" of the black community.

10. WE WANT land, bread, housing, education, clothing, justice and peace. And as our major political objective, a United Nations supervised plebiscite to be held throughout the black colony in which only black colonial subjects will be allowed to participate, for the purpose of determining the will of black people as to their national destiny.

Going Too Far With Mao

from MIM Theory #7

by MC5

Sometimes Black Panther Huey P. Newton went too far in taking inspiration of Mao Zedong and the Chinese Communist Party. Newton paraphrased Mao on guerilla warfare to be applied to the United States.(1)

He went on to adopt the above-ground strategy that Mao adopted in China:

"If the Chinese Revolution is investigated it will be seen that the Communist Party operated quite openly in order to muster support from the masses."(2) Newton left out Mao's observation that the conditions were fundamentally different in imperialist and oppressed countries. In countries such as China of the 1920s and 1930s, where there was a very weak government, communists could operate in many places with impunity. Not so in the imperialist countries.

Newton seems to have missed this not-often-seen quotation from Mao:

"Internally, capitalist countries practice bourgeois democracy (not feudalism) when they are not fascist nor at war ... and the form of struggle bloodless (non-military) ... the Communist Parties in the capitalist countries oppose the imperialist wars waged by their own countries if such wars occur ... the one war they want to fight is the civil war ... but this ... should not be launched until the bourgeois becomes really helpless."(3)

The Black Panthers and focoists after them also missed the following, also from Mao:

"The question of China's cities and

countryside today is qualitatively different from that of the cities and the countryside in capitalist countries abroad ... It is impossible to conceive of a protracted guerrilla war carried on by the peasants in the countryside against the cities in a country such as England, America, France ..." (4)

THE PANTHERS' LATER PERIOD

Even as late as April 1971, Newton was still quoting Mao on how to look at picking up the gun for struggle.(5)

In January 1970, Newton put it this way in response to the question "what has been the most important inspiration for the Black Panthers?"

"I think that not only Fidel and Che, Ho Chi Minh and Mao and Kim Il Sung, but also all the guerilla bands that have been operating in Mozambique and Angola, and the Palestinian guerillas who are fighting for a socialist world."

In 1970, when the Panthers were already past their peak, it was not such a great contradiction to say what Newton did. The differences of Mao with the Soviet Union had only been public since 1962. The differences with other countries and leaders in the socialist world were much murkier and did not become apparent right away. Mao agreed with Newton at the time in the generally rosy outlook supporting armed struggles of oppressed nationalities throughout the world.

When Nixon announced his plans to visit China, the Black Panthers called on China to negotiate for the oppressed of the world, including the 1971 Attica prison rebellion. While denouncing Nixon, Newton said about the Attica uprising, "this is why we approached Chairman Mao Tse-tung, because we know of his peace-and-freedom loving nature."(6)

Notes:

1. Huey P. Newton. *To Die for the People*, Random House: New York, 1972, p. 15.
2. Ibid., p. 17.
3. MIM Notes 47, p. 6.
4. Stuart R. Schram, ed. *The Political Thought of Mao Tse Tung*. Praeger: New York, 1969, p. 288. For more on focoism, order MIM Theory 5, available for \$5 post-paid.
5. Newton, op cit., p. 49.
6. Ibid., p. 205.

The Panther Legacy, Black Riders and Intercommunalism

Wiawimawo of MIM(Prisons) June 2016

Uhuru of the Black Riders Liberation Party - Prison

Chapter: 2016 marks the 50th anniversary of the founding of the original Black Panther Party for Self-Defense (BPP) by Dr. Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale. This year also marks the 20th anniversary of the founding of the Black Riders Liberation Party, the New Generation Black Panther Party for Self-Defense, under the leadership of General T.A.C.O. (Taking All Capitalists Out).

The original BPP arose out of an immediate need to organize and defend the New Afrikan (Black) nation against vicious pig brutality that was taking place during the 1960s and 70s; while at the same time teaching and showing us through practice how to liberate ourselves from the death grip of Amerikkkan-style oppression, colonialism and genocide through its various Serve the People programs.

The Black Riders Liberation Party (BRLP) came about in 1996 when former Bloods and Crips came together in peace and unity while at the Youth Training School (a youth gang prison) in Los Angeles. The BRLP, which follows the historic example set by the original BPP, is a true United Lumpen Front against pig brutality, capitalism, and all its systems of oppression.

The political line of the BRLP, as taught by our General, is Revolutionary Afrikan Inter-communalism, which is an upgraded version of Huey's Revolutionary Intercommunalism developed later in the party. Revolutionary Afrikan Intercommunalism is a form of Pan-Afrikanism and socialism. This line allows us to link the struggles of New Afrikans here in the Empire with Afrikans on the continent and in the diaspora. Thus Revolutionary Afrikan Intercommunalism is, in essence, revolutionary internationalism as it guides us towards building a United Front with Afrikan people abroad to overthrow capitalist oppression here in the United States and imperialism around the globe.

Our Black Commune Program is an upgraded version of the original BPP's Ten-Point Platform and Program, which includes the demand for treatment for AIDS victims and an end to white capitalists smuggling drugs into our communities. [The Black Commune Program also adds a point on ecological destruction as it relates to the oppressed. -MIM(Prisons)]

Mao recognized, as did Che, that every revolutionary organization should have its own political organ — a newspaper — to counter the psychological warfare campaign waged by the enemy through corporate media, and to inform, educate and organize the people. Like the original BPP newspaper, *The Black Panther*, the BRLP established its own political organ, *The Afrikan Intercommunal News Service*, and took it a step further by creating the "Panther Power Radio" station to

"discuss topics relative to armed self-defense against pig police terrorism and the corrupt prison-industrial complex," among other topics.

Like the original BPP, the BRLP have actual Serve the People programs. When Huey would come across other Black radical (mostly cultural nationalist) organizations, he would often ask them what kind of programs they had to serve the needs of the people because he understood that revolution is not an act, but a process, and that most oppressed people learn from seeing and doing (actual experience). The BRLP's programs consist of our Watch-A-Pig Program, Kourt Watch Program, George Jackson Freedom After-school Program, Squeeze the Slumlord project, BOSS Black-on-Black violence prevention and intervention program, gang truce football games, and Health Organizing Project, to name just a few. These lumpen tribal elements consciously eschew lumpen-on-lumpen reactionary violence and become revolutionaries and true servants of the people!

Finally, the BRLP continues the example set by the original BPP by actively building alliances and coalitions with other radical/revolutionary organizations. George Jackson stated that "unitary conduct implies a 'search' for those elements in our present situation which can become the basis for joint action." (1) In keeping with this view and the BPP vision of a United Front Against Fascism, in 2012 the BRLP launched the Intercommunal Solidarity Committee as a mechanism for building a United Front across ideological, religious, national and ethnic/racial lines.

While I recognize that the white/euro-Amerikkkan nation in the United States is not an oppressed nation, but in fact represents a "privileged" class that benefits from the oppression and exploitation of the urban lumpen class here in the United States and Third World people, there exist a "dynamic sector" of radical, anti-racist, anti-imperialist white allies willing to commit "class suicide" and aid oppressed and exploited people in our national liberation struggles. And on that note I say "Black Power" and "All Power to the People."

Wiawimawo of MIM(Prisons) responds: For this issue of *Under Lock & Key* we received letters attempting to feature the BRLP (like this one) as well as to critique them. For years, MIM(Prisons) and the readers of *ULK* have been watching this group with interest. We made a few attempts to dialogue directly with them, but the most concerted effort happened to coincide with the release of [an attack on us by Turning the Tide](#), a newsletter that has done a lot to popularize the work of the BRLP. No direct dialogue occurred. We thank this BRLP

comrade for the article above. The following is a response not directly to the above, but to the many statements that we have come across by the BRLP and what we've seen of their work on the streets.

On the surface the BRLP does have a lot similarities to the original BPP. It models its platform after the BPPs 10 point platform, which was modeled after Malcolm X's. The BRLP members don all black as they confront the police and other state actors and racist forces. They speak to the poor inner-city youth and came out of lumpen street organizations. They have worked to build a number of Serve the People programs. And they have inspired a cadre of young New Afrikans across the gender line. In order to see the differences between MIM, the BRLP, and other organizations claiming the Panther legacy today, we need to look more deeply at the different phases of the Black Panther Party and how their political line changed.

APSP, AAPRP, NBPP

The BRLP regularly presents itself with the tagline, "the New Generation Black Panther Party for Self-Defense." And it is not the first, or the only organization, to claim this mantel. The African Peoples' Socialist Party (APSP) was perhaps the first, having worked with Huey P. Newton himself at the end of his life. That is why in discussing the Panther legacy, we need to specify exactly what legacy that is. For MIM, the period of 1966 to 1969 represented the Maoist phase of the BPP, and therefore the period we hold up as an example to follow and build on. Since the time that Huey was alive, the APSP has shifted focus into building an African Socialist International in the Third World. We see this as paralleling some of the incipient errors in the BRLP and the NABPP that we discuss below.

While the APSP goes back to the 1980s, we can trace another contemporary organization, the All-African People's Revolutionary Party, to the 1960s.(1) The brain-child of Ghanaian President Kwame Nkrumah, the AAPRP in the United States was led by Kwame Toure, formerly Stokely Carmichael. The AAPRP came to embody much of the cultural and spiritual tendencies that the Panthers rejected. The BPP built on the Black Power and draft resistance movements that Carmichael was key in developing while leading the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC).(2) Carmichael left SNCC, joining the BPP for a time, and tried to unite the two groups. But the Panthers later split with SNCC because of SNCC's rejection of alliances with white revolutionaries, their promotion of pan-Afrikanism and Black capitalism. Carmichael's allies were purged from the BPP for being a "bunch of cultural nationalist fools" trying "to undermine the people's revolution..." "talking

about some madness he called Pan-Africanism."(3)

In the 1990s, we saw a surge in Black Panther revivalism. MIM played a role in this, being the first to digitize many articles from *The Black Panther* newspaper for the internet and promoting their legacy in fliers and public events. MIM did not seem to have any awareness of the Black Riders Liberation Party at this time. There was a short-lived Ghetto Liberation Party within MIM that attempted to follow in Panther footsteps. Then the New Black Panther Party began to display Panther regalia at public rallies in different cities. While initially optimistic, MIM later printed a critique of the NBPP for its promotion of Black capitalism and mysticism, via its close connection to the Nation of Islam.(4) Later the NBPP became a darling of Fox News, helping them to distort the true legacy of the BPP. Last year the NBPP further alienated themselves by brutalizing former Black Panther Dhoruba bin Wahad and others from the Nation of Gods and Earths and the Free the People Movement. While there is little doubt that the NBPP continues to recruit well-intentioned New Afrikans who want to build a vanguard for the nation, it is evident that the leadership was encapsulated by the state long ago.

Huey's Intercommunalism

Readers of *Under Lock & Key* will certainly be familiar with the New Afrikan Black Panther Party, which was originally an independent prison chapter of the NBPP. Their promotion of Maoism and New Afrikan nationalism was refreshing, but they quickly sided with Mao and the Progressive Labor Party against the BPP and more extreme SNCC lines on the white oppressor nation of Amerikkka. They went on to reject the nationalist goals of the BPP, embracing Huey's theory of intercommunalism. The NABPP and the BRLP both embrace forms of "intercommunalism" as leading concepts in their ideological foundations. And while we disagree with both of them, there are many differences between them as well. This is not too surprising as the theory was never very coherent and really marked Newton's departure from the original Maoist line of the Party. As a student of David Hilliard, former BPP Chief of Staff, pointed out around 2005, Hilliard used intercommunalism as a way to avoid ever mentioning communism in a semester-long class on the BPP.(5) In the early 1970s, Huey seemed to be using "intercommunalism" in an attempt to address changing conditions in the United States and confusion caused by the failure of international forces to combat revisionism in many cases.(6)

Probably the most important implication of Huey's new line was that he rejected the idea that nations could liberate

themselves under imperialism. In other words he said Stalin's promotion of building socialism in one country was no longer valid, and Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution was now true. This was in 1970, when China had just developed socialism to the highest form we've seen to date through the struggles of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, which also began 50 years ago this year. Huey P. Newton's visit to China in 1971 was sandwiched by visits from war criminal Henry Kissinger and U.S. President Richard Nixon. Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai, who would go on to foster normalized relations with the U.S. imperialists, stated that China was ready to negotiate or fight the United States in 1971.(7) The Panther visit was a signal of their development of the second option. But after 1971, Chinese support for the Panthers dissipated as negotiations with the imperialists developed.

A bigger problem with Huey's intercommunalism was how do we address the Amerikkkan oppressor nation when ey claims there are no more states, there are no more nations? In eir "speech at Boston College" in 1970 ey specifically refers to Eldridge Cleaver's ["On the Ideology of the Black Panther Party"](#) in order to depart from it. Newton rejects the analysis of the Black nation as a colony of Amerikkka that must be liberated. That Cleaver essay from 1969 has great unity with MIM line and is where we depart with the NABPP and BRLP who uphold the 1970-1 intercommunalism line of Huey's.(8)

Black Riders and NABPP Interpret Intercommunalism

To take a closer look at the BRLP itself, let us start with General T.A.C.O.'s essay "African Intercommunalism I." Tom Big Warrior of the NABPP camp has already written a review of it, which makes a number of critiques that we agree with. He calls out the BRLP for accepting "race" as a real framework to analyze society, yet the NABPP line also rejects nation based on Huey's intercommunalism. At times, the NABPP and BRLP still use the term nation and colony to refer to New Afrika. This seems contradictory in both cases. Tom Big Warrior is also very critical of the BRLP's claim to update Huey's theory by adding African cultural and spiritual elements to it. This is something the Panthers very adamantly fought against, learning from Fanon who wrote in *Wretched of the Earth*, one of the Panthers' favorite books: "The desire to attach oneself to tradition or bring abandoned traditions to life again does not only mean going against the current of history but also opposing one's own people".(9) This revision of intercommunalism is one sign of the BRLPs conservatism relative to the original BPP who worked to create the new man/womyn, new revolutionary culture and

ultimately a new society in the spirit of Mao and Che.

The NABPP is really the more consistent proponent of "revolutionary intercommunalism." In their analysis a worldwide revolution must occur to overthrow U.S. imperialism. This differs from the MIM view in that we see the periphery peeling off from imperialism little-by-little, weakening the imperialist countries, until the oppressed are strong enough to impose some kind of international dictatorship of the proletariat of the oppressed nations over the oppressor nations. The NABPP says we "must cast off nationalism and embrace a globalized revolutionary proletarian world view."(10) They propose "building a global United Panther Movement." These are not really new ideas, reflecting a new reality as they present it. These are the ideas of Trotsky, and at times of most of the Bolsheviks leading up to the Russian revolution.

Even stranger is the BRLP suggestion that, "once we overthrow the Amerikkkan ruling class, there will be a critical need to still liberate Africa."(11) The idea that the imperialists would somehow be overthrown before the neo-colonial puppets of the Third World is completely backwards. Like the APSP, the NABPP and the BRLP seem to echo this idea of a New Afrikan vanguard of the African or World revolution. MIM(Prisons) disagrees with all these parties in that we see New Afrika as being closer to Amerika in its relation to the Third World, despite its position as a semi-colony within the United States. (12)

The NABPP claims that "Huey was right! Not a single national liberation struggle produced a free and independent state."(13) And they use this "fact" to justify support for "Revolutionary Intercommunalism." Yet this new theory has not proven effective in any real world revolutions, whereas the national liberation struggle in China succeeded in building the most advanced socialist system known to history. Even the Panthers saw steep declines in their own success after the shift towards intercommunalism. So where is the practice to back up this theory?

We also warn our readers that both the NABPP and BRLP make some outlandishly false statistical claims in order to back up their positions. For example, the NABPP tries to validate Huey's predictions by stating, "rapid advances in technology and automation over the past several decades have caused the ranks of the unemployed to grow exponentially."(13) It is not clear if they are speaking globally or within the United States. But neither have consistent upward trends in unemployment, and certainly not exponential trends! Meanwhile, in an essay on the crisis of generational divides and tribal warfare in New Afrika the BRLP claims that the latter "has caused more deaths in just

Los Angeles than all the casualties in the Yankee imperialist Vietnam war combined!!!"(14) There were somewhere between 1 million and 3 million deaths in the U.\$. war against Vietnamese self-determination. [EDIT: Nick Turse cites Vietnam official statistics closer to 4 million] Los Angeles sees hundreds of deaths from gang shootings in a year. We must see things as they are, and not distort facts to fit our propaganda purposes if we hope to be effective in changing the world.

Black Riders

We will conclude with our assessment of the BRLP based on what we have read and seen from them. While we dissect our disagreements with some of their higher level analysis above, many of their articles and statements are quite agreeable, echoing our own analysis. And we are inspired by their activity focusing on serving and organizing the New Afrikan lumpen on the streets. In a time when New Afrikan youth are mobilizing against police brutality in large numbers again, the BRLP is a more radical force at the forefront of that struggle. Again, much of this work echoes that of the original BPP, but some of the bigger picture analysis is missing.

In our interactions with BRLP members we've seen them promote anarchism and the 99% line, saying that most white Amerikkans are exploited by capitalism. BRLP, in line with cultural nationalism, stresses the importance of "race," disagreeing with Newton who, even in 1972, was correctly criticizing in the face of rampant neo-colonialism: "If we define the prime character of the oppression of blacks as racial, then the situation of economic exploitation of human beings by human being can be continued if performed by blacks against blacks or blacks against whites."(15) Newton says we must unite the oppressed "in eliminating exploitation and oppression" not fight "racism" as the BRLP and their comrades in People Against Racist Terror focus on.

This leads us to a difference with the BRLP in the realm of strategy. It is true that the original BPP got into the limelight with armed confrontations with the pigs. More importantly, it was serving the people in doing so. So it is hard to say that the BPP was wrong to do this. While Huey concluded that it got ahead of the people and alienated itself from the people, the BRLP seems to disagree by taking on an even more aggressive front. This has seemingly succeeded in attracting the ultra-left, some of whom are dedicated warriors, but has already alienated potential allies. While BRLP's analysis of the BPP's failure to separate the underground from the aboveground is valuable, it seems to imply a need for an underground insurgency at this time. In contrast, MIM line agrees with Mao that the stage of

struggle in the imperialist countries is one of long legal battles until the imperialists become so overextended by armed struggles in the periphery that the state begins to weaken. It is harder to condemn Huey Newton for seeing that as the situation in the early years of the Panthers, but it is clearly not the situation today. In that context, engaging in street confrontations with racists seems to offer more risk than reward in terms of changing the system.

While the BRLP doesn't really tackle how these strategic issues may have affected the success and/or demise of the BPP, it also does not make any case for how a lack of cultural and spiritual nationalism were a shortcoming that set back the Panthers. BRLP also spends an inordinate amount of their limited number of articles building a cult of persynality around General T.A.C.O. So despite its claims of learning from the past, we see its analysis of the BPP legacy lacking in both its critiques and emulations of BPP practices.

While physical training is good, and hand-to-hand combat is a potentially useful skill for anyone who might get in difficult situations, there should be no illusions about such things being strategic questions for the success of revolutionary organizations in the United States today. When your people can all clean their rifle blind-folded but they don't even know how to encrypt their email, you've already lost the battle before it's started.

Finally, the BRLP has tackled the youth vs. adult contradiction head on. Its analysis of how that plays out in oppressed nations today parallels our own. And among the O.G. Panthers themselves they have been very critical as well, and with good cause. It is clear that we will need a new generation Black Panthers that is formed of and led by the New Afrikan youth of today. But Huey was known to quote Mao that with the correct political line will come support and weapons, and as conditions remain much less revolutionary than the late 1960s, consolidation of cadre around correct and clear political lines is important preparatory work for building a new vanguard party in the future.

Notes:

1. See our brief AAPRP study pack with a few MIM articles
2. Joshua Bloom and Waldo E. Martin, Jr., 2013, *Black Against Empire: The history and politics of the Black Panther Party*, Berkeley: University of California Press, p. 131.
3. Bloom, p. 346.
4. HC93, 15 May 2005, *The New Black Panthers: 1 outta 3 ain't bad*, archive of MIM etext.org site.
5. MIM, circa 2005, *An interview with a student of David Hilliard's: David Hilliard revises Black Panther history*, archive of MIM etext.org site.
6. MIM, circa 2000, "The bittersweet fruit of 'practicality': Ho Chi Minh's divisive legacy in the international communist movement", archive of MIM etext.org site.

7. Bloom, p. 350.
8. For a more theoretical analysis of Huey Newton's essays from 1971 on intercommunalism and other topics, see "Combatting Wrong Ideas from Huey Newton Late in Life" by a USW comrade, February 2006, and our intercommunalism study pack.
9. As cited by Linda Harrison in "On Cultural Nationalism", reprinted in Foner, Philip S., 1995, *The Black Panthers Speak*, New York: Da Capo Press, p. 152.
10. Tom Big Warrior Watts, 29 April 2016, "Revolutionary Intercommunalism: Not Some Cool Idea", rashidmod.com.
11. General T.A.C.O., 2 February 2013, "African Intercommunalism I".
12. see MC5, February 1998, "On the internal class structure of the internal semi-colonies", 1998 MIM Congress Session II.
13. NABPP, 29 September 2015, "In Search of the Right Theory for Today's Struggles: Revisiting Huey P. Newton's Theory of Revolutionary Intercommunalism", rashidmod.com.
14. General T.A.C.O., 2 February 2013, "African Inter-communalism part II: It is easy to criticize from the sideline but harder to struggle from the frontline".
15. Foner, p. 255.

Applying Lessons from the Black Panthers to our Current Struggle

USW11 of United Struggle from Within June 2016

As we reflect on the legacy of the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense (BPP), we are reminded that the struggle for national liberation continues. Fifty years ago, the Panthers emerged from similar conditions of national oppression to what we face today. Armed with Maoism and the gun, Panther leaders Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale set out to organize their Oakland community against police brutality and other social inequalities. And what they accomplished distinguished the BPP as the greatest revolutionary organization in the history of the New Afrikan/Black liberation struggle.

During its height, the BPP established itself as the vanguard of the revolutionary movement in the United States. Revisionists try to paint the Panthers as simple nationalists who only wanted to improve their community. But history proves otherwise, because the Panthers' revolutionary work went beyond the Serve the People programs they implemented. The BPP was a Maoist party which criticized the bankrupt ideas of cultural nationalism and Black capitalist reforms. They attacked revisionism in the Soviet Union, while offering troops to support the Vietnamese in their struggle to push out the Amerikan invaders, and upholding the progress of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China. It understood that the relationship between the Euro-Amerikan settler nation and the many oppressed nations internal to the United States was (as it still is today) defined by semi-colonialism, and that national

liberation was the only path forward. To this end, the Panthers formed strategic alliances and coalitions that broadened their mass base of support and unity. Eventually they succeeded in forming Panther chapters in virtually every major city, precipitating a revolutionary movement of North American oppressed nations vying for national liberation.

Despite this progress the BPP made serious mistakes, mistakes that arguably set the movement for national liberation back tremendously. Even though the Panther leadership adhered to Marxism-Leninism-Maoism (MLM), they failed to assess the changing landscape of social and political conditions, which inevitably led them to take up focoist positions. This error in analysis resulted in security issues as repression from the U.S. reactionary forces intensified. With J. Edgar Hoover's plan to destabilize and neutralize the revolutionary movement underway, the Panther leadership continued to promote a "cult of personality" around Newton instead of democratic centralism. Consequently, these mistakes placed such intense pressure on the party that it was unable to overcome the tide of repression.

Ultimately, the point of this article is to honor the revolutionary legacy of the BPP by demonstrating how the Panther practice is relevant to our current struggle. For our national liberation struggles to gain traction we must learn from the successes and failures of the most advanced revolutionary organization in U.S. history.

Fuck the Police!

"The Party was born in a particular time and place. It came into being with a call for self-defense against the police who patrolled our communities and brutalized us with impunity."(1)
— Huey P. Newton

There is no greater tragedy for the oppressed nation community than the unjust murder of one of its own at the hands of the pigs. The impact is two-fold. On one hand, police brutality demonstrates to members of the oppressed nation community that there are two sets of rules governing society, one for the oppressor and one for the oppressed. On the other hand, it removes all doubt from the minds of oppressed nationals that their lives are virtually worthless in the eyes of the white power structure.

This point was just as much a sobering reality during the Panther era as it is for us today. In *The Black Panthers Speak*, Phillip S. Foner cites a 1969 report that captured a snapshot of the police relations with the Oakland community. It read in part:

"...for the black citizens, the policeman has long since ceased to be — if indeed he ever was — a

neutral symbol of law and order...in the ghetto disorders of the past few years, blacks have often been exposed to indiscriminate police assaults and, not infrequently, to gratuitous brutality...Many ghetto blacks see the police as an occupying army..."(2)

Under these circumstances, the BPP was formed and began to transform the Oakland community in a revolutionary manner. (3) Newton and Seale understood that the terrorist actions by the pigs undermined the oppressed nation community's ability to improve its conditions. So they organized armed patrols to observe and discourage improper police behavior. These unprecedented actions by the Panthers gave them credibility within the community, particularly as community members experienced the positive effects brought about by the patrols. Therefore, when the Panthers engaged in mass activities, such as the Free Breakfast for Children program, they did so with the full support of the community.

Naturally, the BPP met resistance from the local and state reactionary forces. Challenging the Gestapo tactics of the pigs and building institutions that served the needs of the oppressed was seen as too much of a threat by and to the white power structure. But the revolutionary movement had already picked up steam, and, given the momentous energy and support from the anti-war movement, it was not about to be derailed. It was upon this platform that the BPP spoke to the oppressed nations across the United States and saw its message resonate and take root within the consciousness of all oppressed peoples.

Today, we face the same challenge. Whether it's the pig murder of Denzil Dowell that mobilized the Panthers into action fifty years ago, or the more recent pig murder of Jamar Clark this past November, there has been no significant change in the conditions of national oppression that U.\$. internal semi-colonies are subjected to.

Police brutality continues to keep the oppressed nations from addressing a system of national oppression and semi-colonialism. But there is an even more sinister dynamic involved today. Mass incarceration, and the "War on Drugs" and "War on Crime" rhetoric and policies that fuel it, further divides the oppressed nation community against itself. With the lumpen section of these oppressed nation communities criminalized and incarcerated so too is the revolutionary potential for national liberation neutralized and restrained. Here, the Panther practice provides a blueprint for our current struggle in respect to revolutionary organizing.

Recently, we have seen the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement come into being in response to the unbridled pig

terrorism that occurs across U.\$. oppressed nation communities. So the basis for revolutionary organizing against the current system exists. Nonetheless, BLM is a reformist organization that advocates for integration and not liberation. What we need are Maoist revolutionary organizations — organizations that seek to build the political consciousness of oppressed nationals through mass activities and proletarian leadership similar to the Panther practice.

Maoism, not Focoism

Maoism demands that in determining correct revolutionary practice we must first proceed from an analysis of contradictions. This means that we must identify the contradiction that is principal to our situation, and then assess its internal aspects as well as its external relationships. In contrast, focoism "places great emphasis on armed struggle and the immediacy this brings to class warfare!"(4) Where Maoism takes account of the national question in its entirety and pushes the struggle for national liberation forward according to the prevailing conditions, focoism seeks to bring about favorable conditions for national liberation (or revolution) through the actions of a small band of armed individuals. To date Maoism has informed many successful people's wars; focoism, on the other hand, has mostly made the prospect for revolution much less likely.

In this regard, Newton, in developing the Panther practice, saw the international situation of the time as favorable to revolutionary organizing within the United States. Given the historic Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China representing the furthest advancement toward communism to this day, the national liberation wars of Afrika and Asia dealing blows to imperialism, and the Vietnam War stoking the fire of discontent and rebellion among sections of the white oppressor nation, Newton was correct in organizing and politicizing U.\$. oppressed nation communities for liberation.

Bloom and Martin explain in their book, *Black Against Empire*, that these conditions, in particular the anti-war movement, assisted the Panthers' organizing efforts greatly.(5) This coalition between the Panthers and the Peace movement was so dynamic that U.\$. veterans returning from Vietnam joined the BPP and other revolutionary organizations. The link between Vietnamese liberation and New Afrikan liberation (and other U.\$. oppressed nation liberation struggles) became a central point in building political consciousness.

Nonetheless, Newton took his analysis too far. It is clear that he believed the armed struggles abroad were inextricably tied to the U.\$. national liberation struggles. Newton maintained, "As

the aggression of the racist American government escalates in Vietnam, the police agencies of America escalates the repression of Black people throughout the ghettos of America."(6) From this standpoint, Newton assumed that the police brutality in U.S. oppressed communities created a military situation, to which a military response from the U.S. revolutionary movement was appropriate.

Newton's error was mistaking the weakness of imperialism abroad as indicative of a weak U.S. imperialist state. Instead of assessing the changing landscape of social and political conditions, created by a period of concessions by U.S. imperialists, the Panthers continued to organize as if the stage of struggle was an armed one.(7) Even when Newton recognized the dramatic changes and began to adapt, a split occurred within the Party, as a faction held that revolution was imminent.(8)

With respect to our current struggle, we are in the stage of building public opinion and independent institutions of the oppressed. In this work we must establish a united front of all those who can be united against imperialism.

Therefore, when we see the Ferguson or Baltimore protests against pig terrorism descend into scenes of mayhem and senseless violence we must criticize these methods of resistance. Many of the individuals who engage in these spontaneous uprisings mistakenly believe that this will bring about some change or vindicate the wrongs done to them and their community. The only thing these focoist actions change, however, is the focus from pig terrorism to people terrorizing their own community. This basically undermines our ability to organize and build public opinion in this stage of struggle.

Part of this problem lies in the fact that there is no revolutionary organization at this time representing these oppressed nation communities. There is no BPP or Young Lords Party going into these communities and doing agitation and organizing work. As a result, a lack of political consciousness prevails among these communities, underscoring the need for a revolutionary organization.

A Maoist party would guide the U.S. oppressed nations with a concrete revolutionary practice and strategy. This revolutionary organization would use MLM study and analysis to determine the correct actions and methods to take in order to liberate those oppressed nations and avoid the pitfalls of focoism.

Ultimately, this lesson can be summed up in one sentence: "Maoism warns that taking up the gun too soon, without the proper support of the masses, will result in fighting losing battles."(9)

On the Necessity of Security Culture

Furthermore, the Panthers' incorrect analysis of conditions that led to focoist positions eventually compromised the security of the Party as well. Once the period of concessions began to sap support for the BPP's militant posture, FBI head J. Edgar Hoover was able to ratchet up repression against the Panthers. This was seen most clearly when agent provocateurs were able to infiltrate and exploit the focoist tendencies held by some Panthers. Undercover FBI agents would literally join the BPP and begin to incite other members to engage in criminal activities or "make revolution." These repressive measures, their ever-increasing frequency and intensity, began to take a detrimental toll on the Panthers.

Make no mistake, since day one of the BPP's organizing efforts it faced repression. Armed New Afrikan men and wimmin organizing their community toward revolutionary ends was intolerable for the white power structure. However, the anti-war movement created such a favorable climate for revolutionary organizing that the more reactionary forces attacked the BPP, the more support the Panthers received, the more its membership grew and its chapters spread throughout the country.

But when those favorable conditions shifted, the BPP's strategy didn't. The Panthers continued to operate above ground, maintaining the same militant posture that initially placed them in the crosshairs of Hoover's COINTELPRO. Ironically, Newton was well versed in the role of the Leninist vanguard party. Ey explained that "All real revolutionary movements are driven underground."(10) Though, by the time Newton put this principle into action and attempted to adapt to the changing situation the Party as a whole was thoroughly divided and beaten down by wave after wave of relentless repression.

For us, the important point to draw from this lesson is the assessment of conditions for revolutionary organizing. Because we live in a point in time where we consume our daily social lives openly through various social media, it is easy to forget that the reactionaries are observing. We must therefore place a high priority on security culture as it pertains to our organizing efforts going forward. In addition, we must strongly emphasize the importance of avoiding death and prison. A robust security culture will protect our organizing efforts and dull the blows of repression that are certain to come.

Currently, we face a strong imperialist state that is more than capable of disrupting a potential revolutionary movement. This point is evidenced by the fact that Hoover's repressive practices are "mirrored in the far-reaching high-tech surveillance of the

US National Security Agency."(11) Maintaining a strong revolutionary organization thus requires us to maintain strong security practices informed by MLM theory and practice.

Party Discipline over Party Disciple

Hystory is a testament that some revolutionary organizations and movements have fallen victim to the "cult of persynality." This is more true in an imperialist society as bourgeois individualism nurtures a response in people to associate or reduce organizations and movements to the characteristics of one persyn. And the BPP was no exception in this regard.

Newton was very intelligent, charismatic, and embodied qualities of a true leader. In truth, ey was a symbol of black power and strength that had been missing from the New Afrikan nation for centuries. The militant image that Newton projected was undeniably magnetic and a source of inspiration for U.\$. oppressed nations.

Yet, the BPP relied too heavily on Newton as an individual leader and not enough on the party as a whole. Eir ideological insights and theoretical contributions were unmatched within the party. And to a certain extent this was a weakness of the party. Newton was the primary source of oxygen to the party whereas other members of leadership didn't meet the demands that the revolutionary movement required of the party.

Bloom and Martin hint at this cult of persynality around Newton, arguing "In late 1971... Hilliard recalls that Newton was surrounded by loyalists who applauded Newton's every action, challenged nothing, and would do anything to win his approval."(12) For example, when Newton was imprisoned on the bogus pig murder charges, the BPP adapted its struggle and practice toward the "Free Huey" movement. Even Eldridge Cleaver, who was one of those members of leadership that reneged on eir revolutionary principles, criticized this move that ultimately confused mass work with party work. The oppressed masses began to associate the party and the Panthers with freeing Newton and not liberating themselves. The BPP had let its practice become dictated by Newton who was for the most part disconnected from the people and community because of eir imprisonment.

The Panthers should have developed a strong party discipline, one based on democratic centralism. Democratic centralism means that any decisions that the party makes is debated and discussed through a democratic process. Even if party members do not agree with the decisions, they must support them in public. This ensures that the party maintains unity in the face of reactionary forces. Those party members

who are still in disagreement with the decision have the opportunity to utilize the democratic process of the party and make their case. Overall, this strengthens the theoretical basis of the party and does not allow one persyn to hijack it or undermine it.

The thrust of this lesson is not to discourage party members from developing leadership. The revolutionary movement will certainly need all the leaders, in whatever role or capacity, which the struggle for national liberation demands. But the point is the importance of party discipline. Because as we see with the Panther practice many of the major mistakes stemmed from not maintaining party discipline. Democratic centralism would have promoted the space and opportunity for members to challenge and question decisions by Newton. And as members engaged in this process they would have developed their theoretical practice, shouldering some of the load that Newton, even while imprisoned, had to bear.

This is not to say that the Panthers would not have made mistakes. But with the same party discipline that saw the Bolsheviks lead the successful Russian Revolution of 1917 or the Chinese Communist Party execute at a high level throughout the many stages of its liberation struggle, surely the Panthers could have avoided the divisions that were largely fomented by FBI interference. In addition, proper application of democratic centralism should have led to the distinction between party cadre and mass organizations to take on campaigns like "Free Huey" and doing the support work to run Panther programs. Such a distinction would have helped prevent the decline of the Oakland-based party into reformism as conditions changed.

What our current struggle does not need is a party disciple or some demagogue who is proclaimed our savior. What will liberate the U.\$. oppressed nation is a Maoist revolutionary organization connected and related to the masses. Consolidating the mass line is a necessary part of applying democratic centralism within the Party.

Conclusion

We are at a critical point in the hystory of U.\$. national liberation struggles. No longer can we continue to allow the police to murder us with impunity or for our communities to exist merely as pathways to imprisonment. Revolutionary nationalism is needed. And that begins with relating the thought and struggle of the most advanced revolutionary organization in U.\$. hystory to our current struggle.

This article has highlighted a few mistakes of the BPP. But in no way does this discard the Panther practice overall. On the

contrary, our path to national liberation has been illumined by the lessons drawn from the revolutionary legacy of the BPP. It is in this spirit that this article honors the Black Panther Party, and represents a theoretical step on that path to liberation.

Power to the people!

Notes:

1. Huey P. Newton, 2009, *Revolutionary Suicide*, New York: Penguin Group, p. 355.
2. Philip S. Foner, 2014, *The Black Panthers Speak*, Chicago: Haymarket Books, p. 40.
3. Newton and Seale formed the Black Panther Party, its platform and program, during the spring of 1966. Seale became Chairman of the Party, and Newton chose the position of Minister of Defense. While Newton revealed in his autobiography, *Revolutionary Suicide*, that he was reluctant to lead formally, he was in fact the ideological leader of the Party. The revolutionary movements occurring across the world at that time heavily influenced Newton and Seale in which Mao Zedong, Che Guevara and Frantz Fanon became prime sources for the Panther ideology. However, Malcolm X's "by any means necessary" message of self-defense informed the vision of the Black Panther Party. Newton was convinced that the BPP was acting in the spirit of Malcolm X's legacy.
4. See MIM (Prisons) Glossary
5. Joshua Bloom and Waldo E. Martin, Jr., 2013, *Black Against Empire: The history and politics of the Black Panther Party*, Berkeley: University of California Press, p. 347.
6. Bloom (2013), p. xxix.
7. Bloom (2013), p. 366. Bloom and Martin contend that this period of concessions consisted of increased access of petty bourgeois New Afrikans to social and political representation, and a scaling down of the Vietnam War to appease the anti-war movement. Consequently, much of the revolutionary fervor that once existed during the BPP's height began to dissipate quickly. The support for the ultra-militant BPP ran out and a corresponding demand for more moderate positions filled the void. This put the Panthers in a compromising position as they had relied too heavily on support from these moderate groups. For example, the Panther practice led to arrests that required legal assistance from outside groups. And these groups who were once fervent supporters of the BPP's militant posture now wanted more moderation on the part of the BPP as concessions began to be distributed. In the end, the party was driven apart because some members believed revolution and national liberation was imminent while a Newton-led faction supported a change in strategy.
8. Newton (2009), p. 355. Well after the rise and fall of the Black Panther Party, Newton acknowledges that the Panthers were too militant and that he misjudged the changing social and political landscape of U.S. imperialist society at that time as it related to the revolutionary movement. He notes: "The emphasis of weapons was a necessary phase in our evolution... We saw this action as a bold step in making our program known and raising the consciousness of the people. But we soon discovered that weapons and uniforms set us apart from the community... We saw ourselves as the revolutionary 'vanguard' and did not fully understand then that only the people can create the revolution... The people misunderstood us and did not follow our lead in picking up the gun... Perhaps our military strategy was too much of 'a great leap forward.'" This was a cardinal error because the Party became disconnected from the masses and got too far ahead that they couldn't keep up. The Panthers could have shifted from a more militant posture to one that was still critical and confrontational but based on actually politicizing the masses.

9. MC42 & MC86 of MIM, "Black Panther Party Paved the Way," from the pamphlet *Maoism and The Black Panther Party*, April 1992.
10. Foner (2014), p. 66.
11. Foner (2014), p. xvi.
12. Bloom (2013), p. 381—2

Fighting the Patriarchy: George Jackson and the Black Panther Party

PTT of MIM(Prisons) May 2016

A criticism often made of the Black Panther Party (BPP) lies in errors it made around addressing the patriarchy. Most of these criticisms are attempts at subreformism, which is the approach of resolving conflict on an individual or interpersonal level in an attempt to resolve social problems. But the patriarchy is a system of oppression. It manifests in interpersonal interactions, but can't be stopped without addressing the system of oppression itself. Just by the very fact that the BPP was organizing for national liberation under a Maoist banner, it was making more advances toward a world without gender oppression than all of their pseudo-feminist critics combined.

George Jackson did have some bad gender line in *Soledad Brother: The Prison Letters of George Jackson*, which covers the years 1964-1970. To wimmin searching for their place in an anti-imperialist prison struggle, the most alienating examples are where Jackson says wimmin should just "sit, listen to us, and attempt to understand. It is for them to obey and aid us, not to attempt to think." (p. 101) Later in the book after Jackson encounters some revolutionary Black wimmin, he can't help but to sexualize their politics. Much like in our everyday society, *Soledad Brother* tells wimmin their role in this struggle is to shut up or be sexualized. These were not consciously worked out analyses of gender but instead Jackson's subjective responses to frustration and excitement.

A challenge to all revolutionaries is to take an objective approach to our scientific analysis. This is very difficult. To wimmin struggling within the national liberation movements, looking at the social and historical context of these remarks is imperative to overcoming this alienation from sexist brothers in struggle. Jackson was reared in the United States in the 1940s and 50s, with time spent in youth detention facilities. He entered the hyper-masculine prison environment at the age of 20. Jackson's social context was our fucked up patriarchal society, and is similar to many of our contributors whose scope of perspective is limited by the conditions of their confinement. Where our sisters need to not split over subreformism, our

brothers also need to work to overcome their empiricism and subjectivism in how they approach uniting with wimmin against imperialism and patriarchy.

It was after the publishing of *Soledad Brother* that Jackson advanced to be a general and field marshal of the People's Revolutionary Army of the Black Panther Party. While *Soledad Brother* gives more of a look into the prison experience, in eir later work, *Blood In My Eye* (which was published by the BPP posthumously), Jackson lays out eir most advanced political analysis shortly before ey was murdered by the state on 21 August 1971. More than an author, Jackson was a great organizer. Panther and life-long revolutionary Kiilu Nyasha is a testimony to Jackson's abilities, indicating that subjectivity around gender did not prevent him from organizing seriously with wimmin.(1) Of course, Jackson's biggest legacy was organizing men in prison. Eir ability to organize strikes with 100% participation in eir unit serves as an counterexample to those in California today who say we cannot unite across "racial" lines. It's impressive all that Jackson accomplished in developing eir politics and internationalism, and organizing prisoners, considering all the barriers Amerikkka put in the way.

Jackson was a good representative of the BPP's mass base, and the BPP was correct in organizing with Jackson and others with backward gender lines. If the Party hadn't been dissolved by COINTELPRO we can only guess at what advances it could have made toward resolving gender oppression by now. One thing is certain, it would have done a lot more to combat the patriarchy *for the majority of the world's inhabitants* than First World pseudo-feminism ever has or ever will.

Notes: Black August Commemoration: Part One, Women's Magazine, 14 September 2009.

New Afrikan Revolutionary Nationalism The Correct Path Forward (Part One)

a position paper by the Royal Council of the Black Order Revolutionary Organization
August 2014

"There is as much force in a black man's standing up and exclaiming after the manner of the 'old Roman' - I am an American citizen, as there was in the Irish-man who swore he was a loaf of bread, because he happened to be born in the bake oven ... I can hate this government without being disloyal, because it has stricken down my

manhood and treated me as a saleable commodity. I can join a foreign enemy and fight against it, without being a traitor, because it treats me as an ALIEN and STRANGER, and I am free to avow that should such a contingency arise I should not hesitate to take any advantage in order to procure indemnity for the future. I can feel no pride in the glory, growth, greatness or grandeur of this nation." - H. Ford Douglas

Intro

Many have never read or heard the above quote by H.Ford Douglas, which was made in 1854; but no doubt are familiar with the analogy as it was reused by Malcolm X in the 1960s - "because a cat has kittens in an oven, that don't make them biscuits." In the context that both of these statements were made, they were implying that just because New Afrikans (so-called Black/Afrikan-American people) were born in the United States, that doesn't make Us Amerikans.

The purpose of this paper is to briefly outline our position with regard to the existence of the New Afrikan nation here in North Amerika and to demonstrate why we uphold the line that New Afrikan Revolutionary Nationalism (NARN), as the correct political expression and the correct path forward for the liberation of the New Afrikan nation. And, that national independence and socialist development will not materialize, unless we wage, and win, a national(ist) revolution for land, independence and socialism.

"Political history shows the continuity of a [New Afrikan] nation in North America. [New Afrikan] struggles have taken the form of national liberation to varying degrees since before the United States was even formally a nation ... But we also look for the material basis for that nation, to better understand it and the political imperatives we face in seeking its liberation."(1)

For the sake of ideological clarity, BORO refers to the settlers of the United Snakes - "Amerikans" - as a de facto, oppressor nation. We use the "K" or triple k's (amerikkka), instead of a "c" to distinguish between the settler nation of outlaws to which we refer, and the widely recognized (and hence 'legitimate' or de jure) group, "Americans," which is indeed a misnamed entity supposedly including all citizens of the United Snakes. The "k" says that "America" is a lie, that the "United States" is an outlaw state "built on stolen land with stolen labor."

Why We Call Ourselves New Afrikan

Our people, when they landed on these shores were from different nations and tribes, with different cultures, languages, traditions, customs; etc. But thru our collective oppression and historic collective resistance, we developed socially, culturally, economically, etc; into an entirely NEW people. A NEW, Afrikan nation. Thus, our NEW national identity/nationality -- New Afrikan.

Think critically for a moment. "Do you recall the scene in the movie Roots -- we're in the slave ship and the brother says: talk to the sister or brother next to you. Learn their language, teach them your language. We must become one people!

"We didn't land on these shores with a collective identity as 'slaves,' 'negroes,' 'blacks,' -- not even as Afrikans. We arrived here as say, Ibo, or Fula. However, we had already begun to change, to develop an identity as a new people."(2) A new people, separate and distinct from all other people on the planet.

Later in this piece, we'll deal more with the terms nation and nationality, to further uphold and defend, our position.

What is BORO?

The Black Order Revolutionary Organization (BORO), is a New Afrikan revolutionary nationalist organization that is committed and dedicated to the liberation of the New Afrikan nation. Our primary task at this stage in our development is to raise the national consciousness and identity of New Afrikan people; to build public opinion for national liberation (revolution) and to build independent institutions of the oppressed that address their immediate needs.

While we are not, at the date of this writing, in an active recruiting stage, membership in BORO is incumbent upon two things -- revolutionary nationalism and scientific socialism. Those New Afrikans who believe they uphold these two cardinal principles belong in BORO. Those who do not, do not.

One major difficulty with this requirement is that many people and organizations who claim to uphold NARN are bourgeois nationalist frauds, and are misleading people who have less political awareness and consciousness. Our mission is to expose those frauds thru ideological struggle and scientific knowledge, and to offer a different method and application of struggle that will get us to REAL freedom.

BORO upholds the Huey P. Newton line that "there are two kinds of nationalism: revolutionary nationalism and reactionary nationalism. Revolutionary nationalism is dependent upon a

people's revolution with the end result being the people in power. Therefore, to be a revolutionary nationalist you would by necessity have to be a socialist. If you are a reactionary nationalist you are not a socialist and your goal is the oppression of the people..." BORO further upholds that cultural nationalism is an idealist form of nationalism that uses the past to establish an identity, rather than taking our destiny into our own hands and creating a new future.

Comrades who are not sure if they uphold NARN are reminded that it has the following features:

1. Belief that descendant New Afrikan people of enslaved Afrikans in the United \$nakes, make up a New, Afrikan nation entitled to land, reparations and self-government.
2. Belief that armed struggle will be necessary to realize our goal of national independence and socialist development. We believe that violence is necessary to end oppression because the oppressor never stops oppressing any other way.
3. Belief that the United \$nakes of Amerikkka is an imperialist-settler nation of Euro-Amerikans and it holds New Afrikan and other nations in semi-colonial bondage and cultural subjugation; and it oppresses other nations outside of its borders.
4. Belief that national liberation (revolution) is a people's struggle for independence -- to choose the content and direction of their socio-political and economic lives.
5. Belief that capitalism/imperialism is an economic system that divides, oppresses and exploits people and nations, for profit.
6. Belief that socialism is the process of uniting, liberating and equalizing people on all levels by setting up a people's government responsible for revolutionizing the relationships between people, paving the way for communism.
7. Belief that neo-colonialism is when an imperialist nation indirectly extends its influence over oppressed nations through economics and politics as opposed to doing so through direct control. We call this "flag independence."
8. Belief that as long as there is imperialism, there will be war.
9. Belief that a vanguard party is necessary at this stage in history to lead the struggle for independence, proletarian revolution and against imperialism, militarism and patriarchy.
10. Willingness to uphold party discipline. That means comrades abide by majority decisions to the best of their ability.

On Nationalism

Nationalism is about ideology and politics, not color or "race." When we refer to people as nationalists, we're saying that they have, or are shaping, an ideology and a particular set of social relations.

Revolutionary nationalism is where the nation carries out a national(ist) revolution against capitalism, and to build socialism. Revolutionary nationalism is also anti-patriarchal and abhors all forms of gender oppression. Revolutionary nationalists fight for the liberation of ALL people of the nation.

National liberation means that the people of a nation that is being oppressed, fights for their independence -- to choose the content and direction of their socio-political and economic lives. They fight to govern every aspect of their nation's life, free and independent of the jurisdiction of their oppressor.

NARN recognizes that We, having developed hystorically as a colony, in objective reality, comprise a separate nation of our own, a people who have the right of self-determination and who are sovereign unto ourselves. And, based on our hystorical development, Our ideological/theoretical foundation must be that of New Afrikan revolutionary nationalism, because it speaks to Our reality, despite the fact that Our people are more integrated into the U.\$. economy and culture than ever before.

Conversely, "in regard to New Afrikan self-determination, nationhood and independence, it must be understood that the United States is a settler nation. The historical evolution of this country is based on the colonization process, have made the United States the most powerful nation in the world. Yet internal social conflicts persist subject to how the United States came into existence. The resolution of these contradictions/conflicts may result in the dissolution of the United States as we know it. Therefore, it is posited that separation/independence may be the method to resolve this contradiction. This is a particularly viable approach, if domestic colonized (nations) peoples decide to once again establish their sovereignty. Hence, the political argument is whether or not colonized peoples in the United States want to establish their sovereignty, and not whether they have a right to do so."(3)

Once again, Our basic understanding of the "USA" is that of an illegitimate nation. This was summed up in *Settlers: Mythology of the White Proletariat*, which is the hystorical-materialist analysis of the Euro-Amerikan Masses. We all know the Amerika is an oppressor nation; that is, a nation that oppresses other nations. This is a characteristic that the U.S.A. shares with other imperialist powers. What is specific and

particular about the U.S. oppressor nation is that it is an illegitimate nation.

"What pretends to be one continental nation stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific is really a Euro-Amerikan settler empire, built on colonially oppressed nations and peoples whose very existence has been forcibly submerged. But the colonial crime, the criminals, the victims and the stolen land and labor still exists... So that the 'United States' is in reality not one, but many nations (oppressor and oppressed)."(4)

The Black Order Revolutionary Organization is "guided by the strategic objective of winning sovereignty for our nation, to build a new, socialist society and to support and wage world revolution until all people everywhere are so free. If any party or organization is to be built and supported by those who identify themselves as New Afrikans, it must rest upon the foundation of the New Afrikan Declaration of Independence and New Afrikan Creed. These are integral parts of Our ideo-framework and it's upon this foundation that all else rests, unity included."

There are no 'races', only Nations

"Reflect: The movie Shaka Zulu - the British Party is swept ashore by the storm. As they gather themselves on the beach, they're approached by a regiment of Zulu soldiers. Because he speaks the language of the Zulu, one of the party is taken to Shaka. In the next scene, Shaka asks him: "Of what tribe are you?" and the man answers, "Dutch."

"When we get to it, Shaka's question was about what we now call nationality. Shaka asked the man, 'Of what **people** are you?' "(5)

Everyone seems to think they know what a nation is by definition. But most of their overstanding is both elementary and unscientific. This ain't their fault, this is they way they were educated. Our overstandings must be based in concrete reality. We must develop an overstanding of how nations develop and change according to specific conditions.

When We speak of nations, We are NOT speaking of skin pigmentation or other biological factors. We're speaking of objective material conditions -- hystory (social development), economics, land, culture, etc; that make(s) humyn groups what they are.

We do not uphold the usage of the term "race" when trying to identify any humyn group. There are no "races" of people,

only NATIONS of people, and we'll tell you why.

The term "race" can trace its origin and usage to slavery/colonial periods. It is a social construction, meaning, that it was not scientifically derived at. It is a fictitious categorization of people. It was/is a made-up idea. But why and for what purpose?

"Race" and "racism" are used to justify and facilitate the exploitation of peoples, and it's based on the false belief that humanity is divided into a plurality of "races" that stand in relation to each other as "inferior" or "superior" based on physical and/or cultural differences. There are no "races" -- only people(s) and groups of people(s), united and distinguished by a common origin, tradition, languages, habits, etc; something We call nationality.

Meditate on this definition of nation that is based in reality -- 1) a politically organized nationality/group; a community of people/ a people having a common origin, tradition, language having historic continuity, and social collective consciousness, possessing a common and defined independent territory; 2) a group of people who have a sovereign government/state.

A nation is manifested in hystory and in present time. Its first basic nature is functional (meaning the people within it act as a united community on a significant level) -- this is National Unity. And its second basic nature is psychological (meaning the people within it see themselves as one community distinct from others on a significant level) -- this is National Consciousness.

We assert that Our national identity/nationality to be New Afrikan and that Our national territory is in the five states of Georgia, Mississippi, Louisiana, South Carolina and Alabama. That the name of Our National Territory is the People's Republic of New Afrika; and it is yet to be liberated. We also assert that We have the right to assert self-rule in all areas outside of Our national territory where We live in large, concentrated numbers.

The 13th Amendment: A Re-Visit

Let's go forward by backing up -- Afrikans were brought to the shores of what became the United \$nakes of Amerikkka by an imposition of war and kidnapping. The sole purpose of war was to create a large source of cheap and exploitable labor.

In 1776, the British subjects on this land declared "their" independence from the British Crown. 100 years later, a war between Euro-Amerikan people of the North and South was fought for complete control of the land, politics, military and economy. The North won the war.

There has been a total mis-interpretation of hystorical fact that the war was about the freedom of Afrikans held in bondage. The war was actually about two different forms of exploitation and domination of the colonial subjects -- Afrikans, First Nations (so-called Indians), etc.

The 'Emancipation Proclamation' of January 1863, freed all Afrikans who were still held as slaves in those areas of the imperialist state which sought their independence from the U.\$.

"When the 13th Amendment was passed by the Euro-Amerikan settlers in December, 1865, they recognized -- on paper -- the freedom of all Afrikans inside U.\$.

However, "the freedom allegedly given to all Afrikans in the U.\$.

After we were 'emancipated' from the control of individual slave-owners and placed under the collective control of the U.\$.

Overstand that after we were "freed" we should have had several choices: 1) to repatriate back to Afrika, 2) to become citizens of this government or 3) to start our own independent nation on land here in North Amerika given to us in a reparations settlement. But what happened was that the U.\$.

Our nation was born here in this country during the period of slavery; New Afrika arose on the North Amerikkkan continent before 1660. It was a birth facilitated by Our kidnapping and enslavement, and the ensuing law and custom of the slavemaster.

While there had been 'manumission' of Afrikans individually or in small numbers by individual slavemasters, the first mass 'manumission' of Afrikans in the U.S. occurred on August 6, 1861, with the enactment of the Confiscation Act. This mass recognition of the Afrikan's inherent freedom was

followed by another Confiscation Act on July 17, 1862.

The Confiscation Act was supposed to give 18,000 Afrikans 400,000 acres of land to be divided into 40 acre plots. This is where you get the '40 acres and a mule' saying from. But this Act was repealed and replaced with the 13th and 14th Amendments. By making us 'citizens', they took away our right to independence and forced us once again to be part of their nation.

Conclusion

We all know that there is a need for unity, we fully recognize that whether We know it or not, We are already united -- in Our suffering, in our daily repression of positive forces. We totally overstand and agree with the statement 'unite or perish', because We know that if We perish, it won't be as individuals.

"We seek to unite with all those We can ... to unite with all those it is possible to unite with ... around the primary factor of consciousness, a unity around primary interests -- particular interests that We know not all of Us share. We know that some [of Our people] will fight harder than the masses to put out the fire in massa's house that some [of Our people] set, -- this too, is a part of Our glorious history."(8)

We believe in the family and the community and the community as a family. And, we believe in defending Our community and nation. We believe that all people have a right to determine their own destiny and to not be hindered in the developmental process or interfered with by others.

At the same time, "some people talk about a 'nation' but don't really wanna be one (independent), as evidenced by their efforts to crawl back on the plantation. How can We tell? You can identify those trying to crawl back on the plantation by the way they identify themselves, i.e: 'black', 'African-American,' 'Ethnic group,' 'minority nationality,' 'underclass,' anything and everything except New Afrikans, an oppressed nation. Amerikkka is the plantation, and continuing to identify yourself within the Amerikkkan context is evidence of the colonial (slave) mentality. Ain't no two ways about it."(9)

Those New Afrikans who believe they uphold New Afrikan Revolutionary Nationalism and scientific socialism and believe that this is the path forward for Our people, belong in BORO. **Those who do not, do not.**

Part two of this position paper will outline the economic factors and show that the divisions in the economy are national in character. That it is not 'racism' but national oppression at the

root of our problems.

"There's never been a 'question' for Us, only a task, a goal: the struggle to ReGAIN our independence as a separate people with interests which oppose those of the empire. A goal for us, is a 'question' for those outside the nation who have a different nationality, and/or for those inside the nation who have a different ideology, e.g; the phrase 'national question' was coined by people trying to determine what position they would take regarding the struggle of colonized peoples -- there was never a 'national question' for the colonized. "

We believe in the Malcolm X Doctrine: that We must organize upon this land and hold a plebiscite, to tell the world by a vote that we are free and our land independent, and that after the vote, we must stand ready to defend ourselves establishing the nation beyond contradiction.

Power to the people who don't fear real freedom!!

Royal Council - BORO

Black August 2014

End Notes:

1. "Community of economic life: 1980s Point to National Differences, MC12, MIM Theory 7, 1995, MIM Distributors, PO Box 40799, San Francisco, CA94140
2. Meditations on Frantz Fanon's Wretched of the Earth: New Afrikan Revolutionary Writings, Spear & Shield Publications.
3. The National and International Struggle Toward a New Global Revolutionary Strategy, Jalil Muntaqim.
4. Settlers: The Mythology of the White Proletariat, J. Sakai; available at MIM Distributors.
5. Meditations (2)
6. Resubjugation of New Afrika, Owusu Yakubu, Spear & Shield.
7. Ibid.
8. Thoughts on Consolidation, Ideology and Organization, Owusu Yakubu, Spear & Shield.
9. Vita Wa Watu: A New Afrikan Theoretical Journal, Book 3, Mbili Shanna; Spear & Shield

Review: *Lonely Rage: The Autobiography of Bobby Seale*

from MIM Theory #7
by MC17

Fully, the first half of *Lonely Rage* (Times Books: New York, 1978) is a psychological exploration of Seale's youth. This is disappointing for its lack of political analysis, coming as it does

from the ex-Chairperson of the vanguard of the Black nation in the 1960s and early 1970s.

Midway through the book, Seale meets Huey P. Newton. From then on *Lonely Rage* gives a brief outline of some of the Black Panther activities as Seale was involved in them. We do get a picture of how Seale was fed up with all the revolutionaries he associated with (Revolutionary Action Movement) before he and Newton founded the Black Panther Party. Those other organizations didn't want to do anything but sit around and talk and he thought they didn't understand the need for immediate and direct action.

For the most part, the picture Seale paints of the Black Panther Party just touches on the facts that anyone who has studied them already knows. Most of the descriptions in the book are geared towards the exciting times in Seale's life, such as police confrontations. Although it is a small part of the book, there is some use to learning how Seale went from being anti-communist but thinking the ideas of Black liberation were correct, to understanding that communists are the ones truly for liberation of all people.

Probably the best story he tells is about how he was going to leave town after getting arrested on the steps of the capital for demonstrating against gun control laws. He didn't want to go to jail. His wife asked what would happen to the rest of those who were arrested if he didn't show at the hearing, and he realized that he would be leaving them all to face jail sentences that they would get out of if he showed up and took the rap. So he decided not to leave.

There are some interesting parts about gender and the BPP in this book. He wrote:

“The principle that backed up love relationships among the Party members was simply that those who did not have an established one-to-one relationship with someone had the right, male or female, to make love with whomever they desired.”

(It should be noted that Seale was considered among those uncommitted people even though he had a legal wife – he said he left her because she was not supportive enough of his political work.) He says they established this principle: “to ward off petty jealousies and unnecessary quarrels that might in the future ruin the overall goal and purpose behind the struggle for freedom. I had also witnessed before this principle was established that brothers were freer than sisters to make love with whom they choose.”

Seale points out that many of the men in the party would

force women into the typical women's roles of serving the meals and doing the secretary work. Some women were even kicked out of the Party for refusing to sleep with someone. The Party established a number of rules to keep the men from continuing these practices.

While their policies were certainly less than perfect, the BPP did make some good advances on the gender front by recognizing that women should have free choices in relationships just like men. Unfortunately, they made the mistake that many anarchists make in believing that free love can be achieved within the context of capitalism and the patriarchy. It should have been a good clue to Seale that this was not really free and equal love that many women wanted to sleep with him just because he was Chairperson and that excited them. In the end, it was the women, like Seale's wife, who were hurt by this free love, while the men were able to use their positions of political power to get women to sleep with them.

Former Panthers Restart Newspaper

The Black Panther Newspaper Committee
P.O. Box 519
Berkeley, CA
94701-519
reprinted from MIM Notes 54, July 1991

revised November 1994

by MC 17

The Black Panther is a newspaper put out by former members of the Black Panther Party. This paper does not signify the revival of the party; its purpose is “to help keep our community informed and thinking about the issues which impact us and strategies and tactics for liberation.”

While the paper does a good job of exposing many of the injustices inflicted on the Black community by the Amerikan government, it does not have a consistent and effective analysis of how to change this situation.

The strategies and tactics for liberation of the Black Panther Party in the 1960s were those of revolution. Unlike the current newspaper staff, they did not see boycotts of Colgate-Palmolive and letter writing campaigns to the Mayor as a means of liberation. They did not suggest that “homelessness is the end result of many things gone wrong – there is no one thing that causes it and there will be no one thing that corrects it.” Instead they saw homelessness, drugs, and all the other means used to keep Blacks down, as symptoms of capitalism – a system that is

supported by the oppression and colonization of Blacks, Latinos, First Nations, and all oppressed nationalities in this country and around the world.

The paper is filled with articles that attack the symptoms of oppression without discussing the cause. There is no recognition that revolution is the only way that Black people and all oppressed nationalities will ever be liberated.

The Black Panther reprints the rules and program of the Black Panther Party but does nothing to explain their position on these ideas now, or why they no longer think it necessary to organize as a revolutionary political party. They seem to support the actions of the Panthers in the past, but offer little discussion of the causes of their downfall or the need for future revolutionary organizing.

The paper does a good job of exposing the racist nature of the prison system and the large number of political prisoners held in the United States. But it offers no means to challenge this government repression, beyond the suggestion to write to the Governor or the defense committee of each individual prisoner.

Further, their inadequate analysis of history is revealed in the arena of world politics by their support for the Cuban regime today. In their solidarity statement they say that the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe are just now “retreat[ing] from socialism.” MIM believes that the Soviet Union has been implementing capitalism since the death of Stalin and Eastern Europe has no socialism to retreat from.

The statement goes on to complain about the loss of support from these regimes for Third World revolutions. But is just this “support” that led the Cuban revolution into economic dependence of the Soviet Union, a dependence that forced Cuba to adopt a bureaucratic and authoritarian political and economic structure, ultimately adopting the USSR's form of “socialism,” otherwise known as state capitalism.

Supporting Cuba without an analysis of their revolution and resultant retreat from revolutionary principles is an ahistorical view of liberation that ignores the plight of the Cuban people today.

MIM does not want people to forget the history of the Black Panther Party, a revolutionary Maoist party that was destroyed by the government COINTELPRO repression in the 1960s and 1970s. From this history there is much to be learned about effective revolutionary work. One lesson MIM takes from the destruction of the BPP is the need to organize underground, safer from government infiltration and repression.

Notes From A Panel Discussion

from MIM Theory #7

Participants:

- Ahmad Abdur-Rahman; ex-Panther, released from MI prison in November.
- Gloria House; ex-SNCC member, teaches at Wayne State U. in Detroit
- Assata Shakur, ex-Panther, in exile in Cuba
- Dhoruba bin-Wahad; ex-Panther, released from prison 1989

January 1993

by a Comrade

The panel spoke under a banner which said “Free all u.s. Political prisoners, prisoners of war and conscience!” MIM has some criticism of this slogan and with the type of political organizing that goes along with it. Political prisoner solidarity work explicitly excludes the majority of political prisoners in the United States – people who are in prison based on their position in the Amerikan political system – e.g. for being poor and knocking over a gas station for some cash or being for Black and being within a mile of a robbery or rape, for example.

So while we agree with the political prisoners' advocates who say that it is irresponsible for activists to forget their comrades who are set-up and/or imprisoned solely for their political work, mutual responsibility for mutual security is hardly an argument for this type of single-issue organizing. Many of the recognized political prisoners in the United States today went to prison fighting for nationalist or socialist revolution against the Amerikan state. And now the “Free ...!” campaigns are saying simply to “free” these individuals, often in the process of renouncing socialism or revolutionary nationalism. Why should the fact that these individuals are in prison overshadow the importance of those initial goals?

As with all other forms of political work – producing literature, conducting education and propaganda, feeding people, building base areas, overthrowing the government – MIM says that individuals are most effective working within an organization that is clear and direct in its ideology and program. MIM also says that activists are most effective when they are honest with the people they are organizing. So if you know these prisoners are in there because the fascists use every means at their disposal to destroy political threats to themselves, and that the only way to put an end to the political imprisonment of

people's warriors is to fight imperialism and national oppression, why aren't you organizing on that basis?

AHMAD ABOUT-RAHMAN

Rahman began by saying that the critical difference between the Black Panther Party (BPP) and what he sees of Black organizing today is that the Panthers had a clear worked-out strategy and a guiding ideology which was Marxism-Leninism. And they related to Mao Zedong. He also referred to Franz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* as a key influence in the Panthers' understanding of revolutionary consciousness and struggle in the Black Nation.

He outlined the analysis in *Wretched of the Earth* in terms of the experiences of the BPP and then went on to explain how he had become a member of the Nation of Islam (NOI) and what he thinks is the most correct path Black revolutionaries can follow today to put together a liberation movement.

- Spontaneity has three principal characteristics:
 1. Momentary great display of the masses' strength
 2. Undisciplined action
 3. Doesn't sustain lasting damage to the oppressor

Rahman talked about how the FBI's counter-intelligence program (COINTELPRO) capitalized on spontaneous tendencies in the Black liberation movement. Acting to misdirect, disrupt and neutralize the struggle, the FBI directed the masses' anger at false or less-than principal enemies, disrupted clear plans for action and killed or put away a lot of Panthers.

- National culture is revolutionary first as it cultivates a national consciousness and forms a base for political work; but it only stays revolutionary in as much as it changes and grows according to the needs of the political struggle. He gave the examples of Algerian women using their long dresses and skirts to smuggle guns past checkpoints, where men would have been searched. He also gave the negative example of Black people dressing in Kinte cloth while ignoring whatever political movements are going on around them.
- Concerning Violence: it wasn't the BPP alone that Hoover labeled the #1 threat to security in the United States; it was the potential power of the Panthers' example to Black people and all oppressed people. Similarly, it is never the violence of individual

revolutionaries that oppressors fear, it is the movement they represent. He also talked about the oppressed dealing with the possibility of carrying out violence against the oppressor. He said that initially the oppressor looms so large that it is difficult to face the challenge of confronting him or her. And that often the rage against the oppressor turns into rage against one's own people because they are easier, closer targets. But people have to overcome this impulse and recognize that only systematic attacks on the oppressor will pay off in eliminating imperialism and racism.

Ahmad still says the word "revolution" a fair bit but his description of his movement to Islam sounds a lot more like working on the revolution from within, which contradicts his own analysis of culture. Yes, inner consciousness is necessary to outer revolutionary activity. But inner consciousness is not nearly enough. People need to combine that with, or use it to build, a revolutionary political program. He said that in the early 1970s (when he began his natural-life sentence) the Panther program was shown to be unrealistic (presumably by the fact that the organization was largely gutted by the number of leaders who were in prison, dead or in exile). According to Rahman, Islam was clearly a better/more appropriate means of achieving self-mastery and spiritual development and independence.

Rahman closed by telling young people to study some political theory. He said that theory receives little attention and that's why so many organizations shatter or just disintegrate when faced with ideological struggle. He said revolutionary nationalists should study the theory and practice of the past to build a solid practice for today. Ahmad's lessons in words are right on. MIM wonders how he resolves the issue of leading by example.

GLORIA HOUSE

Gloria House has a book of poetry out called *Blood River*. She opened with one poem from it, and judging from that one, her poetry is a good example of oppressed nationalist consciousness - people should check it out.

Demonstrating the difference between the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and the BPP, House said that one of the principal lessons SNCC learned in the 1960s was the need for independent strategies for empowerment. She contrasted this to SNCC's practice at the 1964 Democratic national convention of trying to seat the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP). The MFDP was a group of

alternative delegates organized by SNCC to replace the Klan-run regular Mississippi delegation. The MFDP was destroyed several ways by leading liberals in the Democratic party - the vice presidential candidacy was rewarded in exchange for booting the freedom delegates – and learned the very hard way that trying to wring justice out of the Amerikan political system doesn't work.

House made the excellent and infrequently-stated point that student activists need to be aware of surveillance, and the need to be ready to protect each other in the event of government attack. She said one of the most important tasks student activists have is to avoid prison, assassination and exile. How else will you get your work done? MIM approaches this point, as we are constantly arguing over the realities of government repression of radical political groups and individuals with people who believe Amerika gives freedom of speech to its enemies. The experience of oppressed national struggles in the 1960s and 1970s is one of the examples we often point to of what the state will do to people who threaten its existence, and how not to advertise one's location, habits, friends, etc. to the state.

Students caught on to the security issue, and during the question and answer period some asked what were good books to read on the subject. The panelists suggested ex-Panther Assata Shakur's autobiography *Assata*, and *Agents of Repression* by Ward Churchill and Jim Vander Wall. One student asked how it was possible to recognize agents in progressive organizations. House responded by rattling off a list of agent behaviors: placing oneself in charge of security at an event and having had experience with weapons; being in a leadership position and confounding decision-making processes when it comes time to take action. While MIM recognizes these actions as techniques the FBI could use and has used, we know that no organization is going to protect itself from infiltration simply by keeping careful watch on all its members' behaviors.

As Ahmad said, the best way to safeguard against infiltration is to do have a clear strategy and ideology. Know your goals and you will be able to define the best route to go to get there. You will also be able to objectively judge who is blocking your progress intentionally and who is just confused politically. And most importantly, you can have these discussions on a political level, rather than in the fashion of a witch hunt.

ASSATA SHAKUR

Assata Shakur sent a tape recording of her speech from

Havana where she is in exile. She spoke about the conditions of political prisoners in the United States. She detailed the means through which they are cut off not only from politics but from any means of personal support that could help them stay strong (both personally and politically) while they are locked up. Her talk was a moving statement on what lengths guards and wardens go to to harass the politics out of the prisoner: denying mail, frequent moves, isolation, torture.

DHORUBA BIN-WAHAD

Dhoruba bin-Wahad said that in the struggle between the people and the oppressor, either the people will win, or the oppressor will win. He said that the Panthers worked with this understanding and reminded everyone that Mao's often-quoted-out-of-context statement “political power grows out of the barrel of a gun” was simply an observation and analysis of the nature of the modern state. The other part of this analysis was that there is a moral aspect of violence only the oppressed can be in touch with, and that the oppressed use this understanding to turn the whole of humanity to participate in the struggle to overthrow the oppressor.

This was the most revolutionary analysis MIM has yet heard from the Nation of Islam on all sorts of issues: gender, culture, political responsibility. Towards the end of his talk Wahad spoke specifically to the Muslims possibly absent themselves from political struggle. Asking how you can ignore the teaching in the Koran which says to fight your enemy and defend those who cannot defend themselves? And how can you “bump your head five times a day without bumping some cracker upside the head five times a day?”

He also seemed to downplay the “free political prisoners” aspect of the other speakers' presentations. His focus was global: “with the collapse of the Soviet Union what we have in the world today is a contradiction between the north and the south.” He directed himself to various issues from the perspective of the revolutionary nationalists and their allies who have an obligation to the people.

Wahad addressed the issue of culture in revolutionary consciousness – repeating Fanon's statement that culture is related to the word “cultivate,” and stating that culture is only revolutionary so long as it cultivates revolutionary consciousness. He upholds the Panthers' analysis of 1966 that consciousness of Black culture in Amerika was initially progressive as it helped to identify a basis for organizing. But that culturalism is reactionary when it distracts people from political struggle.

Wahad seems to agree with MIM that gender played a big role in holding back/weakening the Panthers. “Why is it that we can use the term 'bitch' and 'ho' in our rap music and can't use the term 'revolutionary overthrow of the government' in that same music?”

He said that nationalists have got to deal with all aspects of oppression, and all contradictions in the world so that they can be as advanced as possible theoretically and so that they can grow and also respond effectively to threats: “if you are not in the forefront, what happened to the Black Panther Party will happen to you.”

He closed by saying “I hope that you will leave here tonight with a profound understanding of how insignificant you are.” MIM takes this as a call to struggle through the impulse of individualism Amerika tries to instill in all people who live here and move on to an internationalist focus in organizing. We hope for the same thing for all people we come into contact with, and will continue the struggle to spread that understanding through our work and propaganda.

Phil Donahue: The Issue Is Race

October 2, 1992

from MIM Theory #7

by a Comrade

This talk show episode with 11 speakers contained a heated discussion on progress in the conditions of Black people in the United States. Compared with most talk shows it had a much better representation of varying opinions. Despite the title of the panel, it focused just on Black and white people in the United States, not the “races” in general. Three speakers were white and eight were Black.

For the most part, the panel was characterized by an argument between radical Blacks and those Blacks working within existing institutions for change, but President John Silber of Boston University spoke up a few times for the reactionary view.

According to Silber, there has been great progress since the 1960s in the conditions of Black people in the United States. He mentioned that in the early 1960s, Black people could not use public bathrooms reserved for whites. Furthermore, he argued against Sister Souljah for her anti-white “racism,” when she said that white people have no “moral conscience” and hence should not be “appealed” to for help.

Sister Souljah countered Silber also by saying there is no such thing as Black racism. MIM agrees that Silber was not correct in his characterization of Sister Souljah. However, MIM does not agree with Sister Souljah exactly, because we believe it is possible for Black compradors like Clarence Thomas to bolster white supremacy and hence perpetuate national oppression and its symptom of racism. [MIM(Prisons) adds: people of all nations can be racist but New Afrikans can't be national oppressors over whites.]

In contrast with Sister Souljah, Silber said that Martin Luther King was effective because he referred to Plato, Thoreau and other elements of Western culture. According to Silber, King “shamed a majority of Americans” with their own traditions.

Black Professor Cornell West of Princeton University also believed there was such a thing as a “multi-racial moral ground.” That common ground and the necessity of Black “self-love” are the two most important points to move forward, said Dr. West.

Sister Souljah attacked West's position by saying you can't make a “moral appeal to people with no moral conscience.” She pointed out that white people demonstrate by the millions in regard to abortion, but not in regard to the killing of Black youth.

MIM agrees with Sister Souljah that the issue of abortion is indicative of white moral priorities. We refer to any feminism that is not anti-imperialist as “pseudo-feminism.”

MIM also agrees with panelist and former Black Panther Dhorube bin-Wahad that the United States only adopted civil rights laws in the 1960s because it was “expedient” to do so under international pressure when the United States was claiming to be a leader in “freedom” and “democracy.” We would add that the mounting pressure of Black people themselves was also a factor. That is to say there was a power struggle that made some limited gains for Blacks.

White scholar Jonathan Kozol, the Black Republican Senate candidate from Maryland, Mayor Sharon Pratt Kelly of Washington, D.C. And Tony Brown all focussed on the Black middle class. They pointed to the growth of the Black middle class as proof of change and talked about how they expected the Black middle class to aid the overall condition of Blacks. The Black speakers in this group also bristled with middle-class Black nationalism – resentment that whites and many Blacks seemed to ignore their existence and characterize all Blacks as poor, unemployed or in prison. MIM often refers to middle-class Black nationalists as “integrationists,” because in the end they

believe in the strategy of integration with white people – just by proving that Black people can be cogs in the imperialist machine just as good as whites.

In response to bin-Wahad, Mayor Kelly let it all hang out: she said she would not “walk away” from Amerika and give up on integration, just when Black people were going to get their “piece of the rock.”

In this regard Sister Souljah and Dhoruba bin-Wahad had more in common than the other Black people on the panel. Neither explicitly advocated revolution, but both see a radical political solution to political repression of the Black people as necessary.

Even though Dhoruba bin-Wahad attacked capitalism and patriarchy, none of the speakers really addressed the illusions created by imperialism. The radicals said that the conditions for Black youth were repressive, but they did not have a convincing answer to why the solution was not to let the Black middle class keep growing.

MIM believes that capitalism is a system that is by nature cut-throat. Where one group of people succeeds, it is necessarily at the expense of others. Again and again we have seen capitalist economic competition lead to war this century. Within this system, there is only so much room for success, while capitalist after capitalist seeks to drive other capitalists out of business to survive. Even if a group of people does rise up into the ranks of the rich and powerful, it is only by exploiting other groups. Black people should see to it that they rise up and that no group is ever treated like Black people today. That would require socialism.

The three-quarters of the world's population who are oppressed by imperialism can see clearly capitalism's cut-throat nature. The conditions of the international proletariat create a “moral common ground” - the ideology of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism.

In addition to this “moral common ground” created by actual living conditions, there is a science of revolution for the international proletariat. It is this science that makes communication possible within the ranks of the international proletariat. The same science recognizes that each oppressed nation is unique.

Jonathen Kozol did a good job silencing the whiny liberals on at least one point. He said that it doesn't matter if Black people like white people as individuals or in groups. What matters is “if Black people have the same shot” as white people in society. Although MIM would say the question is how to create a harmonious world free of national oppression, Kozol's

general approach is well-taken. After a round of criticism from the speakers, Phil Donahue promised never again to ask anyone on the panel whether Black people and white people like each other or himself. This was a small victory. Too often white liberals seek to personalize social problems instead of looking at what happens on a group level.

This small victory against whiny liberalism and individualism was somewhat undercut when Dhoruba bin-Wahad charged Donahue with “always going to the white people” to ask them about oppression. In point of fact, the panel was quite clearly dominated by Black people, so the former Panther's point seemed weak and insecure. More importantly he contradicted himself and some other good points made by Sister Souljah when he said that it was impossible for men to understand what it was like being women and white people to understand what it is like for Blacks. Nonetheless, the former Panther made a necessary and correct point about sexism, so why did he say he could speak on the subject? The shortfalls of identity politics is a point many people working against oppression don't have clear in their own minds.

One reason that people don't have it clear is that many speakers, especially those on lecture-circuits, have a self-interest in saying only Black people can speak against national oppression and only women can know how to fight sexism. People like Phil Donahue then have to host such speakers. Another reason that people take this tokenist approach is that it is easier than doing an analysis or winning one's arguments. MIM does the analysis and wins arguments. What the correct analysis is the end oppression and who takes up that analysis are two entirely separate questions. MIM calls on all people to take up the science of revolution to end oppression, but we know that disproportionately it will be the oppressed nationalities which make up the international proletariat that do take up revolution.

BLACK MIDDLE-CLASS POLITICS AND TOKENISM

The position that the Black middle-class should see to its own people first to make all Blacks middle-class, and the use of opportunist tactics like tokenism, are not ideas constructed out of thin air. They have a material basis.

Tony Brown did the best on the panel to point out that in some ways the Black people are already an economic success story. Counted as a country, the Black people have a GNP of \$300 billion, which is the 14th richest in the world. According to Brown the big problem is that Blacks only spend 6.6% of their money in the Black community. The rest goes to purchasing

goods and services from whites and others. That is why Black people do not have middle and upper classes comparable to the white ones. Brown said it was important for the Black middle class to hire and buy things from the Black poor.

Sister Souljah countered Brown by saying that there were political obstacles to the business success of most Black people, which is why only a small middle-class can arise. Many of the panel seemed to agree that the obstacles started right in grade school when children receive inferior opportunities.

Tony Brown said he agreed that political power was one weapon the Black people needed. He also made a point of saying he did not consider himself a capitalist, just someone apolitical trying to “pay the bills.” He raised the question of the definition of “capitalism,” but he did not answer it.

In the end, it was ironic, but the Black Republican running for Senate who spoke at the Republican National Convention, summed it up that all the Black speakers were saying that the grassroots must establish a power base. He was right.

Sister Souljah concluded that Black youth must free their minds, rely on themselves, start with the assumption that whites have no conscience and ignore the majority of Black leaders, because they are “insincere.” Dhoruba bin-Wahad said they needed a Black political party.

A certain vagueness in the solutions offered by Souljah and the former political prisoner allowed their opponents to say that they did not have any solutions. It is true that Souljah and bin-Wahad did not point to anything concrete either here within U.S. borders or abroad that they supported as solutions. Hence, Cornell West said, “rage cannot have the last word.” As if he were supporting the radicals, Kozol said despair was warranted: “nothing has changed” in the last 25 years. Others simply said that the radicals were preaching useless “despair.” MIM believes this was incorrect. What the radicals said was often correct, but there was no reason to leave out the history of African anti-colonial struggle, the recent revolution in Eritrea and Ethiopia or the struggle in Peru or the Chinese socialist revolution as concrete examples of what can be done.

Definition of Racism

from MIM(Prisons) glossary, 2017: MIM observes scientifically that race does not exist and that what really happens in the United States is national oppression, not racial oppression. "Racism" does exist as an element of the superstructure of society, that is to say the ideas and culture, but "racism" is a product of national oppression, including the

exploitation and enslavement of various nations by others. Racism can only be disguised, never eliminated, by propagating politically correct attitudes, because racism is just a justification for exploitation and enslavement. To rid the world of this exploitation and enslavement, and hence racism, requires armed struggle against the imperialists. For more on racism's inherent presence in capitalism, see "Labor Aristocracy: Mass Base for Social Democracy" by H.W. Edwards

NAPO: By Any Means Necessary

Fall/Winter 1991
New Afrikan People's Organization
PO Box 31762
Jackson, MS 39286
from MIM Theory #7
by MC5

This is an excellent 24 page color paper by a revolutionary Black nationalist organization. MIM Notes would print just about every article in the paper itself if it had the articles and the money.

NAPO's main thing is to liberate Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia and South Carolina – the Blackbelt South – as a new nation called New Afrika. This used to be the program of the Communist Party-USA for Blacks in the 1930s.

Stories cover the expulsion and re-admittance of Black students at Grambling State University; the “rehire Ina Best” movement; the strikers at Delta Pride food company; the legal efforts of 63 year-old Black woman to show that Black people actually legally own 3 million acres of land in the South; the atrocities committed by a KKK-headed Fire Department in Georgia; the Malcolm X movement that the NAPO has going; elections within NAPO; the Angola, LA oppression of prisoners; the Zionist/Black conflict in New York; remembering the Republic of New Afrika 11; the Dahmer case as police brutality; how Clarence Thomas is a sell-out; the sexism in rap; the idea of privatizing prisons; articles on the law concerning the treatment of Prisoners of War (POWs) in the United States; the Mowhawk struggle; racism in Southern California; the Mexican struggle for self-determination; the phony Columbus Day outlook of whites; the struggle for Chicanos for self-determination; the commercial usage of Malcolm X lately; South Africa as a colony; rain forest defender Chico Mendes; the Pan Africanist Congress; the New Orleans police murder of

a Black youth; the death penalty in Lagos for children; Farrakhan's new Islamic center in Ghana; the Nigerian student movement and the principles of NAPO.

The most questionable article in MIM's eyes is the one about a Black lawyer from Detroit who went to South Africa to help the ANC write a proposed new constitution.(1) In this article, the line between national liberation and following the U.S. Model of a so-called integration is blurred. It concludes calling for a jury trial system in South Africa modeled on the United State's system.

MIM's disagreements with NAPO are not readily apparent in this issue of the newspaper. However, MIM does not support the notion of promoting armed struggle at this time. That is one major difference. At the same time, MIM is very interested in prisoners as is NAPO. Some of the freedom fighters are working hard to establish legal precedents for POW's fighting for the creation of the New Afrikan republic. MIM supports this legal struggle for existing POW's and finds it encouraging that NAPO reports that the Zimbabwe government has requested that Dr. Mutulu Shakur be granted political asylum in Zimbabwe.

Notes:

1. By Any Meant Necessary, p. 19.

Election Begg Question of the Road to Dual Power in New Afrika

Wiawimawo of MIM(Prisons) June 2013

Chokwe Lumumba — lawyer, activist, Vice President of the Republic of New Afrika, and cofounder of the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement (MXGM) — was elected mayor of Jackson, Mississippi on 4 June 2013 with 87% of the votes. Accounting for 80% of the population, Jackson is the second Blackest city in the United States. Mississippi is the Blackest state with 35% of its voters being New Afrikan.(1)

Even though the rate of white voter turnout was more than twice that of New Afrikans, and some 90% of whites supported the other guy, Lumumba came out victorious.(1) All of these facts support the decision of the MXGM to focus on building a base of power within New Afrika in Jackson, Mississippi. However, elections themselves cannot be a tool for liberation or independence, and the only cases where MIM(Prisons) might promote them would be for tactical victories. This election was part of a strategic plan that MXGM released almost a year ago.

This plan states:

"The Malcolm X Grassroots Movement (MXGM) firmly believes that at this stage in the struggle for Black Liberation that the movement must be firmly committed to building and exercising what we have come to regard as 'dual power' — building autonomous power outside of the realm of the state (i.e. the government) in the form of People's Assemblies and engaging electoral politics on a limited scale with the express intent of building radical voting blocks and electing candidates drawn from the ranks of the Assemblies themselves."(2)

The idea of the oppressed nations building organizations that are independent of and not funded by the state can be a controversial issue in this country. While there is nothing illegal or inherently threatening about organizing independent from the state, Amerikans rely on repression in order to prevent the self-determination of the oppressed nations. If the oppressed nations are to break free from imperialism's choke hold, it will threaten the luxurious lifestyles of the average Joe the plumber who lives off the wealth of oppressed nations abroad. We saw one example of this mentality among Amerikans when recent issues of *Under Lock & Key* were censored in North Carolina specifically citing as the justification the fifth point of the United Front for Peace in Prisons — Independence.

While "independence" is a fairly broad term used to define a thing in relation to another thing, "dual power" has a much more specific meaning to Marxists. Independence on its own does not constitute the establishment of "dual power." When MXGM uses the term "dual power" they appear to really be talking about parallel strategies of community organizing and electoral politics.

The condition of dual power actually exists when there is an emerging state coming up against an existent, and dying state. This, of course, is the product of class struggle, the motive force of history. In discussing Engels' ideas in defining what state power is, Lenin wrote:

"What does this power mainly consist of? It consists of special bodies of armed men having prisons, etc., at their command. ... A standing army and police are the chief instruments of state power."(3)

Dual, of course meaning two, would imply that you would have two different political structures with their own police, army and prisons, etc. in order to have dual power. Such a situation would mean that a civil war had begun. When Lenin first coined the term in 1917 he was speaking of the emerging Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies that would seize state

power later that same year.(4) Certainly this is not the condition in Mississippi today.

MXGM recognizes their electoral efforts are limited, and considers them one pillar of their strategy of building political power in the region that is separate from their work to build autonomous structures (People's Assemblies).(2) But these People's Assemblies are not parallel to the Soviets in 1917 or the liberated zones in China in 1948 or even the countless regions in the world today where power is held by emerging states (see Palestine, India, Colombia, the Philippines, etc).

Within the context of oppressed nation territory, there is an argument to be made for engaging in electoral politics as a step towards building one's base. While the Lumumba campaign has a clear connection to revolutionary nationalism, it is not based in proletarian ideology. Revolutionary nationalism can come in different class forms. The lack of proletarian ideology leads them to succumb to populism. Populism threatens New Afrikan independence because of the economic pull of U.\$ imperialism. With "economic development" as part of his political platform, it seems hard for Lumumba to avoid playing the role of bribing his own people with superprofits won from imperialism. This is one reason it is hard to justify supporting electoral work except to make tactical gains.

The MXGM economic program, the "third pillar" of their Jackson Plan, focuses on cooperative economics and building green economies. Such a strategy does not confront the structure of capitalism, but is a concession to petty bourgeois idealism. As long as capitalism exists people are either exploited or exploiters, so all efforts should be on exposing the need to end that system rather than white-washing it with co-ops and eco-friendly operations. There is no example in history of building new economic systems that effectively challenged capitalism without first establishing true dual power. Therefore if dual power is not feasible in our conditions, these economic strategies become reformist at best. We are better off struggling to maintain our political independence at this stage.

While running for and being elected Mayor limits Chokwe Lumumba politically, the public release of the Jackson-Kush Plan a year prior means that his landslide victory represents a majority of New Afrikans in Jackson who are at least open to the idea that political independence from Amerika is in the interests of their nation. Establishing that fact in the eyes of the New Afrikan masses is one small victory on the road to New Afrikan liberation. But electoral politics are a feeble bridge. The more people rely on it to reach liberation, the sooner it will fall out beneath them. Unless the bridge is strengthened with correct revolutionary theory, it will be doomed to leave the New

Afrikan masses on the wrong side of history.

Notes:

1. Bob Wing. Voices: From 'Mississippi Goddam' to 'Jackson Hell Yes', The Institute for Southern Studies.
2. The Jackson Plan: A Struggle for Self-Determination, Participatory Democracy, and Economic Justice. Malcolm X Grassroots Movement, July 2012.
3. VI Lenin. The State and Revolution, Chap. 1 Section 2.
4. VI Lenin. The Dual Power, Pravda NO. 28, April 9 1917.

First Nations

The ABCs of Decolonization

by Enāēmaehkiw Wākecānāpaw Kesīqnaeh

reprinted from the blog Maehkōn Ahpēhtesewen:

Decolonization Resistance Sovereignty

<https://onkwehonwerising.wordpress.com/2016/05/16/the-abc-of-decolonization/>

The purpose of this short article is an attempt to put pen to paper regarding a number of thoughts that have been working themselves out in my head recently about the default Eurocentrism of the North american left and the necessity for a genuinely anti-colonial position as a point of correction. I have been attempting to work out these ideas for myself regarding just what exactly such a position would look like, so please keep in mind that this is a work in progress.

First: Decolonization is NOT a Tendency Subordinate to Class Struggle

The general practice of the white and “multinational” left(s) in occupied north amerika has been for some time to submerge the aspirations of Indigenous (First Nations, non-Status Indians, Inuit-Iñupiat, Michif, Xicano, Genízaro & Boricua), as well as Afrikans, for decolonization, the reclamation of land and independence underneath an amorphous “the class struggle.” This struggle we are told pits the proletarian class against the capitalists. This reduces the decolonial liberation movements of those nations territorially engulfed by the imperialist-capitalist-industrialist empire of north amerika to mere tendencies or affinity groups within larger multinational class struggle oriented organizations and movements (Marxist-type parties of one stripe or another, anarchist federations and affinity group networks etc.).

Indigenous and Afrikan people are told over and over again by the Eurocentric left and its agents that it is only through broader “class unity” with the settler working-class that we can achieve our goals of decolonization. We are told that once the settler-led proletarian socialist revolution happens (because let’s be real, “multinational” in North amerika will always be code-talk for “settler-led”) on this continent we will be able to secede from the corpus of the empire if we so please.

However, it is fundamental to understand that the processes of colonization and decolonization has always coloured all of

what we might call “the broad class struggle.” This can be most concretely seen in the positioning of settler workers within not just the North american Empire, but indeed within the whole of the parasitic capitalist world-economy. Settler workers are, by and large, an embourgeoisified, non-exploited labour aristocracy, a pseudo-proletariat if you will, with a privileged lifestyle far above the levels of exploited and colonized nations of the world, both outside and within imperial borders. While this is a controversial point for dogmatico-religious class struggle anarchists and Marxists, who continue to be rooted in a political economy now a century out of date, it has been, in my opinion, quite conclusively shown by an array of theorists and writers. There have been a number of attempts to disprove this thesis—displaying varying degrees of ineptitude, abdication of basic principles of revolutionary analysis, and scholastic con-artistry, all fuelled by dogmatic adherence to old ideas—but proof is not just in the numbers, but in the actual pudding (if you will) of 100 years and more of complete settler worker abandonment and betrayal of decolonization struggles in North amerika.

While there have been high tides of radical settler working-class struggle, perhaps most vibrantly seen in the early work of the Industrial Workers of the World, even those movements failed to truly break with general trend of settler labour movements to ignore, submerge and derail decolonial movements arising from within the popular ranks of the territorially engulfed nations. Regardless, even that high tide ebbed nearly a century ago. Since then the settler working-class has primarily functioned outright as a bulwark of colonial and fascist oppression domestically and imperialist aggression overseas (it had previously as well, but it was at least tempered at times by nominal anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist organizing by some strata of the settler working-class movement).

Both the failure of even the most radical expressions of settler labour organizing, as well as the broader historic trend of the settler working class to act as a reactionary bulwark is a result of their class aspirations, which are inherently petty-bourgeois in nature, seeking a greater slice of the imperialist pie, or, in the era of neo-liberal globalization, to re-assert their position on the imperialist pedestal at the expense of heightened exploitation and oppression of colonized people. In the context of North amerika specifically, the goals of the settler labour movement have always inherently trended towards the elimination of the Indigenous population and the control of Afrikan people. Indeed, from the perspective of Indigenous and Afrikans peoples it is difficult to tease apart the broad settler population, including its lowest strata, from the colonial state

itself, precisely because the settler population has always been the primary agent for the expansion of the colonial state. This was true both historically in the era of direct frontier homicide (the Indian Wars) and the enforcement of chattel slavery, and still is today in the processes of assimilation (bureaucratic genocide) and territorial population containment (the reservations, reserves, barrios and ghettos).

However, while this remains true, I argue that a true understanding of the processes of settler colonialism must force us to dig deeper. It must force us in fact [to] rethink not only the nature and position of class struggle as it regards our understanding of colonization and decolonization, but even its relevance. This is because settler colonialism, which is the primary mode of Indigenous oppression, is prior to the antagonism between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. Most simply this is because the colonization of *Maehkaenah-Menaehsaeh* [Turtle Island – MIM(Prisons)] is one of the two pillars that brought the capitalist world economy into existence (the other is the enslavement and oppression of Afrikan people). As the late theorist of settler colonialism Patrick Wolfe put it:

“[A]ll the ostensibly self-sustaining actors in liberalism’s individualist drama—the entrepreneur, the labourer, the investor, the citizen—turn out to be collectively reliant on the continuing violence of colonial expansion. As Manu Vimalassery has pointed out, the nations whose wealth was Adam Smith’s central concern ‘were in fact empires.’ Imperialism is not the latest stage of capitalism, but its foundational warrant.”

So simply put our struggle was already in motion before capitalism was even consolidated.

Settler colonialism is fundamentally a project of the elimination of Indigenous nations and sovereignty through various overlapping means. It always was, and always will be. What settler colonialism is not, is a project of the exploitation of Indigenous labour. Settler colonialism will use Indigenous labour while Indigenous people exist, but the goal is always to ultimately replace them. For First Nations in particular, both urban and rural populations, we exist almost en masse outside of traditional capitalist production relations. While we do have to contend with the disciplining of our people to the whims of the capitalist market, and the indoctrination of our nations into the concepts of private property, possessive individualism, and menial wage work, our labour is largely superfluous with regards to the functioning of the capitalist economy. Rather, we primarily experience oppression and exploitation not in the form of traditional capitalist labour exploitation, as envisioned by

both Marxists and class struggle anarchists, but rather as ongoing primitive accumulation. In other words through the continued theft of our land and resources. What can traditional class analysis emergent from a European context have to say about this? What does talk of “working class unity” mean in this context?

Another aspect of settler colonialism that we can draw out, working on the analysis of the heterodox Azanian Marxist theorist Hosea Jaffe, is the concept of *modal struggle* as a driving force, rather than traditional class struggle, in understanding imperialism/colonialism. Modal struggle is the struggle between two fundamentally irreconcilable modes of production. In the context of the settler colonial project of North America this is the antagonistic struggle between an ever-expanding and consolidating Euro-American imperialist-capitalist-industrialist mode and traditional Indigenous lifeways, which many forces, both pro-colonial as well as decolonial, have correctly labelled as inherently communistic/collectivist. Thus, this concept helps us to deepen our understanding of the targeted destruction of Indigenous lifeways in both the United States and Canada by rival settler lifeways, in a way that orthodox conceptions of “class struggle” simply cannot even speak to in any kind of meaningful fashion.

The key point to take away from all of this is that truly revolutionary struggle within Occupied *Maehkaenah-Menaehsaeh* simply cannot take the form classically prophesized by Marxists and class struggle anarchists of an antagonistic contest between an amorphous multinational “proletariat” at one pole and the bourgeoisie at the other. To put forth such an analysis, especially one that subordinates decolonization to orthodox notions of class struggle, is to deeply obfuscate fundamental processes and structures at work within the settler colonial context.

Second: Racism is Not the Primary Mode of Indigenous & Afrikan Oppression on Maehkaenah-Menaehsaeh

Understanding the role of colonial oppression, especially how it deeply complicates the class struggle, on this continent allows us to also put into greater perspective one of the major planks of the North American settler and multinational lefts: anti-racism. Most of the left on this land has waxed eloquent about the “origins of the white race,” the horrors of racist police abuse and mass incarceration, the dehumanization of non-settler people in the popular media, the irrational fear of third and fourth world migrant people, and the general fact that North American culture is replete with common phrases of a profoundly racist manner. They have talked, and talked, and

talked some more about how overcoming racist thinking on the part of settler, especially the settler working-class, is necessary for genuine revolutionary organizing.

However, the point that they miss, again by abandoning the basic tenets of revolutionary analysis, is that racism is a phenomena of the imperialist-colonialist superstructure. What most of the left refers to as “racism” or “racist oppression” in North amerika is in actuality the superstructural element of colonial oppression, which is a real, materialist relationship between the popular masses of the domestic colonies and the settler nation. This is why Patrick Wolfe referred to race as a “trace of colonial history.” Racism is the ideas in the minds of most of settler garrison that have arisen from the material conditions of, and reflectively continue to justify, the colonial oppression of Indigenous & Afrikan People. In other words, we are not oppressed and colonized because they hate us; they hate us because we are oppressed and colonized.

The focus on racism and anti-racism on the part of the majority of Marxist and anarchist organizations in North amerika is an outgrowth of their holding to the faulty premise that views the North amerikan empire as an entity with a unified class-structure and a singular proletarian class. Given that, as noted above, the settler working-class has, more often than not, been the most reliable shock troops of colonialism, the left has had to seek a reason for this seeming contradiction in what they hold to be the fundamental nature of the proletariat. Relying on an array of somewhat brutalized extractions from Gramscian, Lukácsian, Althusserian and post-Marxist thought, they have put forward the notion that the development of white supremacy (white power is a better, more accurate, term) was/is an insidious plot by the bourgeoisie to fill up the minds of the settler garrison with false consciousness and ideology in order to break a supposedly previously unified working-class.

This is bunk (I don’t really have time to explain how it is here, but please see this site’s suggested reading section for works that eviscerate this position at length), but it is important to address the fact that this kind of politics is profoundly obfuscating. The implications of the anti-racist focus in terms of revolutionary direction are two-fold:

1. Because racism is normally placed within a context of restricted access to the largesse of the empire, the macro-level solution is to open up the doors of the empire via a programme of radical integrationism;
2. At the micro-level the solution to the problem then is to combat the ideas bumbling around between the ears of settlers. Since racism is a superstructural problem then we must work to combat racist ideology.

When that is done we can organize to achieve the macro-level goal.

This obscures the actual point of colonial oppression. Indigenous & Afrikan people suffer under the heel of a really-existing material relationship rooted in exploitation and the ongoing colonial expropriation of land and resources, the solution to which is full decolonization, not radical integration into the Klan fortress that is North amerika. While racist ideas kicking around the brains of white folks is a problem, it is not the fundamental problem: if Indigenous & Afrikan people are allowed to determine our own destinies then these malicious ideas become of secondary importance. Indeed they are likely to wither away relatively quickly once the tables flip and Red & Black Power become the order of the day, their material basis having been ripped away.

Third: The Belief that Settlers Have an Inherent Right to a Future of Stolen Land Has Got to Go

A genuine decolonial politics in North amerika must abandon the idea that settlers have an inherent right to a piece of this continent in any way, shape or form. It’s not that settler class struggle anarchists and Marxists explicitly claim such a position, because they don’t (at least not that I have ever seen), but it is implicit quite clearly in their various lines (other relatively superficial disagreements aside). Here I am not addressing those formations and individuals whose lines are entirely rooted in a politics of pure anti-racism, as how that position (radical integration into the settler colonial empire) leads to this point does not need much explanation; rather I am aiming this at those forces and individuals who have a political line that recognizes, on some level, colonial oppression (often alongside racism as some kind of dual racial-national oppression).

Most of the Marxist-Leninist and Maoist formations in North amerika, as well as some anarchists, put forth a sort of watered down recognition for decolonial struggle, though not necessarily for the same reasons. For both the Marxists and anarchists who support, at least on paper, decolonial demands, their lines are inherently weakened by their being subsumed under the rubric problematized by the first two points I have raised. For Marxist-Leninist and Maoists in particular however their political support for full decolonization is further weakened by a general non-recognition of the liberation aspirations of Indigenous Nations. Many of these formations provide lip-service support to Afrikan, Xicano & Boricua independence, but tend to only provide vague platitudes when it comes to the question of First Nations.

Perhaps I am too much of a cynic, jaded by too many

negative experiences working within and around settler-dominated Marxist and anarchist organizations, but I believe that this is because they have a deep psychological unwillingness to confront the consequences of genuine Indigenous liberation. From this their history vis-à-vis the Indigenous and Afrikan nations has been one of decades long false internationalism, parasitism and opportunism in their relations with the revolutionary decolonial movements that have risen to the surface at different junctures, and is directly rooted in their socio-economic positioning within the imperialist pecking order

They can support Xicano, Boricua and Afrikan independence, but only because while they would have to allow the succession of a few (though some quite large) swaths of imperial territory to the colonized, it is a scenario that leaves the bulk of the land in settler hands. Support for the liberation of, and return of land to, First Nations and our Michif and Genízaro cousins, and not just our Xicano and Boricua family, and our old Afrikan allies, would mean the surrender of the entirety of the settler nation's land base.

Indeed, this the reason that the settler garrison population exists at all: to physically hold down the land against the people from whom it was seized. This is also why the state enacts every kind of juridical tool at its disposal in order to head off Indigenous land claims outside of a revolutionary situation.

The settler left cannot imagine a future where the garrison population does not continue to hold down the majority of the land of Maehkaenah-Menaehsaeh. It doesn't matter if settler society is re-organized on the basis of a confederation of autonomous anarchist municipalities and industrial collectives, or a federative socialist workers' republic of the Marxist sort: so long as the land is not relinquished back to its original owners then all that will develop is settler colonialism with a Marxist or anarchist face.

So it must be recognized that all of Maehkaenah-Menaehsaeh is stolen land, and that over the course of revolutionary anti-colonial struggle all of it must be liberated, even if that goes against the material interests of the settler population. The rights and aspirations of those nations that have been territorially engulfed by the expansion of empire will be given primacy.

Conclusion: What is to be Done?

So what does all this mean for the actualization of a revolutionary decolonization movement? To answer Lenin's old maxim of "what is to be done?" we must begin with a single

basic premise: the return of land, all of it, and not just symbolically.

This means the return of all land seized via treaty, the overwhelming majority of which are demonstrably fraudulent, and were never signed in good mind on the part of settlers. Many settler anarchists and Marxists propose a line of upholding treaty rights, and the full application of previous agreements such as the Two Row Wampum as the vehicle for what they call "decolonization." However, this politic immediately falls into the trap of assuming that settlers have an inherent right to at least possess some of the land, which is in fact simply a more insidious form of settler colonialism. Further, the treaties and other like documents are what removed thousands of Indigenous peoples from their lands, sometimes marching them hundreds or thousands of miles to foreign lands, and sequestered all of us, even those of us who remained on ancestral lands, onto reserves and reservations. So all of the treaties must be scrapped, and the land returned that they were used to seize. Decolonization that is restricted to the open air prisons in which one is held prisoner is not real decolonization.

It also goes without saying that this process must also include the return of the enormous swaths of land (including, for example, the vast majority of so-called British Columbia) that were seized without even the slightest pretence of treaty making. Additionally the return of all lands to our nations which continue to exist, but which have no recognition from the state, or were written off as extinct, but whose existences have been continuous, must also be of the highest priority. This includes the lands of many nations in Waabanakiing and the southern Atlantic Coast.

We must also include, as one of our most sacred goals, the right of return for those nations who were pushed west into Wisconsin, Ontario, Oklahoma and other places by the manifest destiny expansion of the United States and Kanada. This means that the garrison population must surrender control of former Choctaw, Cherokee, Oneida, Lenape, Muscogee, Seneca, Munsee, Shawnee, Fox, Kickapoo and others' land in the southeastern and northeastern woodlands, land to which they are tied to intimately by identity, language, spirituality and culture. Again, we must say that decolonization that is restricted to the open air prisons in which one is held prisoner is not real decolonization.

Finally it must also mean the negotiation, should the Afrikan Nation seek it (something to be self-determined internally by the Afrikan nation without any form of external interference), of an Afrikan National Territory as part of the larger decentralized, bio-regional confederacies that will form in the wake of the

breakup of “North amerika.” It must also mean reparations to the Afrikan Nations for five centuries of slavery and colonial bondage.

These goals, once accomplished, would wipe out the material basis for the existence of the settler empire, which only exists by dint of genocide, enslavement and occupation. Only after all of this will it be possible to negotiate a future for the former occupying nation, but such negotiations must take place between the former colonized nations, not necessarily with the consent of the settler population. Indeed, given that the consolidation of the settler nation was dialectically tied to the colonization of Indigenous and Afrikan peoples, then the elimination of the material basis of the settler nation via anti-colonial struggle may well result in the dissolution of that entity.

Once all of these things are understood, of the primacy of decolonial struggle, and the fullest understanding of what that portends for revolution on this continent, will it be possible to claim that one has arrived at the most genuine possible decolonial politics.

Factors Falling Into Place for Successful Revolutions

January 1994

from MIM Theory #7

by MC5

The First Nations (indigenous peoples) of North America are setting the pace for national liberation in the 1990s. In none of these struggles is Maoism exerting a dominant role. In most cases, the people themselves are launching spontaneous struggle, including armed struggle.

In North America, the First Nations and urban youth gangs of Blacks and Latinos are the closest to putting armed struggle into an organized framework for revolution. MIM generally opposes armed struggle at this time in North America, but in the case of many First Nations, MIM supports the armed struggle where it breaks out because the following material and subjective conditions are in place:

- Strong political support from at least a substantial fraction of the people favoring nationhood.
- Strong support for the necessity of confronting white supremacy with regard to specific jurisdiction over land and government functions.
- Opposition to Amerikan taxes and Amerikan restrictions on First Nation economic activity.

The more organized an oppressed people is for self-reliance, the more it finds itself in revolutionary conflict with the imperialists.

The international situation is another important political factor. Despite centuries of genocide, the white supremacists never succeeded in entirely rewriting history. International public opinion recognizes that indigenous peoples existed before Euro-Amerikans did; hence, the international political situation brings some pressure to bear on the imperialists attempting to eradicate the First Nations through assimilation. International public opinion on other oppressed nations within North America, such as the Black or Latino populations, is not yet as favorable.

The most crucial condition for leading a successful and completed armed struggle still does not exist in any First Nation in North America – the dominant leadership of a Maoist party. Despite the presence of MIM in the First Nations communities, the struggles of the people are spontaneous or consciously led by the national bourgeoisie. Yet there is a great affinity between the First Nations' struggles and Maoism. With the example of indigenous Maoist parties in South America, it is only a matter of time before the First Nation masses of North America take up Maoism also.

Where the struggle is relatively advanced, the propositions of Maoism have been accepted already to a greater degree than in those places where the struggle does not go forward. The First Nation struggle in North America often accepts the following ideas:

- The division of the world into oppressor and oppressed nations.
- The necessity of armed struggle to defend national borders and achieve independence.
- A conscious plan to maximize the role of women.
- Struggle against the compradors – the puppets of the imperialists. These compradors in the First Nations include bureaucratic capitalists who are high-ranking functionaries of the U.S. government.
- Concern for the people's welfare – the elderly, children, unemployed, alcoholics, etc.

The First Nations are very open to communism compared to other people in North America, but they do not attempt to organize a communist party for national independence. Hence, although in most regards the subjective factor opposing imperialism in the First Nations is much more advanced than in

the rest of North America, even in the case of the First Nations not all the subjective factors for successful revolution are in place.

The First Nations are making the transition from one stage of struggle to another. The first stage is creating public opinion to build independent power of the oppressed. The second stage is armed struggle to seize even more power for the oppressed. The First Nations are in transition from the first stage to the second with some back and forth movement between the stages.

LESSONS FOR OTHER OPPRESSED NATIONS

The current struggles of the First Nations in North America hold many lessons for other oppressed nationalities. One of the first steps to revolutionary armed struggle is the secession of the village, town or city from the U.S. Or Canadian governments, including the Euro-Amerikans' village, town and city governments.

Many First Nations have never had to take that secessionist step because of continuous historical traditions. But it is in that step that emerging nations can take their first legal steps toward maintaining their own police, fire and school systems and collecting their own taxes.

The next step is to throw off state-level authority. This step takes considerable political clout internationally and locally and not all First Nations and other oppressed nations are ready for this. Leaders of the struggle must pay attention to fighting winnable battles until they have accumulated the power necessary to take this step.

The break from state authority within U.S. borders or province authority within Canadian borders is crucial. At that point, the people are throwing out the state's police forces. The Mohawks have done this at certain points in their history; although, in Akwesasne the people recently suffered a setback on this score since New York state troopers consider Mowhawk territory part of their jurisdiction again (upon invitation of the Mowhawks themselves). The FBI also intervenes in tax and business matters.

Having achieved real self-reliance at the town and state level, the nation is ready to take on federal authorities. The imperialist government must then decide if it will send the army to assert its sovereignty. In the case of the First Nations, international public opinion and the masses' own military might has made this a costly but not impossible option for the imperialists.

POLITICAL ECONOMY

Probably the most difficult issue facing the indigenous nations in North America is their own success. What to do when the struggle does succeed? What is success? In North America, the possibilities for economic success are much greater than in South America, because of the wealth of the imperialist United States and Canada that is sucked out of the entire Third World.

In some First Nations there is already disgruntlement that the struggle of the people to free themselves from Euro-Amerikan taxes and economic restrictions has created indigenous millionaires. These millionaires then proceed to integrate themselves into Amerika and leave their nations entirely. Others stay and seek to oppress their own people.

A key difference between the Maoist way and the approach seen now in the First Nations is that the proletariat leads in the Maoist way. If the proletariat does not lead, the interests of the vast majority of people cannot be protected and the greatest unity of the people cannot be achieved. In the end, the cause of national independence depends on a correct class and gender analysis and stand.

500 Years of White Unity

reprinted from MIM Notes 69

October 1992

revised November 1994

by MC12

Many people have chosen the 500 year anniversary of the landing of Cristobal Colón as an opportunity to denounce the colonial conquest of the peoples and lands of these continents. The occasion must also be noted for what it is today: a milestone in the *unbroken chain* of Amerikan oppression which stretches through half a millennium.

MIM has always emphasized that Amerikan oppression is national oppression – the exploitation of nations by a whole nation. Since the first poor whites demanded total subjugation of indigenous peoples, and their working class compatriots in Europe clamored for cheaper consumer commodities produced by slaves, the oppression nation has, as a whole, feasted on the spoils of genocidal Amerika.

That is why, from the perspective of the oppressed nations, the “left” and “right” of Amerikan politics are so hard to tell apart. In the 1600s, white farmers led a revolt (Bacon's rebellion) to demand more land-grabbing war on native people,

and, in Bacon's words, the “utter Ruine and destruction” of all indigenous people. The event is considered a milestone of “democratic resistance” for the Amerikan left.(1)

In the 1700s, the incipient white working class rallied around the Amerikan revolution in order to gain more control over the state's tools of repression and exploitation, and to develop independent capitalism. Sixty-five thousand slaves joined the war on the side of the British, more than 10 times the number who fought for settler Amerika – and many more used the crisis as a chance to fight for freedom on their own. Most of the Amerikan left maintains that revolution as the birth of democracy in Amerika, starting a tradition which must now be remade. The oppressed know that the innovation of that era was the reuniting of Amerikan nationals against their subjects – the indigenous, Black and other oppressed nations.(2_

In the 1800s, modern capitalism gave birth to the Amerikan labor movement. Its leaders fought for the elevation of white workers, the extension of slavery, and the exclusion of oppressed peoples from all spheres of power. When Chinese workers struck for better conditions in the West, white workers forced their unions to organize boycotts of goods which were not “Made with White Labor Only.” In 1879, 99% of California white voters voted to ban Chinese immigration, after Chinese workers had built the railroads out West and made huge tracts of California lands suitable for growing crops.(3)

After the bourgeoisie finally convinced white workers that slavery was an infeasible economic system, white workers and their allies took their battles to the streets of Northern cities, fighting to keep Black workers (who were often driven off what little land they had by white settlers) in the lowest industries, jobs and neighborhoods.(4)

White “feminism” further extended the suffering of oppression nationals, as suffragists argued that if white men didn't give white women the vote, white power would be fatally threatened. A Kentucky suffragist leader wrote that the National America Women's Suffrage Association “never hesitated to show that the White women's vote would give supremacy to the white race.”(5) These white supremacists decided the suffragist movement would wear white. It was a convenient decision: the only thing missing from their daytime wardrobe was the white hoods they needed for nighttime cross-burnings and lynchings.

The Amerikan women of the pseudo-feminist movement today pay proud homage to their early white supremacist sisters, as they wear white in National Organization for Women marches. And the white labor movement leads a massive fight to keep their jobs at hundreds of times the wages of Third World

workers, and keep immigrant competition away. They clamor for war and conquest abroad, and for the repression of revolutionary movements among the oppressed in the ghettos, barrios and fields within Amerika.

The only revolutionary movement within Amerika since 1492 has been the movement of oppressed nations against the dominant Amerikan nation. There is no revolutionary class or gender struggle separate from this overarching reality. Within the revolutionary struggle of the oppressed nations, proletarian and feminist struggles propel the movement forward. There can be no revolutionary “working class” movement, and no revolutionary “feminist” movement, which does not adopt the perspective of the oppressed nations, and fight for their emancipation.

The first test of any revolutionary movement within Amerika remains the same today as it was the day Columbus first raped an Arawak woman: does the movement fundamentally oppose Amerika and all that it stands for? Or does it merely pose left in its quest – deliberate or accidental – for a unified oppressor nation?

Notes:

1. J. Sakai, *Settlers: The Mythology of the White Proletariat*, Morningstar Press: Chicago, 1983. pp. 12-16.

2. Sakai, p. 19.

3. Sakai, pp. 33-37, George MacNeil, ed., *The Labor Movement: The Problem of To-day*, New York: 1982, pp. 446-7.

4. See William Turtle, *Race Riot: Chicago in the Red Summer of 1919*, Athanum: NewYork, 1980.

5. Paula Giddings, *When and Where I Enter: The Impact of Black Women on Race and Sex in America*, Bantam: New York, 1984. pp. 125-6.

Yavapai 1: Bet on Blockade

reprinted from MIM News 66

July 1992

by MC99

One hundred members of the Yavapai McDowell Reservation outside Phoenix, Arizona blocked eight FBI-driven tractor trailers containing electronic gambling machines from leaving their reservation game center on May 12. The FBI presence was part of a state-wide effort to enforce a federal law that bans gambling on indigenous people's land.(1) Four other indigenous-run gambling centers in Arizona were also raided that day, and the feds confiscated a total of 750 machines which were said to be in violation of federal law.(2)

Warned by reservation members commuting to Phoenix for

work that federal vehicles were approaching the reservation, the Yavapai barricaded the casino using pick-up trucks, earth movers and cars. The barricade stopped the feds from making off with equipment that generates 70% of the reservation's income, tribal Chairperson Clinton Patten said in an interview with MIM Notes. The Yavapai non-violently held 50 to 100 FBI agents in the parking lot of the casino for eight hours until a temporary agreement was reached.(3)

MEETING WITH STATE OFFICIALS

Arizona governor Fife Symington met with Pattea in a library outside the reservation of May 12. Pattea and Symington agreed that the machines would remain inside the trailers for a 10-day "cooling off" period. The FBI left and the reservation took responsibility for the security of the equipment. The Yavapai people maintained a 24-hour-a-day watch on the machines until June 5, when they were taken to a warehouse in Phoenix.(4)

The Yavapai have been trying – unsuccessfully – to negotiate an arrangement with the state of Arizona to legalize gambling since 1988. But in the wake of the blockade, when Patten suggested to Governor Symington that the Yavapai could and would meet any challenge by the state in defense of their economic sovereignty, Symington agreed to discuss an agreement with the Yavapai McDowell Reservation on June 9.

The state presented a proposal that limited the number of machines to 250, the hours that the casino could stay open per week to 80 and the bet limit to \$5, and further proposed that the operation would be regulated by the state. The Yavapai rejected the proposal and agreed to make their own proposal.

Patten told MIM Notes he is hopeful for an agreeable outcome for the reservation, if the event gets enough attention that other Arizona tribes will be able to win similar deals with the state. Before the blockade, the Yavapai, along with three other tribes, filed a lawsuit attempting to force negotiations, gain the security of the use of the electronic game machines and avoid losing a major chunk of their income.

BLOCKADES ARE BETTER THAN LAWSUITS

On May 12, the Yavapai people met imperialist aggression with a force stronger than a lawsuit. The blockade produced negotiations, and while the outcome is yet to be determined the legal course hangs in the dust. The Yavapai know that they have a good argument, which is in fact within Indian Gaming

Regulatory Act guidelines, but relying on the "justice" system is not in the favor of anyone outside the white nation.

The fact that the Yavapai are being prevented from obtaining any economic stability is not due to an abused law or an uncooperative administration. The economic wreckage is deliberate. It is a technique that is part of the systematic oppression that keeps the indigenous nations under the thumb of imperialism and severed from any chance at creating prosperity for the Yavapai McDowell reservation or any of the other indigenous nations.

NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY

The Indian Gaming Regulatory Act of 1988 permits gambling on reservations within states that permit gambling. The state of Arizona frequently does permit not-for-profit organizations to hold "Las Vegas nights," where gambling paraphernalia similar to Fort McDowell's is brought in for a night.

On June 8 all charges against the rebels were dropped. The attempted seizure of the machines was due to government rules that took effect May 11, barring two types of gambling: electronic card game machines and an instant lottery game machine. Beyond the electronic card and lottery games the game center hosts bingo, live keno and card games, with the profits accounting for 70-80% of reservation income.

Pattea wants people to understand that the Yavapai nation is a sovereign nation and that federal government put them in this situation. "They keep telling us that we should decide on our own destination, yet they make decisions that effect our people," he told MIM Notes.

The Yavapai McDowell reservation has 800 members, 500 of whom are residents. The game center has about 1,000 customers per night, patronized by people living in and visiting the Phoenix area.

The government's agenda to curtail the gambling industry within reservations does not surprise MIM. Imperialism tries to keep oppressed nations from obtaining any power or independence. The unemployment rate on the reservation before the game center was established was 30-40%; afterward unemployment was brought down to less than 5%. Since the removal of the equipment 80 people have been laid off. The game center employment 150 people, of whom one-third were tribal members.

Although gambling is an addictive vice that sucks money and stability from people, it has provided the reservation with

cash that funds college scholarships, pre-schools, youth programs, clothing for school children, a library and a senior center. The outgrowth of gambling – emotional and psychological desperation – is probably what has sustained it as an imperialist-sanctioned enterprise within indigenous nations.

Notes:

1. National Public Radio 5/13/92.
2. Boston Globe 5/13/92.
3. Atlanta Journal and Constitution 5/13/92.
4. New York Times 5/13/92.

Yavapai 2: People Fight Back

reprinted from MIM Notes 68
September 1992
by MC31

After the May 12 standoff between the Yavapai nation and the FBI over the use of gambling machines on the reservation, the indigenous nation entered into negotiations with the Arizona state governor. The Yavapai people living on the Ft. McDowell reservation northeast of Phoenix continue to stand their ground after the May raid by the FBI, and insist upon national sovereignty. Ron Dorchester, a member of the Yavapai nation, said: “The issue is self-government. Does the tribe have a right to self-government? And, I mean, once they take away those machines, what else are they going to come and take away?”(1)

MIM spoke with Yavapai tribal Chairperson Clinton Pattea about their current negotiations with the Arizona government. The tone of the conflict seems to have dampened since the Yavapai agreed to a cooling-off period and these negotiations.

“We need to get those machines back so we can start putting people back to work,” Pattea urged. He also said that right after the raid there was a public opinion poll put out by several television stations that found that anywhere from 60-70% of the people supported the Yavapai position. “We were very encouraged about that. The governor was made aware of that, and that’s why we have started our negotiations with him. Before that, he wouldn’t talk about it.”

MIM asked Pattea if he thought that real self-determination could come from negotiations with the state government, and made clear MIM’s position that such negotiations are not going to work for the oppressed nations of this country. MIM believes that the people must organize and struggle against the Amerikan government. Pattea, however, repeatedly drew a distinction between the federal government, which passed the 1988 Indian

Gaming Regulatory Act allowing gambling on reservations, and the Arizona government which is resisting an agreement with the Yavapai.

“The federal government would allow us to have gaming on the reservation ... All over Arizona there are Las Vegas nights and casino nights, and we just want the tribes to be able to do what [everyone else does].”

When asked if the American Indian Movement (AIM) and the League of Indigenous Sovereign Nations (LISN) were working in support of the efforts to get casinos back open on reservations, Pattea said that AIM members has been very helpful in coming to Arizona to speak on the issue, and he emphasized the importance of this support. Pattea also called for more public support in the Yavapai negotiation efforts with the state. He made clear, however, that the Yavapai nation is a sovereign nation and should be treated as such by Amerika.

FIGHTING THE SAME STRUGGLE IN KANSAS

In addition to the struggle at Fort McDowell in Arizona, there are struggles against the government in Kansas as well – the Kickapoo nation is fighting to have casinos back on their reservation.

The Kansas Supreme Court has just ruled that indigenous nations must have compacts, or agreements, with the government in order to operate gambling casinos on their reservations. In 1987 the Amerikan Supreme Court ruled that since tribes are politically sovereign, they must be allowed to run their own economies, even if that includes gambling. The Kickapoo tribal chairperson Steve Caduc is fighting to make sure that the legislation is upheld by the state government – a lawsuit is pending and the Kickapoo nation is hopeful.(2)

MIM says, do not hold out too much hope on this imperialist Amerikan government! While MIM understands that at this time the tribal economies are in deep trouble and many indigenous people are unemployed, and that control of a gambling industry will employ many reservation members, we do not believe that this will bring true self-determination or self-sufficiency. Only a revolutionary communist movement which recognizes national liberation struggles as essential components will bring true power to the oppressed.

Notes:

1. National Public Radio, “Morning Edition” 6/11/92.
2. The Washington Post 6/16/92.

Casinos Raise Allegiance Questions

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June 1993

revised November 1994

by a Comrade

ONONDAGA NATION, JUNE 16 – Since April, some businesses at the Onondaga nation in central New York have been barricaded to prevent them from opening to the public. People at Onondaga characterize the dispute as an “internal matter” between businesses and the tribal leadership.

Chief Oren Lyons wants more taxes from the businesses, which pay no state taxes. The business owners want more accountability from the leadership on how the money is spent.

A spokesperson for the Mohawk Nation office in Kahnawake also said he needed to know more about the Onondaga situation, but still some things seemed not right to him. The Mohawk questioned in particular whether or not chief Oren Lyons acts in the interests of Onondaga.

The dispute raises questions about the relationship of indigenous nations to the imperialist U.S. State, and about the role of business among the indigenous people themselves. These questions reverberate up and down the East coast.

A Seneca cigarette dealer pointed out that the businesses and tribe should have worked something out before the conflict began, since they rely on each other: “The chiefs probably have a good bitch ... and the state is happy because their own government, the chiefs, shut down the retailers ... The chiefs should be in the frontlines fighting [for the indigenous businesses]. It doesn't look good, when Indians are fighting Indians. The system knows how to get us fighting. You can be conquered.”

While the businesses in Onondaga stand empty, the casino of the Mashantucket Pequot in southeastern Connecticut, now likely the leading single indigenous business in North America, is booming.

According to the Mashantucket Pequot museum, in 1983, Congress passes a law returning a small bit of land stolen from the indigenous peoples. Eight hundred acres in Connecticut became a “reservation.” A spokesperson for the tribal government said 165 of the tribe's 250 survivors have now settled there. The land grant and resettlement are themselves worthy accomplishments of the struggle.

In 1992 the tribal government set up a casino with slot machines and dice games, which has turned into such a huge success that the tribe has guaranteed Connecticut \$113 million for the second year of operation, based on a fraction of revenue guaranteed to the state by the tribe.

With the revenues from gaming and related enterprises, the Mashantucket Pequot have started plans for a new tribal library and museum for indigenous history.

Moreover, archaeological digs at more than 200 sites have continued to turn up new artifacts concerning indigenous history. These digs have generated some information lost in oral history.

Tribal businesses also partially take care of the people's housing needs. According to its public relations official, the tribal government has completed a \$1 million new housing effort and has bought 15 existing houses in the area. More housing appears to be on the way as more tribe members resettle in the area.

POLITICAL ECONOMY OF CASINOS

The gambling casinos represent some kind of redivision of U.S. Imperialism's booty. Certainly gambling itself provides no service of lasting value. But the money it makes can be thought of as a long-overdue reparation to the indigenous peoples.

But to what extent is that reparation distributed among the people, and can the indigenous hold onto their land while they foray into other enterprises?

Despite the benefits of money from gambling, some indigenous people believe the Mashantucket Pequot have made a mistake. Some Mohawks MIM spoke to raised the obvious objection that gambling rots the spirit of the people.

MIM agrees that gambling represents a propagation of degenerate values. But at the same time, white greed brings thousands of customers to the tribe every day.

Furthermore, while some businesses under capitalism are worse than others, the fact remains that the indigenous must survive somehow under capitalism or move to socialism, which is not easy given the balance of forces between the indigenous peoples and U.S. Imperialism.

WHO TAKES WHOM?

Two Onondaga Nation citizens running the blockades in front of Onondaga businesses have raised more important objections concerning the casino.

One said, “The state should pay the taxes to the Pequots. The Pequots are really foolish ... I don't know, but at least they should not do anything to trade for land.”

The young Onondaga critic believes that Pequot negotiations with Connecticut among to agreeing to a state tax: “Sons seven generations down the line are going to have to pay for that.”

East Coast indigenous peoples are united in seeing taxes as a way to make the people sell their land in the long run.

The other critic, a fervent nationalist at the blockade, was even more adamant. He had a message for New York Governor Mario Cuomo: “We grant permission for the white people to have casinos in Albany ... We give permission to Donald Trump. Trump can pay taxes to the [Iroquois] Nation.”

On the other hand, the tribal government of the Mashantucket Pequot also opposes state taxes, but it has a different strategy. Referring to the New York state tax struggle, the tribal spokesperson offered solidarity: “The tribes should not have to pay taxes. Tribes are in the same status as states. The tribes can negotiate with the states, but they should not have to pay something in lieu of taxes. No other municipalities have to pay taxes, so why should the state tax the tribes?”

The Pequot spokesperson sees the gaming as something allowing the indigenous to diversify and become self-reliant, a goal that Maoists support.

The tribe now has a sand and gravel business, a pharmaceutical network and a small public law contract. Such diversification should allow them to give up gaming as their main enterprise, say pro-casino advocates.

But hand-made signs posted in many Seneca yards on the Cattaraugus reservation southwest of Buffalo say, “No New York state taxes. No New York state troopers. No Casinos.” Others in the Seneca nation territories read simply, “Casinos=Genocide.”

PROLETARIAN INTERNATIONALISM

MIM stands with the class of people typified by a young Seneca woman worker who had this to say: “Us younger Indians are stronger than our ancestors ... We're not willing to sell our land.”

She opposed casinos for the Senecas because “It couldn't be controlled ... They [tribal government] can't even take control of the enterprises now ... bingo, gas ... We should be one of the richest tribes ... where's it going?”

This cigarette shop attendant answered her own question: “to me, our government is as corrupt as the white man's.”

She added that the tribal government promised the Seneca people a distribution of income from tribal businesses, but it never happened: “But everybody's different ... as long as I have a roof over my head, that doesn't matter to me.”

Seeing a MIM Notes cover story on Azania, the Seneca woman said, “That's another thing. As far as I'm concerned that over there is the same thing they did to us here. It really makes me mad to hear the white people say things about Blacks. This one guy, I said, 'then why did you bring them [Black people] over here?' You listen to them, they love Michael Jordan [laughs], but then they [say chauvinist things].”

She went on to agree with MIM that the situation in Palestine was similar – white people taking land and oppressing the indigenous population.

In this Seneca woman, we see a clear example of proletarian internationalism. She represents a class of people who don't benefit much from the efforts of an indigenous bourgeoisie. MIM seeks to work in her interests.

Reacting to the idea that the Indian government is as bad as the white man's, one gas- and craft-store owner near Buffalo agreed, and then added that not all government is good and for that matter not all Indian business is good: “Some governments are corrupt and some businesses are corrupt.”

MIM cannot condemn all tribal governments or businesses. Some do good things. Indigenous business-owners are often activists in the struggle against U.S. Imperialism and help provide vital livelihood for their people. And there is always the risk that the imperialist state will take advantage of internal divisions.

Mao Zedong suggested that the revolutionary struggle of the oppressed nation test the bourgeoisie and petit-bourgeoisie of the oppressed nation. Those that did not support the revolutionary struggles of the oppressed were to be considered lackeys of imperialism. That section of the upper class that supported the revolutionary struggles of the people he called “national bourgeoisie.” The ultimate test of the business leaders of the Onondaga and the Mashantucket Pequot is their attitude towards the revolutionary struggle of the oppressed.

But MIM does oppose any faction of an oppressed nation that calls on the imperialists – their courts, their cops or welfare agencies – to resolve indigenous conflicts.

New York Ponders Imperialist Role

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by a Comrade

A court hearing on April 28 concluded a legal battle between the indigenous nations located within New York state boundaries and the New York state government. As MIM Notes goes to press, we expect the imperialist courts in Albany, New York to decide on whether or not New York state can tax indigenous peoples.

New York state's Commissioner of Taxation has brought the issue to court in an attempt to compel a cigarette distributor to tax the Mohawk, Oneida, Seneca, Onondaga and other tribes. Currently, the indigenous nations within the borders of New York state do not charge customers state taxes for cigarette purchases within indigenous nation territories.

The forthcoming ruling also has obvious implications for other industries as well. Gasoline, crafts and convenience store trade figure prominently into the economies of indigenous nations located within New York state boundaries.

Precisely because of the greater implications of the ruling, it is expected that New York state will lose this round in court, while the imperialists devise a more thorough strategy to tax the indigenous. Some similar previous court skirmishes have validated the indigenous nations' claims regarding taxes based on recent and centuries-old treaties between the white man and the indigenous.(1)

If the wholesale cigarette distributor Attea loses this round it will represent a major offensive against the indigenous nation by the imperialists. If New York state loses, it can then go to the Supreme Court and Congress to devise a more thorough strategy of oppression.

That this struggle occurs at all is an impressive indictment of a darling of the "left"-wing of the Democratic Party, New York state Governor Mario Cuomo. Cuomo could top the Taxation Commission from launching this attack on the indigenous since the Commission answers to him, but he chooses to stay mum while letting the Commission do the dirty work.

New York state's offensive takes advantage of conscious and unconscious white-nation chauvinism. Too many Amerikans in New York think it is unimaginable that some people would

not want to be counted as New York residents or U.S. Citizens. They assume that all so-called minority groups want to assimilate into the aptly named Empire State.

Of course, there are those indigenous people who do wish to assimilate and become so-called Native Americans. They should be allowed to do so and should be granted thorough civil rights protections. MIM does not agree that assimilation is the best strategy for oppressed nation peoples, but we stand firmly behind the right of the indigenous peoples to decide for themselves.

On the so-called reservations, better thought of as nations, the sentiment of the indigenous people is strongly anti-tax, anti-New York state and anti-assimilation. Even indigenous people who disagree on their national status, the means of struggle, and what it means to be indigenous agree that New York has no business imposing taxes and state troopers on them. The reservations should be treated as nations where New York state has no business imposing taxes anymore than it has the right to put a special tax on cigarettes sold in Belgium.

One Mohawk trader described himself as in the minority for not thinking of the Mohawks as a nation: "Ninety nine percent disagree with me." He stressed the indigenous peoples' spiritual side and claimed that the whole idea of nations did not exist until the white man came. According to this one well-to-do trader and semi-pacifist, it would be better to die out than to give up the spirit and the Great Law.

MIM believes in a more materialist philosophical approach. The white man's genocide of the First Nations must be countered with the material force of national liberation. There is no victory in letting the indigenous nations die, because the truth can only be propagated by the living.

MIM would also disagree with Trotskyists and others for their general support for assimilation and categorical attack on the oppressed nations' bourgeoisie. According to them, all businesspeople are bad and communists should not care about the taxation issue. Who cares if the indigenous cigarette traders go out of business? They are, after all, just capitalists and petit-bourgeoisie. With this attitude, the Trotskyists and other supposed friends of the indigenous serve as the occasional vanguard of white-nation chauvinism: they would rather indigenous be exploited by whites than by other indigenous people. At the same time, they don't believe in socialism in one country, so the indigenous are supposed to starve to death while waiting for the white working class in Europe and North America to rise up. Clearly this combination of ideas is deadly for the oppressed.

Following Mao, MIM notes the dual nature of the bourgeoisie in the oppressed nations. In particular, there is a fraction of the bourgeoisie and a petit-bourgeoisie aspiring to bourgeois status that sees its avenues blocked by national oppression. These groups will fight national oppression for their own reasons.

One of the better-off Seneca nation traders who has very revolutionary ideas and who organized direct actions of the summer of 1992 against the tax said:

“Taxes lead to revolution, don't forget, ... so anywhere you go, people are going to stand. ... Every country has a super ruling class [trying to decide] 'Who are we going to kill off?' They're gonna have to come down on us. ... They can't let them [indigenous] make too much; then we get too powerful.”

Notes:

1. See MIM Notes 68 for more on the treaties and direct action taken by indigenous people to stop the tax in the summer of 1992.

Seneca Nation Asserts Sovereignty

reprinted from MIM Notes 79

August 1993

revised November 1994

by a Comrade

President Barry Snyder declared Friday, July 16 a national holiday. Offices closed to celebrate the anniversary of the Seneca takeover of a New York state highway that protested New York state's effort to tax the indigenous people.(1)

The Senecas and other First Nations within New York state borders had other reason to celebrate as well. Voting 6-0, a New York State court decided in June that the New York state government could not tax the First Nations because that is the prerogative of the U.S. Congress, not the states.

The decision overturned a lower court decision and forced the New York state government, headed by Governor Mario Cuomo, to seek the opinion of the U.S. Supreme Court. False friend of the people Mario Cuomo could have said, “we are going to leave the indigenous alone and treat them like nations,” but instead Cuomo has established a task force to study the issue and has allowed his underlings to push this disgraceful issue to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Chances are good that the U.S. Supreme Court will decide to hear the case, but the whole process will probably take at least 18 months. In the meantime, the Senecas and other peoples

in the area have gained some respite, so that they may continue to trade in cigarettes, gasoline and so on without paying New York taxes.

The July 16 holiday is now a source of great pride to the Seneca people. The weekend that follows is the Senecas' annual pow-wow. People from all over North America go to the pow-wow to be in solidarity with their Seneca friends.

According to some cigarette shop workers, the takeover “brought back their pride. ... It showed people who they are. ... A lot of people aren't proud of what they are. They wish they were somebody else.” Another worker added about the takeover that “everybody had the same feelings; we went out there drug-free” in harmony.

Organizing to relieve the oppression by the white man does more to benefit the Seneca people than the “work” of a million psychiatrists or social workers. Whether it be alcoholism or illegal drug abuse, it is the oppression of the First Nations by Amerika that drives the indigenous to despair, a feeling of powerlessness and addiction. Psychiatrists and social workers can only teach hypocritical imperialist and chauvinist attitudes to the First Nations in an effort to make them assimilate. The real problem is not the “attitudes” or “personal lifestyles” of the First Nation peoples. The real problem is imperialism, the oppression of nations by other nations driven by advanced capitalists' need to control other economies.

Meanwhile, the struggle does continue. Fourteen people arrested a year ago in connection to the highway protest have yet to be cleared of charges. In speaking with people in the area, MIM has found several people who witnessed the event that challenged the police version of the story. The police have charged the indigenous with “reckless endangerment” among other things.

Yet, the Senecas point out that it was the police who were recklessly endangering people. “We didn't have any guns, no weapons. We went out there with nothing,” said one young woman. Meanwhile, the cops swung their clubs at car windows and the people inside while also trying to hit people with their squad cars according to many people that MIM spoke to.

At best, the police action to open the highway was a one-sided assertion of the white man's treaty rights. At worst it was a simple matter of imperialist chauvinism.

Since the highway passes through Seneca lands, the New York state government should have realized that there was a treaty dispute and found federal authorities to negotiate with the Senecas. Instead, when New York courts violated treaties and

the Senecas responded by the highway takeover, the state resorted to violence on the highways.

Now New York finds itself being sued in court for back payments for the use of Seneca lands where New York highways pass through. The Seneca Nation's civil suit may take up to 10 years to settle.

In cases where the stakes are not too high, the U.S. courts will recognize the sovereignty of the First Nation people in an attempt to fool the oppressed people. However, since the highest law of the land is really the defense of private property however the rich and their lackeys see fit, the Supreme Court may decide that other countries' right to exist is lower than the rights of New York state or others. If the Supreme Court think that independent First Nations are getting too powerful and too threatening to imperialism, the Supreme Court will decide that federal and state authorities have jurisdiction over the indigenous people, so that they will be kept under control.

Like other oppressed nations, the Seneca Nation is faced with the task of creating public opinion to support and organize its own independent power. The only real solution to the problem of Amerikan internal colonialism is internationalism. That means that all the oppressed nations internally and in the Third World recognize each other as equals and coordinate themselves to take over U.S. imperialism so that it never oppresses other nations again.

WHITE POWER ORGANIZERS THREATEN SENECAS

White supremacists have issued a public threat against First Nation people with a spray-painted slogan on Senecas territory. About four weeks ago as MIM goes to press in mid-July, someone painted a slogan under the bridge at exit 17 on Route 17: "Custer's revenge coming to a res. [reservation] near you!!" During the highway takeover last year, other local area slogans had a similar message: "We'll do the Indians like we did Rodney King. I love New York State police." Aside from the violence against the Senecas in the highway dispute, a former New York state police officer named Lee Hunt is now famous for calling for a "shoot to kill" policy. He is organizing ex-troopers to perform security at casinos, according to one person working the Onondaga blockade.

Seneca merchants near the bridge did not know who put up the Custer slogan, but according to white and Seneca youth in Salamance, skinheads spray-painted the slogan. Meanwhile, some merchants in the Seneca's town named Salamanca have

said that they have recently seen skinheads start to hang around town.

Salamanca's population appears united to face the threat. "They're gonna get it," said one young woman. A young man said if the skinheads "come down here they're gonna get shot."

In the more rural Seneca areas among older people the sentiment was similar. One middle-aged merchant said of the skinheads quite simply: "they're bullshit." He said that people in the area were "good neighbors" without much problem among themselves. When it came to something like that [the white supremacist threat], he said all Senecas united. Speaking of the fights among the Senecas, he said, "we know we can continue those next week!" if some outside threat has to be taken care of first.

Although not all skinheads are conscious white supremacists and some are probably closer to being communists than being fascists, overall the skinhead identity is a white supremacist identity to choose, whether the individual skinhead knows it or not. Cultural identities are always an inexact manner, but the most violent white supremacist and fascist organizations now hide in the skinhead culture. To be sure, they do not have nearly the power of the imperialist government, so Clinton is still the ultimate skinhead. In the end, Clinton and the imperialist-created skinhead culture cannot succeed. Third World people are 75% of the world's population and cannot be defeated by Hitler wannabes.

Notes:

1. See MIM Notes 67 on the New York state highway takeover and MIM Notes 77 on the tax fight.

Cop Gets Off For Killing Wampanoag Man

reprinted from MIM Notes 79

August 1993

by a Comrade

Mashpee, MA – during the first weekend of July, the Mashpee Wampanoag held a successful pow-wow in Cape Cod with a hard political edge. One committee sold t-shirts to raise funds to bring justice for a Mashpee Wampanoag murdered by police officer David H. Mace years ago.

"On May 1, 1988, David H. Mace, a white police sergeant in the Cape Cod town of Mashpee, Massachusetts shot and killed David C. Hendricks, a 27 year old Mashpee Wampanoag,

following his pursuit of Hendricks' car for a traffic violation. Sergeant Mace fired eleven shots from his semi-automatic 9-millimeter pistol. Seven struck David Hendricks. ... The last five shots were fired at point-blank range through the driver's side window after the car had stopped. ... The Wampanoag and many of their supporters have suffered from police harassment and surveillance during memorial walks and demonstrations for justice concerning the Hendricks case.”(1)

“In June 1992, it was confirmed in a civil suit that Sgt. Mace fired two volleys at David's car. Two of the six rounds fired in the first volley wounded David Hendricks in the left arm and left hand. While the car was stationary and David sat unmoving, Sgt. Mace walked over to the car and shot five more rounds through the driver's side window. ... The last four shots were fired through the empty window at David Hendricks as he lay helpless and bleeding on the front seat.”(2)

On July 1 of this year, Sgt. Mace received the beginning of payments to leave the police force. Mace had been paid for five years without serving on the police force and now he gets \$75,000 and a job recommendation to leave the Mashpee police force. This agreement between Mace and Mashpee town government came on May 11, 1993 after betrayal by elected selectmen who had pledged to remove Mace through an arbitration procedure that never came about.

MIM spoke to Ramona Peters of the David Hendricks Committee for Human Rights for an update on the story. Peters explained that her community feels responsible for the well-being of other communities that may be faced with David Mace in the future when he gets a new job. Hence, the committee wants to expose this case to whatever extent possible: “Native people are still at risk. ... We can't afford to pretend that injustice doesn't happen,” said Peters.

The Mashpee Wampanoag won a victory in 1992 in civil court when eyewitnesses came forward and rendered evidence that should have been in a murder trial. For himself, Mace said he could not recall what happened and the judge in the case told him to get psychological help.

The son of David Hendricks won \$375,000 from Mace and the police union, but despite crushing testimony from at least seven eyewitnesses who saw the shooting, District Attorney Philip A. Rollins and the Attorney General of Massachusetts refused to open a criminal case against Mace. That means a jury never got the chance to decide if Mace murdered Hendricks.

This case shows the futility of seeking justice in U.S. courts. The relationship between prosecutors and police is too cozy everywhere in the United States. Prosecutors need the help of police in most cases to gain a winning record in court and to gain re-election. Hence, prosecutors tend to let police get away with murder without ever charging them in court. It is also the prosecutor who must notice when police are faking evidence against people they don't like.

However, as four recent convictions for evidence tampering by New York state troopers proves, it is easy for cops to fake evidence in dozens of cases for years at a time without getting caught. In the Hendricks case as in others, the prosecutors simply made a political decision not to prosecute pigs.

The pressure of elections on prosecutors does not help in this country where the majority of the population is the white labor aristocracy. It is only Amerika's anti-crime posture that says that oppressed minorities need to be kept under control by brutal, lying cops. If the white nation working class were not bought off, we would not see its persistent backing for fascist “anti-crime” measures against minorities, measures that justify beatings (Rodney King) and shootings (David Hendricks) for traffic violations.

The same class interests of the middle class in imperialist countries are also a reason that the Wampanoag's appeal to Amnesty International will not work. Across the United States, people working to end internal colonialism have brought case after case to Amnesty International for action. However, these mostly brainwashed lawyers and other middle class people believe that there is universal freedom and democracy in the United States; and they don't concern themselves with the majority of human-rights like the food, shelter, clothing and medicine.

The Hendricks committee is appealing to the Massachusetts state legislature for justice as well. No doubt this will not bring much immediate relief either. However, we do agree with the Hendricks committee that this case must be exposed widely.

One last point made by this case is the need for self-determination of nations. “When Mace shot David it [the police force] was all white and they didn't even live here [Mashpee],” said Ramona Peters. The police force had been almost all indigenous until the First Nations lost control of the land. After the federal government denied the Mashpee Wampanoag recognition as a tribe and after a court ruled that some indigenous land could be sold, white real estate owners took

over the Mashpee municipal government. If not for the power lost by the Wampanoag nation in the last 20 years, it is possible that Hendricks would still be alive.

Notes:

1. League of Indigenous Sovereign Nations ((301) 932- 0808) in News from Indian Country, Vol. VII, number 10, Late May, 1993, p. 17.
2. Kristy Lindgren, "Where Is Justice?" The Eagle, Vol. 11, #3, Early Summer, 1993, p. 14. (203) 729-0035.

Lakotah Reclaim Land from Settler U\$.

MIM(Prisons) October 2016

In recent weeks we have seen the offensive videos of settlers attacking indigenous people who are trying to protect their land from invasion and destruction in the homeland of the Lakotah Nation. The resistance has brought together many First Nation people as well as many supporters around the Sacred Stone Camp in the northern tip of the Standing Rock reservation. This is the point where the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL), currently under construction, comes closest to current reservation borders. This week 200 people moved onto the land claimed by Energy Transfer Partners, setting up their winter camp in the path of the planned pipeline.

In response, Energy Transfer Partners said the people were trespassing, saying "lawless behavior will not be tolerated." (1) There is no better example of how the "law" can be an institution utilized by the oppressor to legitimize their power. When the settlers first came to kill Indigenous people and steal their land, they declared this land to be "lawless."

The Lakotah Sioux are using eminent domain to claim the land in question as rightfully theirs based on their 1851 treaty with the United States government. Cheyenne River Sioux Chair Harold Frazier met with President Obama, as well as the U\$. Attorney's Office to discuss their campaign and the police repression being unleashed on peaceful protestors. Frazier retold one conversation ey had:

Frazier: "How can a non-Indian physically assault an Indian and get away with it?"
U.S. Attorney's office: "Well, that's on state land."

Frazier: "So does that mean if a non-Indian comes to an Indian on Indian land that the Indian could do it back?"
U.S. Attorney's office: "Oh no, you'd go to jail." (1)

Again, the farce that is Amerikan settler law is laid bare before us.

The Standing Rock Sioux Tribe hosted the First International Treaty Council of the Western Hemisphere from 8-16 June 1974. This meeting was honored in 2007 at another meeting where the Republic of Lakotah declared sovereignty, claiming much of the land through which DAPL construction is occurring today. (2)

Indigenous people in North America have always been at the front lines of the anti-imperialist movement. They were the first victims of colonialism and emerging capitalist/imperialism on this land. Their continued struggle to reclaim this land is central to a re-civilization of the brutal settler nation of Amerikkka.



Notes:

1. 26 October 2016. KPFA Evening News.
2. Under Lock & Key Issue No. 2 (January/February 2008).

Amerikan Land Must Be Redistributed to First Nations

By an Oregon prisoner, June 2015

I would like to give props to Loco1 of USW for the article in *ULK 38*, "Lasting Impressions." It eloquently expressed the realistic truth of non-whites rising into Amerikkkan political poverty and oppression, but ultimately becoming part of the Amerikkkan imperialist machine, and therefore part of the problem. They undeniably dance to the same tune as the kapitalist oppressors, which is the only way they can get elected into office in the first place. The oppression they become co-conspirators of far outweighs any good they may be trying to contribute to cultural progress, the revolutionary movement, or even reformism. President Obama's black face on the white-Amerikkkan agenda does very little to counter the injustices he inflicts upon the less fortunate. His priority is to please white-Amerikkka and contribute to kapitalism. Everything else is secondary.

Revolutionary minds can learn from Loco1's political view. However, it draws concern when Loco1 talks of redistributing the lands fairly: "you get what you need. Nothing more, nothing less." Subsequently following a successful revolution this act alone would shift the possession of land for one colonizer to another at the expense and exploitation of the indigenous peoples. Very little of what I've read from the MIM organization has ever gotten to the heart of land claims, which should first and foremost be redistributed back to the First Nation original owners. Many indigenous will be part of the revolution. Non-natives seem to think they are entitled to this land as spoils of war, with complete disregard to the First Nations' claims. Communism is supposed to eliminate oppression. This act would contribute to it, but with power shifting to the hands of a different ethnic and political class.

A complete overthrow of Amerikkkan power should give the land back to those it's belonged to since the beginning of time. This soil is the Redman's tribal ancestral roots and the creator's gift to our people. This includes Mexicanos. Whatever land, if any, is eventually "redistributed fairly" should be at the sole discretion of its tribal owners. Period. (And it's important that non-natives understand this.) Land would be distributed considerately and compassionately as they feel necessary and see fit. Unless, of course, the communist victors then choose to redirect their war towards the First Nation peoples with the intent of keeping them on reservations and stealing the land by force. That would make them no different than this current Amerikkkan imperialist swine.

In the article Loco1 spoke with the voice of New Afrikans but I think he should rethink his ideas for land grab from the indigenous point of view, who have suffered the biggest atrocities and injustices in history.

MIM(Prisons) responds: This is a letter that we forwarded to Loco1 for comment. Having not received a response we will address this question now. It seems we have great unity with the writer above, and we appreciate this point and inquiry. While Loco1's original point was more about combatting Amerikkkan exceptionalism, which justifies Amerikans having more than everyone else, the lack of mention of First Nations land claims is certainly a valid critique. It is an ultra-left error in that it is looking towards the ideal future of communism (from each according to their ability, to each according to their need), before addressing the more immediate task of national liberation.

This is an issue that comrades address in our new book, *Chican@ Power and the Struggle for Aztlán*. Though Chican@s themselves are indigenous to this land, claiming all of the southwest United States could be seen as a threat to First Nations, including the largest reservation in the United States of the Navajo nation. MIM has long been friendly to the Blackbelt Thesis as well, and has printed maps showing both of these territories. We agree with revolutionary Chican@ and New Afrikan movements that land is central to the question of national liberation. As nations within what is today the United States, a failure to claim and liberate their own territory is a failure to liberate these oppressed nations. The same is true for all First Nations.

The drawing of new boundaries today is more of an agitational exercise than an actual political reality, except for most First Nations. So we expect First Nations to continue to be at the forefront of determining future border issues. Their weakness, of course, is in their numbers. So it is an important warning that the comrade above issues to ensure that a national program of one oppressed nation does not impose itself onto that of another. Not only is this necessary for building a just world, it will be necessary for a successful anti-imperialist project. Any efforts by an internal semi-colony to liberate itself without regard for and cooperation with the efforts of the others will lead to no true liberation and will end in it being a puppet to the imperialists rather than being free of them.

There must be a united front of the internal semi-colonies against U\$. imperialism. And once imperialism is overthrown, in imperialist nations there will need to be a joint dictatorship of the proletariat of the oppressed nations to take power and

determine how society can best be run in the interests of the formerly oppressed of the world. Exactly how they address the land question between themselves, as well as with the existing oppressor nation on this land, will be determined in the evolution of that struggle, which will certainly bring about many more changes in the process.

Raza

The struggle of Chican@s in the United States has now been addressed in detail in the book *Chican@ Power and the Struggle for Aztlán*. In this section we reprint a few relevant essays from that book as well as some historical articles from MIM Theory 7 about Raza struggles, and other more recent relevant articles from MIM(Prisons). We urge all readers to get a copy of the *Chican@ Power* book for a full study of the struggle within U.S. borders. (Available to prisoners for \$10 from MIM Distributors).

Introduction excerpted from *Chican@ Power and the Struggle for Aztlán*

“The nation, as a social and historical formation, exists in both objective and subjective reality. It is neither permanent nor unchanging; both its overall existence in human society and its specific manifestations are subject to the laws of material development. The nation rises and falls, is born and dies, as determined by the motion of forces both internal and external to itself. Nations are not created solely by the drawing of state borders, any more than nation-states are the products of their official nations alone. Not all nations have developed nation-states, and not all states have been built around specific nations.” – MC12 (1)

For revolutionaries from the oppressed nations, this point speaks truth to power. All matter is in constant motion and change is the inviolable law of nature. In order for any national liberation movement to be successful, the emerging forces within the revolutionary movement must themselves move in accordance with the material laws of development. This is the only possible way we will ever accelerate the transformation of social progress and achieve our revolution. The Chican@ national liberation movement must embrace revolutionary science if it is ever to complete full emancipation from imperialist oppression and amalgamation. History has shown us that how oppressed nations organize is determinant of their struggles. How the Chican@ nation will decide to organize will be a matter of life and death to the nation; as correct tactics flow from correct strategies which in turn flow from correct political lines. Related to this point is the fact that there has been a renewal of discussion amongst the imprisoned Chican@ lumpen concerning the national-colonial question of the “Southwest United States,” otherwise known as Aztlán. As such, and in

recognition of the material laws of development, the Chican@ national liberation movement behind prison walls has begun to reconvene on a revolutionary-nationalist footing.

We should take into account what this effort means to Aztlán and to future Chican@s. Many of us already know and understand the bloody historical contradictions within the Chican@ nation. Most have come to understand that the pintas were battlegrounds where brown-on-brown crime was the normal program, but this was incorrect practice and fomented further divisions within our nation. For too long Raza have allowed the state to find ways to separate us. This is changing.

The authors of this book have provided us with the most current, correct and concise work out there with which to attract the Chican@ lumpen to our cause. Therefore in reading *Chican@ Power and the Struggle for Aztlán* we hope that one obtains a clear understanding of the nation and its need to be liberated. We also hope that this book challenges the imprisoned Chican@ lumpen to critically think about their place in history and the world. There is indeed a Chican@ national liberation movement that has begun to redevelop behind prison walls, and national liberation will become a real possibility for us as capitalist crisis continues to heighten. But before going into this subject any further it is essential that we build a foundation on which we can unite and push the movement forward. To do this we must address two widely held points of contention within the Chican@ community. First is the concept of Aztlán as a social and historical reality. Second is the very definition of Chican@ itself; “as words are another way of defining phenomenon, and the definition of any phenomenon is the first step to either controlling it or being controlled by it.”(2) Thus we will begin by putting the term *Chicano* into its proper historical context.

The origins of the term *Chicano* are found in the word *Mexica*. Mexica was changed to Mechicano through Spanish mispronunciation, and was used to refer to people all over what would become Central America and the so-called “Southwest United States.” Chicano and Chicana are just shortened versions of Mexica, and have long been considered acceptable variations on Mexica.(3) The Spanish applied the gendered forms of their language to the people they conquered, with the masculine “o” being used to refer to both men and wimmin. This is an artifact of the Spanish language that evolved within a patriarchal society. Language is a part of our culture and we must revolutionize our culture to transform the nation. Therefore, we have chosen to use the gender neutral term *Chican@* to challenge the influence that patriarchy and machismo has had on our movement. We will only gain the full support of the people by challenging the oppression of *all* people.(4)

On a related note, the term *Mexican-American* should by no means be thought of as the next best available term used to describe Chican@s, as if Chican@s are as Amerikan as apple pie. This is an integrationist lie used by the imperialists and their coconut lackeys against the Chican@ people to provide false hopes of full assimilation into the Amerikan nation. Their intent is to distract us from real solutions to the problems of national oppression. To say that we are Mexican-American is to say that we have identified with our oppressor, thus disavowing our own and casting off into the abyss the oppressed people of the world. Instead we recognize that we are a nation separate from Amerika, with a separate history. Our nations do not intersect, rather they contradict via the oppressor/oppressed nation dynamic.

Activists before us refused the terms *Hispanic* and *Latino* as fully and concisely definitive of the Chican@ people. They correctly recognized the relationship of the general to the particular and saw that bourgeois academia was purposely jumbling these terms so as to keep us ignorant of our history. The activists further stated that: "We cannot coin terms for unity's sake when these terms fail to fully represent our diverse communities." (5) We fully agree. They also correctly saw the potential for the term Chican@ to fill the void left by the rejected terms and become backwards in its own right. Hence, the following was said perhaps as a safe-guard against potential national-chauvinist politicking on behalf of Chican@s:

"Chicanismo does not seek to use the word 'Chicano' as an umbrella term when describing all of 'La Familia de La Raza' (family of Latino nations). Rather, Chicanismo seeks to educate our barrios and campos about our history y culture to further create a movement of self-determination for the liberation of Aztlán. Something that Hispanic and Latino has yet to recognize." (6)

Amerikans, through domestic colonialist policies in the field of education, are attempting to reduce the term Chican@ to a philosophical conception that is firmly grounded within an individualist outlook. Some of our so-called "allies" within the Amerikan left, and even members of the nation itself, have taken the stance that Chican@s are not a nation, but are instead an ethnicity stripped and devoid of all the material criteria pertaining to nationhood. Our petty-bourgeois intellectuals have been the particular target audience of this ideological offensive. Many of them regurgitate such fallacious and reactionary ideas back to our people. Most of these petty-bourgeois ideologues have served the imperialists as mouthpieces thru the means of film, literature and television, thus identifying with the oppressor and objectively becoming traitors to the nation. This

erroneous reasoning is nothing but oppressor-nation politics, which are grounded in their desire to preserve their own material interests within a potentially revolutionary scenario.

Liberalism is a petty bourgeois philosophical outlook that rejects ideological struggle and stands for unprincipled peace. In particular, what is practiced within the university setting teaches students that everyone's opinion is equally valid and carries equal weight, thus burying the truth and discouraging students from reaching correct conclusions. Effective manipulation is owed in large part to various Liberal multiculturalist courses and so-called "ethnic studies" departments in Amerika's universities. The universities have been tasked with carrying out this virtual indoctrination of the Chican@ intelligentsia, who, along with the imperialists, have been greatly successful in erasing the national question of Chican@s in Aztlán. Within these university settings our culture is projected as quaint. "They teach us to celebrate culture while simultaneously offering workshops on how to manage 'diversity'; but within these workshops however conflict rarely arises, nor does it offend." (7)

Alongside this academic indoctrination are the very real material concessions made available to the Chican@ people in the form of superwages. These superwages are actually extracted and re-appropriated to Amerikans via stolen superprofits from the global periphery. Superprofits and other abundant goods are used to bribe Chican@s and ensure their loyalty to the oppressor nation. High living standards, due to the proximity and integration of the Chican@ nation with the empire, have resulted in the embourgeoisement of some Raza. This embourgeoisement is based materially on the enrichment of Chican@s through the forced impoverishment of the underdeveloped nations of the Third World, and ideologically in the identification of Chican@s with the Amerikan nation via the First World belief that they deserve to live whole levels above the rest of the oppressed world. Thus our attempts to rescue the nation are made that much more difficult, as many will see our struggle in complete opposition to their way of life. Indeed our struggle for an independent socialist Chican@ state is in complete opposition to the gross parasitism currently practiced by all Amerikans, whose privileged, decadent lifestyles are pre-supposed on the oppression and superexploitation of the

Third World. Or as the Communist International more eloquently put it when speaking of the European and Amerikan so-called proletariat in 1919, "At the expense of the plundered colonial peoples capital corrupted its wage slaves, created a community of interest between the exploited and the exploiters as against the oppressed colonies – the yellow, black and red colonial peoples – and chained the European and American

working class to the imperialist ‘fatherland.’”(8) This “chaining” of the Amerikan and European working class is more commonly known and firmly pronounced in the labor aristocracy theory, famously put forward by Friedrich Engels, V.I. Lenin and in more recent times the Maoist Internationalist Movement.(9)

The Chican@ nation is no exception to this bourgeoisification, like all other oppressed nations within the United States, except for perhaps undocumented migrants and the various First Nations who by and large still find themselves living in sub-humyn conditions. Indeed, even the Chican@ lumpen benefits from this oppressive relationship. However, due to the precarious stratification of the lumpen, and the imperialists’ refusal to let us fully integrate into Amerika, our allegiance to the imperialists is more tenuous. As the lumpen experience oppression first hand here in Amerika, we are in a position to spearhead the revolutionary vehicle within U.\$. borders.(10)

Who is a Chican@?

We define the Chican@ nation based on Stalin’s scientific theory of nations. “A nation is a historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in a common culture.”(11) Here we present a summary of who is a Chican@. Chican@s originated as people of Mexican descent residing on land that was to become part of the United States. While these people began to develop into a new nation, separate from Mexico, well before the invasion of the “Southwest,” the development of the Chican@ nation was accelerated as generations living in the expanding Amerikan settler state developed distinct national characteristics. This nation has evolved to include many from Spanish-speaking Central and South America who have migrated to the United States and, living in Chican@ barrios, have become part of this nation in spite of their distinct national origin.

In general, people who were born outside the United States, but reside within U.\$. borders, will be part of a national minority which identifies with their home country. They share the language and culture with their home country, and often they are sending much of their income there, perhaps even still planning to move back to their country of origin and considering that their territory. Often national minorities will live in a tight community within the United States, reinforcing their identification with their home country. This tie to their country of origin weakens in second and subsequent generations. As second-generation immigrants growing up in the United States,

they are not given the opportunity to fully assimilate into the white nation, and so are likely to become part of an internal semi-colony. Similarly, people who migrate to the United States as youth often do not identify with their home country and grow up within an internal semi-colony.

We see the majority of youth immigrants and descendants of immigrants from Latin American countries assimilating into the Chican@ nation. While the factors which form their nationhood were not commonalities amongst their home countries, nor for the recent immigrants, imperialist Amerika creates conditions for these Latin American nationalities to come together. There is the alternative that a minority of Latin American descendants take, which is full assimilation into the white nation. While not an option for most, those with lighter skin, no accent, and a wealthy family, as well as a few exceptions to this rule, have managed to gain the full benefits of the white nation and do not share a common territory, culture or economics with the Chican@ nation. People like George Zimmerman, who murdered 17-year-old New Afrikan Trayvon Martin for walking through his neighborhood, represent this group.

What is Aztlán? Who are la Raza?

Simply put, Aztlán is the name of the Chican@ nation’s national territory, more commonly known as the “Southwest United States.” Aztlán is also the word used to identify an internal semi-colony that has been and continues to be oppressed. The Chican@ nation of Aztlán developed in the territory of Aztlán during the Amerikan capitalist-imperialist stages of development.

Before the concept of Aztlán was ever used by Chican@ revolutionaries as representative of our struggle against imperialism, Aztlán was originally conceived in the 1960s as a propaganda tool used by cultural nationalists. We must move beyond such traditional and isolated celebrations of Mexican culture in which Aztlán is currently steeped.

The cultural nationalists envision Aztlán as a semi-indigenous, stateless society in which the Chican@ people (who they saw in the 1960s as distinctly Mexican in origin) could go back to living in pre-Columbian tradition free of Western influence. Indeed for the cultural nationalists, ridding the nation of European culture and thought (Marxism included), and even technology amongst the stricter adherents of “tradition,” was itself principal. Their hate of the imperialist state was only relevant so far as they viewed the nation-state and imperialism as products of all things European.

There are still contradictions within Aztlán that must be resolved, none more important than the contradiction between those wanting to side with Empire and those wanting self-determination. For those seeking liberation from imperialism, we must recognize that this can only be accomplished via the Maoist road, as only the communists are capable of dealing with the principal contradiction in the world today. It is therefore the duty of communists from the Chican@ nation to begin constructing class, nation and gender alliances amongst Chican@s that advance the revolutionary interests of the nation to attack the very foundations of U.\$. imperialism.

A related term that we will use throughout this book is Raza. Raza is the Spanish word for race, or people; Raza or la Raza is used as a catch-all term to describe the people of so-called “Latin America.” While the concept of Latin America, and its derivatives Latino and Latina, are steeped in Spanish colonialism, Raza is a term that recognizes the indigenous roots of the majority of the nations south of the Rio Grande, as well as the Chican@ nation itself.

Notes: full citations available in the book Chican@ Power and the Struggle for Aztlán

Puerto Rican Revolutionary Workers Organization: Maoist Vanguard Paved the Way

from MIM Theory #7
by MC234

The Puerto Rican Revolutionary Workers Organization (PRRWO) was the Maoist vanguard in the Puerto Rican nation in the 1970s. Modeled after the Maoist Black Panther Party and influenced by the Women's and Gay Liberation Movements, the PRRWO brought Maoism to thousands of Puerto Ricans.

EARLY HISTORY

The Puerto Rican Revolutionary Workers Organization began in 1965 as a Chicago street gang called the Young Lords. They were politicized in 1967 by then-president Cha Cha Jimenez, and the name was changed to the Young Lord Organization (YLO).

The Black Panther Party wrote about the YLO in the June 7, 1969 issue of *The Black Panther* and the article attracted the attention of some revolutionary Puerto Rican students in New

York. These students formed the first New York chapter.

The first major struggle for the Young Lords Organization and that which brought the YLO to the Puerto Rican people was the Garbage Offensive. For successive Sundays, the YLO cleaned the streets of *El Barrio* (Spanish Harlem, NY) and distributed literature to passerby. For the first two weeks the YLO cadre filled garbage bags and trash cans with garbage, but the sanitation crews didn't pick it up, so on the following Sunday they shifted tactics: they piled the garbage (and abandoned cars) in the center of the street, where the City would have to remove it. The masses of *El Barrio* joined in: first behind brooms, and later in throwing bottles at the pigs who came to arrest the Young Lords.

The Young Lords were able to open an office and then “shifted tactics from streetfighting to programs to serve our people. We began Free Breakfast and Lead Poisoning Detection programs, supported the struggle of welfare mothers that year, began organizing hospital workers and studied revolutions in other countries.

“In October of 1969, we wrote the Thirteen Point Program and Platform (revised May, 1970) and Thirty Rules of Discipline (revised December, 1970).”(1)

The Young Lords Organization was catapulted to international recognition and recognized as a threat to the State with the People's Church Offensive. A local Methodist Church refused space for the operation of a free breakfast program, so after attending mass, latter writing, and other methods failed, “on December 28, we took the Church, renamed it People's Church, and for the next eleven days, we ran free clothing drives, breakfast programs, a liberation school, political education classes, a day care center, free health programs, and nightly entertainment (movies, bands or poetry).”(1)

As the New York YLO grew after the People's Church Offensive, they began to notice problems with the national leadership in Chicago. The newspaper, YLO, was not coming out regularly, so the YLO did not have a political line to follow. The East Coast YLO developed on their own - “the Thirteen Point Program and Platform is an example.”(1) Because of this lack of theoretical and practical leadership from their National Leadership, the East Coast and Chicago sections split, with the East Coast becoming the Young Lords Party.

A major Young Lords Party struggle was in defense of hospital patients and workers. “Ninety percent of hospital workers in New York City are Black or Puerto Rican. To meet their demands for better conditions, and to serve the needs of the

patients, the Health Revolutionary Unity Movement (HRUM) was created.”

“A city T.B. X-ray truck was liberated” and the Young Lords were able to examine more than five times as many people as the city normally would. In July, 1970, Lincoln Hospital was liberated. “We ran programs, like TB and lead poison detection services, and a day care center. ...”(1)

Programs and campaigns continued to expand. The YLP also worked on prison campaigns, political prisoners, and the defense of their own organization from State repression.

GENDER

Pablo “Yoruba” Guzmán said that the Party was deeply influenced by the Women's and Gay liberation movements of the late 1960s and early 1970s. The YLP developed an analysis of the intersections of nation, class and gender that the women's liberation movement did not have – specifically the relationship between oppression of white women and the oppression of the Puerto Rican people.(2)

From the outset, the struggle against sexism took high priority and internal struggle constantly advanced the YLP gender line. One point of the original 13 point program said “We want equality for women. Machismo must be revolutionary ... not oppressive.”

This was a step forward, but internal struggle revealed problems with this point. To combat what was termed 'negative machismo' and 'female passivity' male and female caucuses were formed. After a period of meeting, the groups started to meet together. As Denise Oliver said, “machismo was never gonna be revolutionary. Saying 'revolutionary machismo' is like saying 'revolutionary fascism' or 'revolutionary racism' – it's a contradiction.”(3) Party line was changed to oppose machismo altogether.

The Young Lords opposed a paternalist line on women. In September, 1970, they gave the Puerto Rican Miss Universe their “Pig of the Week” award for her role masking the colonialism of Puerto Rico.(4)

POLITICAL LINE

The Young Lords Party recognized and supported the Chinese Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution as a revolution against the capitalist roaders inside the Party who were attempting to restore capitalism. The YLP attributed Cuba's

problems to the failure to have a cultural revolution.(5)

In another advance over the mistakes of the Black Panther Party, the YLP actively worked to advance their membership and create new leaders. They realized that their Party, in the first few months, relied too much on their charisma of five or six leaders, so they developed their ideology – recognizing that ideology is a more effective organizing tool than personal charm.

MIM should also report that it did not find the same eclecticism in YLP propaganda that it finds in other revolutionary literature from the late 1960s and early 1970s. Revolutionary Puerto Rican nationalists are the most commonly quoted, especially in the earlier material. (In a book review of a bourgeois biography of famous nationalists Don Pedro Albizu Campos, the YLP criticizes Campos for not opposing the capitalist system. They claimed to honor his spirit, but to have learned from his mistakes and failures.)(6)

After the name change to the Puerto Rican Revolutionary Workers Organization in 1972, mention of Marx, Engels and Mao became more frequent. MIM saw Ché Guevara's name mentioned only once, in the context of remembering Latin American history. A review of the books on their literature list reveals only one book by Ho Chi Minh, and the largest number of books by any one author are by Mao.

The YLP/PRRWO organ *Palante* positively quoted an I Wor Kuen member (the Chinese vanguard in the United States) as saying,

“[T]hat only by applying and following the principles of Marxist-Leninist-Mao Tse Tung Thought can the powerful enemy of North American imperialism be defeated.”(6)

Priorities were also clearly displayed by the portraits of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao at the Party Congress. *Palante* published articles in support of the Cultural Revolution. (7) They defended Mao's invitation to Nixon to visit as an example of China's strength. They exposed that imperialism never has a good intent and they connected the various struggles of oppressed people to the common struggle against Amerika. The PRRWO explained that, counter to the bourgeois myths, Nixon went to China from a position of weakness. The PRRWO and Mao realized that Nixon's visit would allow China to further disseminate the reality that the Chinese masses held power.

INTERNATIONALISM

Most issues of Palante in 1972 contained articles in support of the Vietnamese People's War and in support of the Chinese people. They also published statements from the Marxist-Leninist organizations around the world, including the Dominican Republic. The PRRWO also wrote about the struggle of the Communist Party of the Philippines-led New People's Army. In each case where they exposed U.S. imperialism in other countries they drew parallels to the way that Puerto Rico and Puerto Ricans are treated in Amerika. Palante also expressed its support for the struggle of the Albania people.(8) (At the time, Albania was a socialist country that supported the Maoist thesis that capitalism had been restored in the Soviet Union.)

WHITE WORKING CLASS

MIM was unable to find anything specific to give us an idea of what the YLP would think of our line on the white working class. It should be noted that while the YLP was open to all non-white people, the party did work with some white revolutionary organizations. The YLP had respect for the Weather Underground, although it is unclear what level of theoretical unity the YLP had with the Weather Underground. (The Weather Underground and its remnants agree with our white working class thesis.)

Palante did not cover white working class struggles, but their "against the divided nation thesis" (see below) self-criticism does lump together Puerto Ricans and "all poor and working class people of America."(6) It appears that the PRRWO had grasped the reality of the non-exploited and non-revolutionary nature of the white working class in practice, although they did not recognize it in theory.

REPRESSION

Repression of the PRRWO was increasing as the 1970s began. Comrades were busted on petty charges or hunted down for draft resistance. Paper distribution sites were getting visits from the FBI and other state agents. Several comrades were killed by the police, one – very early in the Party's history – in his prison cell.

DEVELOPMENTS LEADING UP TO THE PARTY CONGRESS

In the summer of 1972, the Young Lords Party held its first

and last Party Congress. The Congress formalized internal structures of democracy and centralism, and shifted the focus of the Party.

The Congress's four resolutions were 1) the Constitution; 2) The ideology; 3) The present situation and our tasks 4) Elect a new central committee.

The name was changed to the Puerto Rican Revolutionary Workers Organization (PRRWO) because the name "Young Lords Party" was confusing in Spanish and did not explain what the organization was about.

The Congress shifted the Party's social base from "unemployed youth, students, and lumpen (ex-prisoners or ex-addicts) to workers where the Party will mature in this protracted struggle against the principal oppressor in the world – the yankee octopus."(9)

AGAINST THE DIVIDED NATION THESIS

Prior to the 1972 party congress, Palante started to carry the subhead "Newspaper of the divided nation." This theoretical position changed at the Party Congress. A self-criticism printed in the Dec. 20, 1972 issue of Palante briefly explained the new position of the PRRWO. They argued that Puerto Ricans in the United States do not fit Stalin's definition of a nation in regard to the island of Puerto Rico. The PRRWO argued that Puerto Ricans in the United States are not a nation but a national minority. Formerly, this line meant that the principal task of Puerto Ricans in the United States was to help liberate Puerto Rico. The new line said that the principal task of Puerto Ricans in the United States, as a national minority, was to oppose imperialism.

At this time, MIM does not have a position on whether or not there is one Puerto Rican "divided nation" or if there are multiple Puerto Rican nations. We would have to look at migration rates to and from Puerto Rico, economic and population data, etc. MIM is currently searching for documents from the PRRWO Party Congress in the hopes of examining the basis used by the PRRWO in the development of their line. These documents will hopefully have summations of PRRWO organizing in both Puerto Rico and the United States with the divided nation theory. (Prior to the Party Congress, the YLP had three branches in Puerto Rico which they mentioned often. MIM has not seen all of the issues of Palante, but after the Party Congress, there was no mention of the Puerto Rican branches.)

MIM does not follow the logic of this self-criticism that

since the divided nation thesis is false, then Puerto Ricans in the United States are a national minority. Puerto Ricans in the United States can be a nation that is separate from the island of Puerto Rico.

The Maoist vanguard organizations of the 1960s and 70s did not have a worked out line on the parasitic nature of the white working class. This shortcoming required compromises in other parts of their line in order to achieve internal coherence. To what degree the PRRWO liquidation of the national question line change was a result of this phenomenon or was a result of practice has yet to be determined.

Regardless, the example of the Young Lords Party and the Puerto Rican Revolutionary Workers Organization serves as an example to revolutionaries today. They apply the principles of politics in command, and unity-struggle-unity and continually advanced the cause of liberation for Puerto Ricans.

Learn from them and finish what they started.

Notes:

1. *Palante: Young Lords Party*, McGraw-Hill: New York, 1971. Introduction.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 46.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 52.
4. *Palante* 9/11/70 p. 11.
5. *Young Lords Party*, p. 58.
6. *Palante* 9/1/72 p. 3, 9.
7. *Palante* 9/29/72. p. 2, 8.
8. *Palante* 7/7/72. p. 11.
9. *Palante* 3/3/93. p. 11.

YOUNG LORDS PARTY 13 POINT PROGRAM AND PLATFORM

TENGO PUERTO RICO EN MI CORAZON

YLP

THE YOUNG LORDS PARTY IS A REVOLUTIONARY POLITICAL PARTY FIGHTING FOR THE LIBERATION OF ALL OPPRESSED PEOPLE

1. WE WANT SELF-DETERMINATION FOR PUERTO RICANS, LIBERATION ON THE ISLAND AND INSIDE THE UNITED STATES.

For 500 years, first Spain and then the United States have colonized our country. Billions of dollars in profits leave our country for the United States every year. In every way we are slaves of the gringo. We want liberation and the Power in the hands of the People, not Puerto Rican exploiters. QUE VIVA PUERTO RICO LIBRE!

2. WE WANT SELF-DETERMINATION FOR ALL LATINOS.

Our Latin Brothers and Sisters, inside and outside the United States, are oppressed by American business. The Chicano people built the Southwest, and we support their right to control their lives and their land. The people of Santo Domingo continue to fight against gringo domination and its puppet generals. The armed liberation struggles in Latin America are part of the war of Latinos against imperialism. QUE VIVA LA RAZA!

3. WE WANT LIBERATION OF ALL THIRD WORLD PEOPLE.

Just as Latinos first slaved under Spain and the Yankees, Black people, Indians, and Asians slaved to build the wealth of this country. For 400 years they have fought for freedom and dignity against racist Babylon. Third World people have led the fight for freedom. All the colored and oppressed peoples of the world are one nation under oppression. NO PUERTO RICAN IS FREE UNTIL ALL PEOPLE ARE FREE!

4. WE ARE REVOLUTIONARY NATIONALISTS AND OPPOSE RACISM.

The Latin, Black, Indian and Asian people inside the U.S. are colonies fighting for liberation. We know that Washington, Wall Street and City Hall will try to make our nationalism into racism; but Puerto Ricans are of all colors and we resist racism. Millions of poor white people are rising up to demand freedom and we support them. These are the ones in the U.S. that are stepped on by the rules and the government. We each organize our people, but our fights are against the same oppression and we will defeat it together. POWER TO ALL OPPRESSED PEOPLE.

5. WE WANT EQUALITY FOR WOMEN. DOWN WITH MACHISMO AND MALE CHAUVINISM.

Under capitalism, women have been oppressed by both society and our own men. The doctrine of machismo has been used by our men to take out their frustrations against their wives, sisters, mothers, and children. Our men must support their women in their fight for economic and social equality, and must recognize that our women are equals in every way within the revolutionary ranks. FORWARD SISTERS IN THE STRUGGLE!

6. WE WANT COMMUNITY CONTROL OF OUR INSTITUTIONS AND LAND.

We want control of our communities by our people and programs to guarantee that all institutions serve the needs of our people. People's control of police, health services, churches, schools, housing, transportation and welfare are needed. We want an end to attacks on our land by urban removal, highway destruction, universities and corporations. LAND BELONGS TO ALL THE PEOPLE!

7. WE WANT A TRUE EDUCATION OF OUR CREOLE CULTURE AND SPANISH LANGUAGE.

We must learn our history of fighting against cultural, as well as economic genocide by the Yankee. Revolutionary culture, culture of our people, is the only true teaching. JIBARO SI,

YANQUI NO!

8. WE OPPOSE CAPITALISTS AND ALLIANCES WITH TRAITORS

Puerto Rican rulers, or puppets of the oppressor, do not help our people. They are paid by the system to lead our people down blind alleys, just like the thousands of poverty pimps who keep our communities peaceful for business, or the street workers who keep gangs divided and blowing each other away. We want a society where the people socialistically control their labor. VENCEREMOS

9. WE OPPOSE THE AMERIKKAN MILITARY

We demand immediate withdrawal of u.s. military forces and bases from Puerto Rico, Vietnam and all oppressed communities inside and outside the u.s. No Puerto Rican should serve in the u.s. army against his Brothers and Sisters, for the only true army of oppressed people is the people's army to fight all rulers. U.S. OUT OF VIETNAM, FREE PUERTO RICO NOW!

10. WE WANT FREEDOM FOR ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS AND PRISONERS OF WAR.

We want all Puerto Ricans freed because they have been tried by the racist courts of the colonizers, and not by their own people and peers. We want all freedom fighters released from jail. FREE ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS AND PRISONERS OF WAR!

11. WE ARE INTERNATIONALISTS

Our people are brainwashed by television, radio, newspapers, schools and books to oppose people in other countries fighting for their freedom. No longer will we believe these lies, because we have learned who the real enemy is and who our real friends are. We will defend our sisters and brothers around the world who fight for justice and are against the rulers of this country. QUE VIVA CHE GUEVARA!

12. WE BELIEVE ARMED SELF-DEFENSE AND ARMED STRUGGLE ARE THE ONLY MEANS TO LIBERATION

We are opposed to violence--the violence of hungry children, illiterate adults, diseased old people, and the violence of poverty and profit. We have asked, petitioned, gone to courts, demonstrated peacefully, and voted for politicians full of empty promises. But we still ain't free. The time has come to defend the lives of our people against repression and for revolutionary war against the businessman, politician, and police. When a government oppresses our people, we have the right to abolish it and create a new one. ARM OURSELVES TO DEFEND OURSELVES!

12. WE WANT A SOCIALIST SOCIETY

We want liberation, clothing, free food, education, health care, transportation, utilities, and employment for all. We want a society where the needs of our people come first, and where we give solidarity and aid to the peoples of the world, not oppression and racism. HASTA LA VICTORIA SIEMPRE!

Imperialism Hides Behind Puerto Rican Plebiscite

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On Nov. 14, 1992, a slim majority of Puerto Rican voters approved the plebiscite maintaining the island's common-wealth status.(1) Amerika's military, political and economic domination make such a vote a ridiculous proposal that could never represent the true will of the people.

Only a small number of people voted for independence (4%) because they know that the occupation will continue regardless of the outcome of the vote. A supporter of Ofensiva '92 told MIM that only 15-20% of the Puerto Rican people support independence, because independence is not yet a viable option. There currently does not exist a revolutionary organization capable of leading Puerto Rico to independence, says the Puerto Rican National Liberation Movement (MLN).

The United Nations is currently under economic pressure from the United States to remove Puerto Rico from its list of colonies.(2) The U.N. is expected to see the vote for common-wealth status as evidence that the people support inclusion in the United States and not national liberation.

An oppressed country's listing as an official colony earns the colonizer international condemnation. Being listed as a colony is a political aid for the Puerto Rican revolution; but it is a serious thorn in Amerika's side.

Puerto Rico was put on the list in 1972, during a brief period when Third World countries, especially China and Cuba, held considerable power in the U.N. At that time, the U.N. Decolonization committee voted 12-0 that Puerto Rico had the right to self-determination and independence.(3)

MILITARY OCCUPATION

Thirteen Amerikan military bases in Puerto Rico occupy 20% of the land. Seventy-six percent of the Puerto Rican island of Vieques is occupied by the marines. Mislaunched missiles demolish homes in remaining residential areas and ruin the island's number one source of income – fishing.

In 1975, Nixon withdrew the naval forces from Culebra because of the united front against the Amerika's presence.(4) The successful resistance to the occupation serves as an example that liberation can only be achieved by forcing the Amerikan military out, not by asking politely through an imperialist-

backed vote.

The economic oppression of the island is another way to coerce the people of Puerto Rico into a colonial relationship. The 1990 Census reports admits that 63.3% of the 3.16 million Puerto Ricans on the island are below the poverty line⁽⁵⁾ while in the United States, 14.2% are below the poverty level.⁽⁶⁾

Puerto Rico's per capita income is \$6,200 per year.⁽¹⁾ Inflation increased by 55% between 1980 and 1990, but Puerto Rican per capita income increased by only 17% - two-and-a-half times less than in the United States during the same period.⁽⁷⁾

Puerto Rico is not allowed to import food from any other country but the United States. "Almost all our food products are imported despite the fact that we have nearly one million acres of arable land sitting idly," the MLN stated, and "one goal is to break the dependence on the United States which currently treats us like a captive market."⁽⁸⁾

Without paying taxes to Puerto Rico, 400 American corporations operate on the island and bring the profits back to the United States.⁽²⁾ In the 1980s, the U.S. drug manufacturers received \$8.5 billion in tax credits alone, which is more than double the amount that those corporations spent on Puerto Rican payrolls.⁽⁹⁾

Much of the drinking water is polluted as a result of the large amounts of toxic waste dumped in rivers and brooks by waste-producing corporations.⁽⁵⁾ Multi-national pharmaceutical companies contribute 72% of all toxic discharge in Puerto Rico.⁽²⁾

IMPERIALIST PATRIARCHY

In Puerto Rico, 48.3% of the women are employed by manufacturing as opposed to 25% in the United States. Although the proportion of women in each country by industry is the same, the number of manufacturing sites in Puerto Rico is higher.⁽¹⁰⁾ The restructuring of the world economy has changed the role of Puerto Rico into a major manufacturing site. The industries attracted by American export-oriented incentives, i.e. clothing, electronics and textiles, requires cheap, unskilled labor – women workers. The unemployment rate for women is 12.7% and 18.8% for men.⁽¹¹⁾

Since the 1960s, the Puerto Rican government has been interested in controlling the relative surplus population – unemployed Puerto Ricans whose discontent serves as a social base for rebellion. They accomplished this in part by aiding the migration of many Puerto Ricans to America, and in part by implementing programs aimed at sterilizing poor Puerto Rican

women. In 1965, 34% of women between the ages of 20 and 49 were sterilized.⁽¹²⁾ The sterilization rate for lesser educated women was much higher.⁽¹³⁾

REPRESSION OF POLITICAL ACTIVISTS

In 1979, Angel Rodriguez Cristobal was arrested with 20 others demonstrating against the naval occupation of Vieques. Following his misdemeanor conviction, he was taken to a Florida prison where they forcibly injected him with Thorazine. He died unexpectedly several hours after he told his lawyer of his plans to continue the independence struggle⁽¹⁴⁾

In 1985, hundreds of FBI agents made an island round-up through more than 50 homes and establishments to arrest 12 independentistas for alleged participation in a clandestine independence movement – Los Macheteros.⁽⁵⁾ In defense of his capture, Colon Osorio persisted that colonialism is a crime against humanity and violation of international law. The American judge stated that "international law does not apply here." Osorio was not allowed to submit evidence to the jury that proved Los Macheteros complied with international law.

There are 18 Puerto Rican Supreme Court ruled that the 150,000 files that the Puerto Rican police held on independence supporters were illegal means intended to incite fear. Nearly every family had one member who received a file detailing their activities in the independence struggle.

The incarceration of Puerto Rican nationalists, along with the military and economic domination of the island, are political tactics to disarm the people and deny their right to self-determination. A viable plebiscite on independence will only be a possibility when the Puerto Rican people have the political and military power to make independence a reality.

Notes

1. New York Times 11/11/93, p. A13.
2. La Patria Radical. 6/93/ pp. 3, 5-6.
3. Palante 9/1/72, p. 3.
4. Edwin Melendez ed., *Colonial Dilemma*, Boston: South End Press, 1993, p. 61.
5. La Patria Radical 2/93, pp. 3-4.
6. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.
7. El Nueva Dia 2/23/93.
8. La Patria Radical 1/93, pp. 2-3.
9. Chemical Marketing Reporter 8/3/92, pp. 7-8.
10. Edwin Melendez, op. cit. pp. 97-98.
11. Puerto Rican Department of Labor and Human Resources, Bureau of Labor Statistics.
12. Harriet B. Presser, *Sterilization and Fertility Decline in Puerto Rico*. Greenwood Press: Connecticut, 1976, p. 61.
13. Ibid., p. 129.

Farmworkers and Chinese Peasants

December 1992
by MA71

The state of California is working for legislation to allow the building of “shelters” for Mexican farmworkers in Riverside County, 150 miles southeast of Los Angeles. The county's housing authority is working out the plans for a “novel” approach to housing farmworkers to start in the city of Mecca, and to be called the Mecca Migrant Farmworkers Campground.

These “shade shelters,” 53 in all, will be concrete slabs with metal roofs, communal bathrooms and barbeque pits, and no walls. The farmworkers will be charged \$5-11 per night.

Championed by right-wing conservatives, these shelters will be an obvious “improvement,” since currently farmworkers from Mexico usually live out in the open fields, either in no shelter or in makeshift shacks.

The first farmworkers to receive this “benefit” will be those who pick grapes. These workers have been particularly affected by the use of pesticides. This is how imperialists treat those workers who “feed and clothe the country.”(1) – worse than animals in a zoo, who at least live in cages with walls.

Such treatment is a perfect example of the ugly hypocrisy with which the imperialists and their apologists are treating “illegal” aliens. While right wingers scream about closing down the border and preventing the “illegals” from sapping the social welfare system, etc., at the same time these same people make plans to exploit the farmworkers even more. It is quite obvious that the sanctity of the family as defined by the imperialists certainly does not apply to the farmworkers from Mexico.

To defend this atrocity, the director of the Housing Authority said: “Would I rather have [permanent] housing for everyone? In a utopia, yes.”(2)

THE CHINESE CONTEXT

Compare the situation of the U.S. farmworkers to that of the peasants in China between 1949 and 1976. Shortly after Liberation in October 1949, a tempestuous land reform movement took place designed to free the masses of peasants

from the brutal exploitation of feudalism and imperialism. Beginning step by step, and under state guidance, the peasants organized collective production – first in small mutual aid teams, then into elementary cooperatives, then into more advanced cooperatives. Finally, the Great Leap Forward in 1958 gave a vast impetus to the development of the cooperatives into People's Communes.(3)

The People's Communes were formed by combining cooperatives of between 2,000 and 7,000 households. The land, equipment, and housing were collectively owned. Furthermore, the Commune combined industry, agriculture, trade, education, and military affairs. The Commune became the actual instrument of socialist state power. Furthermore, the People's Communes were run according to democratic centralism, with the tasks of leadership becoming easier.(4)

In the People's Communes, each family was entailed to its own house, rent free, under the condition that it not be rented or sold to anyone else.(5) Medical care was virtually free, with emphasis on “prevention first.”

Even critics of China under Mao will begrudgingly admit that the health and standard of living of the peasants gradually improved from 1949-1976.

What can the imperialists show for their efforts?

Notes:

1. See J. Sakai's *Settlers: The Mythology of the White Proletariat*. Morningstar Press: Chicago, 1983.
2. Los Angeles Times 7/7/92.
3. Chu Li and Tien Chieh-yun, *Inside a People's Commune*, Foreign Languages Press: Peking, 1975.
4. Jean Chesneaux, *China, The People's Republic, 1949-1976*, Pantheon: New York, 1979.
5. George Thompson, *Capitalism and After*, China Policy Study Group: London, 1976.

Amerikans Protest Migrants, Protect Imperialist Privileges

Soso of MIM(Prisons) July 2014

July 1, Murrieta, California - Residents of this southern California town blocked three buses carrying about 140 detained migrants from Central America from entering their town. The buses were diverted to other border patrol facilities for processing and supervised release pending appearance in immigration court. These flag waving Amerikans spouted racist slogans about the destruction of Amerika brought by these “illegal” additions to their precious white community as they attacked the buses. The migrants crossed the border in Texas and

were flown to California to relieve the overcrowded processing facilities in Texas by the Department of Homeland Security.

The protests were instigated by Murrieta Mayor Alan Long who called on residents to oppose the federal government's decision to move the migrants to the facility in his city. He wants the federal government to deport these migrants immediately. The Obama administration responded to the outcry by promising to cut back on the "illegal" border crossings, attempting to get \$2 billion from Congress and authority to return people home faster.(1)

Already this year Border Patrol agents have detained more than 52,000 unaccompanied minors crossing the U.\$. border.(2) But in spite of the media reports, this isn't just about children migrants, and we do not believe that activists should attempt to stir up public sympathy by focusing on the children. The U.\$. border is an artificial restriction, put in place to protect imperialist wealth from those people who create the wealth. Migrants cross the U.\$. border to escape U\$.-backed militia violence, capitalist-corporate economic devastation, brutal regimes and devastating poverty. These are all conditions that secure cheap labor for exploitation by imperialist corporations which bring the wealth home to Amerika and protect it with militarized borders. The border crossers of all ages deserve access to this wealth more than the well-off residents of Murrieta. Anti-imperialists call for open borders, and support the rights of indigenous people everywhere to enforce immigration restrictions on the imperialists who invade and steal their land and resources.

Notes:

1. PBS Newshour, 7 July 2014.

2. LA Times, 2 July 2014.

National Oppression as Migrant Detention

MIM(Prisons) November 2009

As the fastest growing prison population, migrants in detention have helped continue the decades long trend of rising imprisonment rates in the united snakes in recent years, while saving the private prison industry in the process.(1) Despite continued rhetoric about drugs coming into the u.\$. through Mexico, the government drastically shifted resources away from drug enforcement to immigration enforcement following 9/11, and the prison population shows it.(2)

As of July 2009, there are 31,000 non-citizens imprisoned at the federal level on any given day in the u.\$. This number is up

from about 20,000 in 2006 and 6,259 in 1992.(3) There are more than 320,000 migrants detained each year by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and as many as a quarter of them are juveniles. These numbers include only those imprisoned under federal custody, although they may be located all around the country and in state prisons and local jails. These numbers do not include people who may be imprisoned on criminal charges, but are not turned in to federal custody on immigration violations (such as in "sanctuary cities").

The American Civil Liberties Union says that the conditions in which these civil detainees are held are often as bad as or worse than those faced by people imprisoned with criminal convictions. These detention centers are described as "woefully unregulated." The "requirements" that they do have about how to treat people have no legal obligation, reducing them essentially to suggestions.(3) This leads to prisoners without u.\$. citizenship being denied access to telephones, legal aide or law libraries, recreation, visitation, mail, medical care, toiletries, and the list goes on. People are kidnapped from their homes in the middle of the night and transferred without notification to their families. On top of that they often have no means of communication, leading people to become completely detached from their support systems and legal counsel. For u.\$. prisoners, these conditions are nothing surprising or new. The difference for migrants is that the line between detention and punishment is blurred. Years ago, migrants were detained for 4 or 5 days, and then deported. Now people are being detained for up to 2 years (and possibly more), without ever being charged with a crime, let alone convicted, even by an illegitimate jury in an illegitimate u.\$. court.

The Economic Motivations

One reason migrant imprisonment is increasing is because after the prison boom of the 1990s, some prisons are sitting partially empty. The owners and financiers of these prisons are begging for more people to lock up, and their solution is migrants. This is part of the parasitic imperialist economy, where filling prisons is seen as an economic stimulus even though it is a completely non-productive suck of resources.

Private prisons house 17% of people in ICE custody. The Correctional Corporation of America, a private prison management company who controls half of the detention facilities run by private companies, spent \$3 million lobbying politicians in 2004. They want stricter immigration laws so they can have access to more prisoners, which will bring them more money. In turn, ICE is able to pay 26% less per day to house prisoners in a private versus state-run facility.(4) This is possible

because of the lack of public as well as governmental oversight at private facilities, where they reduce costs by getting rid of everything that would help prisoners, including necessary-to-life medical care. One reason state governments shied away from private prisons for their own citizens was the scandals that they quickly became associated with. In the year 1998-99, Wackenhut's private prisons in New Mexico had a death rate 55 times that of the national average for prisons.(5) The migrant population's lack of voice allows these corporations to get away with their cost-cutting abusive conditions when contracted by ICE. This is another good example of how capitalism values profit over humyn life.

Yet, as we described in Amerikkans: Oppressing for a Living, an increase in imprisonment doesn't serve the interests of just the private prison industry; CO and pig unions also reap major benefits. Since 9/11/2001 the u.\$. has increased its border patrol from 8,000 agents to 20,000, 20% of whom are military veterans. Salaries start at \$36,000 to \$46,000 per year plus full benefits. The whole Department of Homeland Security (DHS), which includes ICE, brags about its budget exceeding \$40 billion and providing high paying jobs for 166,234 amerikans.(6) Not only does DHS keep wealth within u.\$. borders, it helps distribute it as well.

And similar to the military-industrial complex and prison-industrial complex we discussed in The privatization of war: Imperialism gasps its last breaths, Homeland Security contracts are based on who you know, not what you're selling, as former staff members sell their wares to their old employers.(7) Meanwhile, many of the smaller start-up companies that are cashing in are headed by overly-enthusiastic and openly racist Minuteman types.(8)

Of course, there are real economic benefits to amerikans as a whole by managing the populations trying to come into the u.\$. If amerikans really made more money because they are just smarter and harder working, then they wouldn't be afraid to open the borders and allow competition for jobs. Instead, the demand for repression is forcing more and more farmers to employ prison labor for harvests when they used to use migrants. Free amerikan citizens just won't work for proletarian wages, not to mention it being illegal, so the argument that they want their jobs back is pretty weak. Though perhaps this is the perfect solution to keeping food cheap, while keeping foreigners out and the oppressed in prison. Migrant detainees do work in private prisons doing the day-to-day maintenance, and because they are not u.\$. citizens DHS enforces a maximum wage of \$1 per day.(9) While adequate food and housing are theoretically provided, this amounts to working and living conditions

generally below those in their home region. Opposite the reactionary turn to border control, we challenge those who want jobs for everyone to work toward a new economic system instead.

Close the Hatches: Whitey Unites

ICE is not the only law enforcement actor in this scam profiting off humyn life. Under the Immigration and Nationality Act 287(g), local authorities can become authorized to officially enforce federal immigration law, while others are comfortable unofficially using the old vigilante trick of targeting specific people. This culture of oppression in the white nation runs so deep that an increasing number of u.\$. citizens are joining in the traditional amerikan hobby of border patrol, volunteering with groups such as the Minutemen Civil Defense Corps. In response to much public outrage, President Obama has addressed the actions of the famous migrant humiliator Maricopa County Sheriff Arpaio by limiting him to only determining someone's immigration status when they've been jailed. This weak response of the Obama administration shows their support of such migrant oppression.

The white euro-amerikan nation has been systematically oppressing other peoples for centuries. One way is through exploitation and neocolonialism in Third World countries, where people are trapped as cheap labor by borders and immigration laws. Corporations pay little to no wages there and sell products for super-profits in this country. The dire economic situations cause people to leave their homes and often risk their lives to provide for themselves and their families. From 1995 to 2005 about 2,600 people died trying to come into the united States through Mexico.(10) Similarly, people regularly die crossing the ocean in makeshift boats from Haiti where the u.\$.-imposed government refuses to meet the needs of the people. It's oppressive in one country so people decide to leave and come here thinking they will find better opportunities. Of course, what really happens is the oppression and exploitation of Third World people continues within the united States when people don't have a green card. Things are worse for the oppressed during the recent economic crisis. Many from Latin America are finding that opportunities are now superior back home, even though amerikans continue to live over-consumptive lifestyles in the united States.

Signs of Progress

In the face of all this, there are people working toward solutions. In Pecos, Texas in December 2008 and January 2009, there was a series of migrant prisoner uprisings. They were

finally set off by the death of a man with epilepsy, who died completely unnecessarily due to a blatant disregard for his life by refusing to give him medical care.(11) People of many different nationalities came together in rebellion, demanding better conditions. This is not the first or last murder of its kind, as unexplained deaths are common in u.\$. prisons, including migrant detention centers.

Some u.\$. cities are moving in the progressive direction of being "sanctuaries." Sanctuary cities allow people who may not be u.\$. citizens to make money here to send home to circulate in their own countries. This is a roundabout way of moving toward a world without borders. However, with accusations that some mayors are "soft on crime," the sanctuary status may be threatened. Additionally, there's nothing stopping federal agents from going into these cities and enforcing federal immigration law, as they often do.

While we favor these progressive steps toward protections for migrants in the u.\$., we acknowledge that they aren't enough to lead to the end of national oppression. They are fragile reforms at best, that can be as easily revoked (or simply ignored). Another solution some have is integration of migrants into the u.\$. exploiter nation through exploiter-size wages. This is an effort to reduce their potential as revolutionaries to that of consumers and labor-aristocratic parasites. What we truly need to end national oppression of migrants in the u.\$. is to expose the "amerikkkan dream," and revolutionize the workers to support revolutionary movements in the Third World.

Notes:

- (1) Greene, Judith. Banking on the Prison Boom. August 2006.
- (2) Fernandes, Deepa. Targeted: Homeland Security and the Business of Immigration. Seven Stories Press, New York. 2007, p.119.
- (3) "Detention Management," U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Nov 20, 2008, http://www.ice.gov/pi/news/factsheets/detention_mgmt.htm
- (4) Berestein, Leslie. Tougher immigration laws turn the ailing private prison sector into a revenue maker. San Diego Tribune, 5/4/2008.
- (5) Fernandes. p. 195.
- (6) <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/rewrite/budget/fy2009/homeland.html>
- (7) Fernandes, p.178.
- (8) Ibid., p.185. Border Technologies, Inc. founder believes that "Mexican culture is based on deceit" and "Chicanos and Mexicanos lie as a means of survival."
- (9) Ibid., p.197.
- (10) Ibid., p.50.
- (11) Wilder, Forrest. How a private prison pushed immigrant inmates to the brink. The Texas Observer, October 2, 2009. <http://www.texasobserver.org/features/the-pecos-insurrection>

On Cesar Chavez and the Correct and Incorrect Handling of Contradictions Among the People

by MIM(Prisons)

Reprinted from Chican@ Power and the Struggle for Aztlan

Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers (UFW) are a well-known part of the history of the Chican @ nation. For many the name Cesar Chavez is synonymous with civil and humyn rights struggles. But if the re-emergent Chican @ national liberation struggle is ever to develop with the same power and strength as that of the last Chican @ struggle then a serious examination of Chavez as martyr for oppressed Raza everywhere needs to be taken up by the new generation of Chican @ activists and revolutionaries. The Cesar Chavez question is a general line question in the age of imperialism particular to the Chican @ nation for its embodiment of the very many contradictions that continue to plague us today.

It is undeniable that the actions of the UFW, under the leadership of Cesar Chavez, helped relieve the suffering of the mostly Chican@ and Mexican@ field workers in the United States. Initially Chavez rightly challenged agri-business, and through the UFW many field workers were organized. But the mobilization of campesinos for decent wages and safe working conditions faced obstacles created by U.\$. imperialism. Corporate agri-business responded to UFW strikes by importing more Mexican@ labor in order to bypass UFW organized labor. This challenge would have been best tackled with an internationalist perspective, looking at how to achieve progress for all oppressed people. But Chavez and the UFW had a narrow focus on improving conditions for documented farmworkers within U.\$. borders. Instead of building a cross-border movement, in the early 1970s the UFW actually supported laws and actions that led to deportation of Mexican workers and stricter measures aimed at migrant workers.(1) Lacking a communist or revolutionary nationalist perspective, the UFW sacrificed undocumented workers to their narrow goals. These actions provide us with a teaching moment on the contradictions created by a capitalist society which demands that Chican@s attack Mexican@s, not only to survive but to protect their privilege.

Chavez serves as an example of what can occur when socialist revolution is taken out of the conversation. One may set out to help the people but trip when faced with obstacles. Facing

criticism from Chican@ and Mexican@ activists, Chavez and the UFW later reversed their stance, demonstrating the internationalist character of the migrant farmworker movement. It should also be noted that the UFW of today is increasingly pro-migrant and perhaps known better for its stance on immigration reform than for its labor activism. This is reflective of the overall progressive nature of the proletariat and semi-proletariat of Aztlán.

Had Chavez taken on an internationalist approach with a communist ideological perspective he would have not only resisted state repression of migrant labor but he would have also built a labor movement spanning both sides of the Rio Bravo. Had Chavez been a revolutionary Chican@ he could have been the bridge to link the mostly urban Chican@ movement with the Mexican@ proletarian migrants into one movement aimed at fighting the root cause of our oppression: U\$. imperialism.

In the end Chavez was a reformer who was not trying to liberate Aztlán, nor was he attempting to overthrow Amerikkkan imperialism. He set out to better the working conditions of field workers who were mostly Raza, and he succeeded. As revolutionaries, Chican@s should not glorify Chavez, rather we should take an objective look at Chavez and the UFW and learn from their approach so that we find ways to do better and avoid the mistakes that they made. Let us strive to correct the mistakes of the past by developing together and learning from history so that we may move as one and retrain our sights on the world's number one enemy: Amerikan imperialism.

¡Abajo Con El Imperialismo!

Some pigs are bigger than others!



Then some rebel pigs said,

The fat pigs said that was ridiculous.



We owe at least that much pie to the starving pie-makers!

When you live in a pigsty, it's hard to not think like a pig.

So, some "nice" small pigs spoke up on behalf of the other small pigs in the sty. But the "nice" pigs opposed the rebel pigs, too, and only pointed out how small the small pigs were. These "nice" small pigs ignored the pie-makers, who were enslaved to make the pie but didn't get to eat any. Instead, the "nice" small pigs wanted to keep all the of the pie for themselves. And they did.

But the pie-makers aren't even pigs!

Any extra pie should go to the small pigs!



What's in the Amerikkkan pie? Billions of dollars in super-profits stolen from the Third World through exploitation.



This story brought to you by the
Maoist Internationalist Movement



A communist vanguard party dedicated to leading the oppressed of the world out of the pigsty of imperialism.

Theory in Review

Settlers: The Mythology of the White Proletariat

J. Sakai

Morningstar Press

Chicago, 1983

August 1990

from MIM Theory #7

by MC5

MIM has distributed many copies of *Settlers*, as the text has profoundly contributed to the party's line on the reactionary nature of the white nation, including the white nation working class, in North America. MIM does, however, have some criticisms of *Settlers*.

Sakai has a dim view of groups like MIM, since Sakai supports armed struggle *now*. After a simplistic reading of Mao's work, Sakai even finds justification for this position in Mao's writings. [The issue of launching armed struggle in the imperialist countries now is handled in MIM Theory 5, Chapter 5 "Armed Struggle Now: An Ultraleft Deviation."]

Sakai's political economy is derived from the Revolutionary Youth Movement I (RYM I). For a history of RYM I, MIM recommends *SDS* by Alan Adelson, or *Weatherman*, edited by Harold Jacobs. RYM I was a faction of SDS that took the strongest pro-nationalist line and favored immediate urban guerrilla warfare.

RYM II, which is where MIM has greater sympathies for the most part, was more cautious about armed struggle, opposed Trotskyism without cheerleading for every nationalist struggle and generally had a more analytical approach compared with the feel-good armed struggle crowd.

Sakai supports nationalist struggle and opposes white nation chauvinism. So even though Sakai does not explicitly identify him/herself as a descendant of RYM I, that is in fact where Sakai's ideas come from. And Sakai's work represents the best that this trend has to offer.

Most of what MIM has to criticize in *Settlers* has to do with the beginning and end of the book. The bulk of the book is a penetrating exposition on the relationship between nation and class as they exist concretely in the United States through history. For the most part, the analysis is clear enough for people

outside Sakai's political trend to understand.

Perhaps the biggest objection to Sakai's history is his/her rendering of World War II as incorrectly handled by revolutionaries in the United States. The analysis starts with a quotation from the imprisoned revolutionary George Jackson that says it was a mistake to side with U.S. imperialists against the Nazis, as Stalin had advised revolutionaries abroad.

The problem with this section is that it does not attempt an assessment of the balance of forces at the time and whether the oppressed in the United States would have done better by opposing the U.S. war effort.

Nothing guaranteed that the imperialists would not gang up on the oppressed. Germany was occupying the first socialist state, the Soviet Union, which proved to be a powerhouse on the side of the oppressed. Why shouldn't people side with the Soviet Union (via the United States) against Germany?

Furthermore, could both imperialists have been overthrown? One possibility is that a strong anti-war effort by the oppressed within the United States would have succeeded. Then the United States would have withdrawn or never entered the war. Roosevelt would have negotiated with Britain, Germany and Japan instead.

This would have cost the Soviet Union and more Jewish people their existence. For that matter, Germany would have likely have held on to Europe. Getting the United States into the war created some space for a number of groups to operate. If the imperialists negotiated away their differences, this may have meant more hardship for Third World peoples.(1)

Overall, though, the most important issue in the book is not World War II, but the national question. Sakai goes too far in equating the nationalism of the oppressed nations with proletarian internationalism. S/he cites the Mugabe regime in Zimbabwe favorably while cheerleading for a particular faction of the PLO. On the back page, Sakai includes a picture of Ho Chi Minh and a quotation.

The rest of the book always cites nationalist leaders in a favorable light.

At the same time, Sakai borrows heavily from Lenin and Mao and decries "revisionism" throughout the book. However, cheerleading for nationalist struggles and opposing revisionism are not the same thing.

Of course Sakai is correct that the chauvinist "left" has distorted Lenin's work on oppressed nationalities. Straightening this out is a tremendous favor to the international proletariat.

But for Sakai to go on to claim Lenin and Mao as backers is incorrect. In particular, Mao's Chinese Communist Party did not have any fraternal relations with any states except Albania. That means it regarded all the rest of the so-called communist world as hard-core revisionists or revisionist with the possibility of developing into genuine communist. How can one tell what is revisionist? Only Albania's communist party and other parties not in state power supported the continued class struggle under the dictatorship of the proletariat. The rest did not see the Soviet Union as state-capitalist.

The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine was not a Maoist group and did not enjoy fraternal relations with the CCP as a party. There were some out-of-power parties that did, such as the one in Indonesia that was massacred in the 1960s, but Sakai is not referring to these nationalist armed liberation struggles for the most part.

So Sakai makes the error of confusing support of national liberation struggles with support of particular organizations dedicated to revisionism. This is the most important error in *Settlers*. To blindly cheerlead for Ho Chi Minh (while failing to point out what the Vietnamese Communist Party thought about the Cultural Revolution and mass struggles) to consolidate the dictatorship of the proletariat is the error of overlooking revisionism in the name of internationalism.

Sakai is correct that we only demonstrate our internationalism by supporting nationalist liberation struggles of oppressed countries. Yet to really support that struggle it is necessary to support a non-revisionist party leading it, a Maoist party. By 1994 it's clear that without a genuine communist party leading, countries such as Zimbabwe, China and Vietnam go back into capitalist dependency.

There are many contexts in which it is correct to simply support a nationalist struggle regardless of the organization involved. Especially in The United States where imperialism is headquartered, internationalists are called on constantly to oppose the maneuvers of the U.S. imperialists. U.S. intervention must be stopped everywhere and national struggles supported everywhere. That is not the same thing as supporting particular organizations.

Vietnam and Zimbabwe are especially bad cases of Sakai's error. Here supposedly socialist construction is underway and the Vietnamese Communist Party (VCP) and Zimbabwe's Mugabe took incorrect lines in political economy and in regard to the all around dictatorship of the proletariat. They did not recognize Mao's teachings on the necessity of continued revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat and hence are

nothing more than capitalist dependencies now.

Notes:

1. See MIM Theory 6, "The Stalin Issue" for an analysis of Stalin, World War II and the United Front.

Race Traitor: 'Treason To Whiteness'

Race Traitor
Issue #3
P.O. Box 602
Cambridge, MA 02140
85 single copies
subscriptions (4 issues) \$20
December 1994
from MIM Theory #7
by MC17

This new journal proclaims as its mission: "Treason to whiteness is loyalty to humanity." As a start this is pretty good, if a bit provincially focused on Amerika only. MIM has long been saying that members of the white nation in Amerika are reactionary as a group. We have also been imploring youth, women, students and all progressive people of the white, oppressor nation to forsake their material interests and fight on the side of the international proletariat.

Race Traitor views the struggle within the white nation as the principal contradiction, all under the name of fighting "racism." Although Race Traitor understands the biological fallacy of "race," it does not have an alternative analysis of the social group "nation." Consequently, its goals are admirable, but hopelessly idealist.

Race Traitor is filled with life stories and testimonials from whites about how they became revolutionaries, anarchists, or some other progressive political bent instead of fascists. In other words, all is not lost if you were born to this oppressive race. Supporting letters and stories from a few Blacks celebrate incidents in which Blacks and whites worked together against their oppressors (most notably the Ohio prison rebellion where the fascists joined with the Muslims to fight the prison guards).

These testimonials lend themselves to individualism. There is no analysis attached to the stories, and the message that the reader is left with is that one individual can act differently from the way that white people are expected to act – differently from what is in the material interests of white people. While this

lesson is true, it is meaningless without a larger context of revolutionary science. Once people understand national oppression and oppose it, how are they to proceed? If they no longer take leadership from the bourgeoisie, where will their leadership come from? Race Traitor does not provide this crucial answer.

It is correct to tell white people that they can in fact be revolutionary and can make contributions to ending oppression. But Race Traitor seems to argue that the act of voluntarily giving up whiteness, presumably taken by a vanguard of white people, will lead to the elimination of racism and make white people as a group revolutionary. This is grossly misleading and will never work.

Race Traitor exaggerates both the spontaneity of the masses in responding to individual acts of “counter-culture,” and the confusion these acts will create in the ranks of the powerful. The best example of the failure of this strategy is the Weather Underground of the 1960s.

In its editorial “When does the unreasonable act make sense,” Race Traitor lays down its view of how to undo the concept of race:

“The way to abolish the white race is to disrupt the conformity. If enough people who look white violate the rules of whiteness, so flagrantly that they jeopardize their white standing, their existence cannot be ignored. If it becomes impossible for the upholders of white rules to speak in the name of all who look white, the white race will cease to exist.”

and:

“We are calling for ... a minority willing to undertake outrageous acts of provocation, aware that they will incur the opposition of many who might agree with them if they adopted a more moderate approach.”

In response to the question “How many will it take” to abolish the white race, Race Traitor answers “No one can say for sure.”

“nowhere near a majority – just enough to undermine public confidence in the official stuff. When it comes to abolishing the white race, the task is not to win over more whites to oppose ‘racism;’ there are ‘anti-racists’ enough already to do the job.”

So here we learn that Race Traitor is not really calling for the building of a movement. The new strategy it proposes is

focoism in its extreme form. It is not even intended to win over more whites to anti-racism, but rather is assumed to be a means to eliminating the concept of race in Amerika. Race Traitor states that the reason for printing the testimonials is “that to popularize such examples will contribute to altering current notions of what constitutes reason, and will encourage others to be still bolder.”

In one interview with an activist at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the activist says “It’s probably a lot to do with what Race Traitor is about, I guess, is just getting over being white.” This sums up the message the reader is left with after reading Race Traitor. MIM, on the other hand, says that white people can’t “get over” being white, unless they are willing to give up their national privilege that comes with being white through actively fighting on the side of the international proletariat. It is not a single courageous act but a lifetime of arduous struggle.

Focusing on the need for a split within the white nation holds out false hope for the revolutionary nature of the white nation as a group. Race Traitor is also hopelessly naive in its belief that the entire construct of “race” can be eliminated by just confusing the powers-that-be about who is the real bad guy in Amerika. This is a dangerous strategy because it will land people in prison very quickly after accomplishing very little. The Race Traitor people should read MIM Theory 1 and J. Sakai’s *Settlers: The Mythology of the White Proletariat*, and study the question of the nature of the white nation before wasting more time cheerleading for a group that does not have a material interest in revolution.

There are some good parts to this journal. Race Traitor editor Noel Ignatiev, in a discussion of the history of white workers and the labor movement makes some of the most important statements in this issue of the journal. He writes: “This solidarity leads me to assert, as provocatively as possible, that the black church has historically been more of a proletarian organization than the white labor union.” MIM agrees with this statement. Ignatiev also correctly concludes that “... in the period before the Civil War, the class movement of American workers was not expressed in the trade unions, working men’s parties, and suffrage and land reform efforts of white labor, but in the striving of the black slave and free person.”

But Race Traitor suffers from a lack of internationalist perspective. By focusing on the white nation within Amerika it does injustice to all revolutionary-minded people who are trying to fight the imperialists on their own scale. Revolutionaries have to be able to think big and act big. Not only do we need to be splitting off those progressive white people willing to give up

their national privilege and uniting them with other revolutionary comrades in the internal oppressed nations, but we also need to work to support revolutions in the Third World, keep a perspective on what it means to live in an imperialist country, and never lose sight of the interests of the international proletariat.

Race Traitor has all the anarchist and focoist, academic and liberal, feel-good elements to make up a popular new movement in the wake of the demise of many activist groups of the 60s and 70s. MIM predicts that this new Race Traitor concept will find a significant following, but as with similar movements without a clear theoretical orientation, people will drift in and out of whatever work the movement offers without any real direction, and ultimately many people will become disillusioned when they realize that the white nation is not disappearing and white people are not rising up in the revolution they way it was promised.

INTERVIEW WITH EDITOR NOEL IGNATIEV

MIM was given a copy of an Utne Reader interview with Race Traitor Noel Ignatiev. The interview helps to clear up some of Race Traitor's goals and theory. Ignatiev touches on the construction of race in North American history, pointing out the distinction made at the end of the 1600s between people of African descent and those of European descent. "In return for these privileges, European-Americans of all classes came to be part of the apparatus that maintained Afro-Americans in chattel slavery ..." Ignatiev's understanding of the distinctions between nations that has been created in this country and the privileges enjoyed by all members of the white nation is important.

Ignatiev also correctly points out that race is a social construct; in Marxist terms, race is part of the ideological superstructure of national oppression in the United States. But his interview, as well as the journal Race Traitor, beg the question of nation. Stalin described nations as groups of people who share distinct language, culture, economy and land. MIM believes that given the history and current reality of internal colonialism in the United States, there are a number of oppressed nations within the borders of this country.

[By focusing on the white nation within Amerika it does injustice to all revolutionary-minded people who are trying to fight the imperialists on their own scale.]

Because of Race Traitor's idealist orientation, anti-racist struggles are trapped in the superstructural realm of culture,

ideology, morals, etc., while ignoring the material basis for that superstructure's continuing force. MIM, as a communist organization, upholds national liberation and self-determination as the antidote to national oppression. The philosophy that white people "can dissolve the white race from within, by rejecting the poisoned bait of white-skin privileges" leaves out the question of national self-determination. Asking white people to take on some "blackness" in acts of counterculture suggests that there is no such thing as national oppression.

While it is self-evident that the cultures of oppressed nations are major sources of strength for the revolutionary movement, Race Traitor misunderstands the correct position of culture in the movement. Black Panther Party founder Huey Newton's formulation will clarify this:

"The Black Panther Party, which is a revolutionary group of black people, realizes that we have to have an identity. We have to realize our black heritage in order to give us strength to move on and progress. But as far as returning to the old African culture, it's unnecessary and it's not advantageous in many respects. We believe that culture itself will not liberate us. We're going to need some stronger stuff."(1)

Ignatiev further blurs the issues by stating that "All people who wish to be free have an equal stake – yes, an equal stake – in overturning the system of white supremacy." This is a view that is possible to adopt from within the limited perspective of this country, only by ignoring the realities of global imperialism and colonialism within the United States. Does Ignatiev really think that well off Americans have the same interest in overthrowing the rule of the white nation as do the peasants in Peru, or the working people of Eritrea, or the farmers of the Philippines, or even the migrant workers in California? Some people clearly have a much greater stake in overturning this system. That's why we speak of the international proletariat as the *class* which is too big to bribe.

Ignatiev asks "... if the cops and the courts and so forth couldn't be sure that every person who looked white was loyal to the system, then what would be the point of extending race privileges to whites?" But the cops and the state know that they don't have the loyalty of every person who looks white, which is why the FBI keeps files on many whites. It's why members of the 1960s Weather Underground were imprisoned, and present day white revolutionaries are still at risk of harassment or murder. If the white race really needed unanimity to survive, it would have fallen in the 1960s if not earlier. The strategy of individual whites acting as traitors has already been proven a failure.

Ultimately Noel Ignatiev gets stuck in the narrow thinking of nationalism when he admits that “not all forms of injustice can be collapsed into whiteness ...” He is correct, of course, but if this is true, why doesn't he also discuss what is going to be necessary to achieve true fundamental social change?

Without an internationalist outlook, it is hard to see beyond the provincial questions of race, but as Ignatiev admits, the construct race has not always existed everywhere under capitalism. Even if race could be abolished by Ignatiev's small-time focoism (small time compared to that of Che Guevara and others), people would be very disappointed to find themselves with no plan for what to do when they realized that underneath race was imperialism and a struggle that can not be waged by a few white people alone.

Race Traitor declined to respond at this time.

Notes: 1. Philip Foner, ed. *The Black Panthers Speak*, Lippincott: Philadelphia, p. 50.

The RCP and the National Question

from MIM Theory #7

September 1990

This essay deals only with the RCP line on the Black nation – it does not address the Latino or First Nations.

By MC12

Considering important historical differences and the internal nature of the Black nation, Blacks in this country are still a nation – based on common language, culture, economic system and to some extent territory (although this last is obviously more complicated than in cases of external nations).

This theory follows from a general analysis of the various classes in Amerika today, largely informed by J. Sakai's *Settlers* and the experience of the Black Panther Party. In 1926, Mao Zedong said: “To ensure that we will definitely achieve success in our revolution and will not lead the masses astray, we must pay attention to uniting with our real friends in order to attack our real enemies.” This requires “a general analysis of the economic status of the various classes ...”(1)

MIM's line on nationalism needs to take into account at every step the analysis of the white working class as an oppressor group among the Amerikan classes today, as well as divisions within the Black nation – its proletariat, semi-proletariat, petit-bourgeoisie and bourgeoisie. This must be

applied generally – as a class analysis – and will reflect on basic strategic assessments made along the way. As Mao saw important divisions among the Chinese national bourgeoisie – such that some would follow the imperialists, and some the Communists – so must we see a similar division among the Black bourgeoisie today.

In China the lines were drawn around economic ties and dependence on the imperialists, as they are in the United States today. So that here we may see elected Black politicians, mainstream Black business leaders and other economic agents of the state kowtow to the imperialist system; but at the same time some Black petit-bourgeoisie, revolutionary nationalists, Muslim nationalists and so on will sincerely resist the white imperialist system without supporting the vanguard party of the proletariat or socialism in general.

Those who argue against a revolutionary nationalist struggle, in favor of proletarian revolution for the Black nation now, are usually assuming the white working class will be an ally in that fight. They don't recognize what Sakai points out as the historical class antagonisms between white labor and African proletarians throughout Amerikan history to the present day – the “dialectical unity of democracy and oppression” which poisons white working class struggles with national chauvinism, genocidal tendencies and bourgeois aspirations.(2)

Bob Avakian, Chairperson of the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP) is guilty of this oversight in his analysis of Black nationalism (See summing up the Black Panthers,” *Revolutionary Worker* 4/4/80, which is still distributed). Avakian seems to take the high ground in his proclamation that “the working class can't tolerate any form of division by race or nationality,” that it has to “not be divided up – my race, my nationality, my people first.” He ascribed this negative attitude to Amerikan individualism and says it must be resisted. But without an analysis of the class nature and consciousness of the white labor aristocracy in this country, this amounts to throwing the Black nation to the wolves, and belittles the countless betrayals and compromises which have resulted from such alliances in the past.

The RCP line is a little more complicated than Avakian's piece makes it sound, as they do define Blacks in this country as an oppressed nation. “Black people suffer not just racism but national oppression – oppression as a people, a people whose roots are in Africa but who developed into a separate nation based on their historical experience in this country,” they write in the pamphlet, “Cold Truth, Liberating Truth: How This System Has Always Oppressed Black People, And How All Oppression Can Finally Be Ended.”(3)

As in Avakian's piece, revolutionary nationalism for Blacks is upheld "to a point," after which it fails because "nationalism falls short in uniting oppressed people of different nationalities." (4) And more explicitly than Avakian himself, this document holds out a false hope to the advocates of national liberation. "While there are certainly white people who are well-off, comfortable and conservative, there are many who are not. There are, in fact, millions of whites who are poor and exploited and whose most basic interests are with the proletarian revolution." (5)

All this is to say, in effect, a national liberation struggle is not what the Black people of this country need. Rather, they need to be united with the workers of the world in proletarian revolution to smash the whole imperialist system. While upholding the right of self-determination for Blacks (and carefully avoiding the phrase "national liberation"), the RCP does not apparently see a role for the revolutionary vanguard in that particular form of struggle.

The RCP line is not all wrong. That's why it's being reviewed here instead of the countless other approaches to the question. But what is needed here is just a little more thorough and sophisticated analysis. In China, the Communist Party – at Mao's suggestion – placed itself squarely within the nationalist struggle, uniting with real friends and fighting against real enemies, based on a class analysis of that time. What the RCP line does not take into account is the possibility of a revolutionary vanguard party taking a leadership role in the national liberation struggle of Blacks, in coalition with those revolutionary nationalists who are truly opposed to Amerikan imperialism.

As an internal nation the situation is different in that the national liberation struggle here is taking place in the belly of the beast. Here more than anywhere there can be no true liberation for anyone without the destruction of the imperialist state first. But this does not have to mean refusing to cooperate with the natural allies of national liberation in a tactical alliance. In fact, breaking off a division of the revolutionary nationalists who might otherwise be driven over to the bourgeoisie might make a crucial difference in the balance of power during the revolutionary struggle.

Ultimately, the line against revolutionary nationalism in the United States stems from the real lack of support for proletarian revolution among the white working class. So without Blacks, the reasoning seems to go under the surface, there is no proletarian revolution. But whatever the case of the white working class, the oppressed nation needs a national liberation struggle because of the alliances that struggle fosters in the

crucial balance of power. The RCP line in this case represents dogmatic pragmatism and opportunism, rather than an honest and thorough-going analysis of the class forces at work right now.

In 1979, Avakian saw the U.S. economy in decline, which he thought was sure to lead to revolutionary insurrection in the 1980s. He was wrong. But this analysis is still at the core of the RCP line. He said then, "The drastic changes and upheavals in this period (1979), unlike the 60s when just a few sections of society were involved, will involve the whole of society, including the working class."

Besides (again) the obvious error of not distinguishing between sections of the working class in this broadly-sweeping statement, what Avakian meant was that the role of the white working class would change as it got squeezed from its temporary allies the bourgeois imperialists, making it a real ally of the Black nation. Wrong again. Although it is not unlikely that the decline of the Amerikan empire compared to other imperialist powers will result in a decrease in the amount of bribe money available to the labor aristocracy – leading to a smaller labor aristocracy and more real white proletarians – it is equally more probably that the real result of this shift will mean even more exploitation of the Black nation and a slide into a fascism based around national chauvinism. This is the reality which the advocates of a national liberation struggle for Blacks face.

Notes:

1. "Analysis of the Classes in Chinese Society," *Selected Readings from the Works of Mao Tsetung*, Foreign Language Press: Peking, 1971. p. 11.
2. J. Sakai, *Settlers, the Mythology of the White Proletariat*, Morningstar Press: Chicago, 1983. p. 16.
3. Published in *Revolutionary Worker*, 8/14/89. p. 20.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 33.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 34.

NAFTA Stand Clarifies RCP's Differences With MIM

Revolutionary Worker
November 28, 1993
December 1993
from MIM Theory #7
by MC5

Many around the world believe that there is no difference between MIM and the RCP, USA on the question of the imperialist country working class. Elsewhere we have analyzed the major documents of the RCP, including its program, to

demonstrate that this is not true.(1)

Recently, the bourgeois internationalists behind the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) on the one hand, and the Amerika-first bourgeoisie led by Ross Perot on the other hand, forced the RCP into taking a fairly recognizable and concrete position on NAFTA.

This position is contradictory, but nonetheless it is something for which we can hold the RCP accountable.(2)

The article, "The North American Bloodsuckers Trade Agreement," (2) starts by tailing after the social-chauvinist opposition to NAFTA, but ends up echoing MIM's line on the labor aristocracy – but only applied to certain "sections" of it rather than the class in its entirety.

THE CONTENDING LINES

When MIM first received J. Sakai's *Settlers: The Mythology of the White Proletariat* and H.W. Edwards' *Labor Aristocracy: Mass Base for Social Democracy*, MIM was in a better position to analyze the different lines out there on the labor aristocracy. MIM reviewed four of the major positions in an early issue of MIM Theory:

Position I was that the question did not matter, because line – derived from the proven desires of the international proletariat – was decisive, not social base in North America.

Position II was Sakai's position that there is no Euro-Amerikan proletariat.

Position III was H.W. Edward's position that the *majority* of workers in the imperialist countries are labor aristocracy, leaving open the possibility of a small Euro-Amerikan proletariat.

Position IV was the RCP position. It held that the labor aristocracy was in decline and that hence there was a growing basis for a revolutionary movement in the labor aristocracy. Such a position can be found in some of the writings of Lenin and Zinoviev, while at other times they lambasted the notion that the labor aristocracy is always in decline.

MIM eventually adopted Sakai's position, while applying the truth of position I at certain times and sympathizing with Edwards to the extent of distributing his book. MIM came to conclude that it did not sympathize with position IV.

The RCP expressed its position very clearly by its only bold-faced quotation in the November 1993 article, a quotation from Neal Soss, chief economist of CS First Boston Inc.: "This

in a nutshell explains why we can no longer afford to offer a bourgeois lifestyle to our white- and blue-collar proletariat." The RCP then went on to say that "the U.S. imperialists are telling the truth in this regard.

The RCP then felt freed to take a line at the end of its article somewhat similar to MIM's but only with regard to "sections of U.S. workers." This is all that allowed the RCP to criticize the NAFTA opposition and Ross Perot, even while the beginning of the article tailed after the reformist NAFTA opposition.

The RCP article is in an open state of contradiction. It appears to want to have things both ways, while finally ending up on the side of the labor aristocracy's begging for reformation of its alliance with imperialism:

"For a decade, the U.S. capitalists have demanded 'take-backs' from industrial workers – freezing or lowering wages, shaving benefits, changing work rules ... And the coming restructuring connected to NAFTA will be used to further 'depress wages' by placing U.S. and Mexican workers in much more direct competition."

So our hearts are supposed to bleed for those workers who have a "bourgeois lifestyle" even by the RCP's own backhanded admission!

Another contradiction is that the RCP has already supposedly set itself apart from the proponents of the "general crisis" approach to everything. Yet here it is echoing the general crisis theorists, who always take one-sided advantage of Lenin's formulation on imperialism to say that revolution is just around the corner because the labor aristocracy is about to come to its senses, something predicted and proven wrong for most of the years of this century.

Related to this, the RCP seems able to live without the crisis theorists in the following formulation: "[NAFTA] will tremendously intensify the exploitation and suffering of the Mexican people." The general crisis theorists usually hold that imperialism cannot deepen its penetration of the world and has reached its end, so here is a hopeful sign from the RCP. It at least recognizes that the imperialists are expanding or deepening their penetration.

Yet how can this happen while the imperialists also decrease the bourgeois lifestyle of Euro-Amerikan workers? The RCP implies that somehow the U.S. imperialists will cut back on both the Euro-Amerikan workers and the Mexican workers, while it admits that the exploitation of the Mexican workers will increase and thereby make more surplus-value available for

redistribution in the First World.

The RCP says, “But the U.S. government insists 'increased profitability and competitiveness' from this 'dislocation' will eventually mean more prosperity – at least for people in the United States. But the current global restructuring of capital is not about 'trickle down' prosperity.”

Here the RCP has had to perform a somersault. On the one hand it said the imperialists are telling the truth about NAFTA. On the other hand, when it comes to telling the U.S. workers what will happen to the extra surplus extracted from the Mexican workers, the imperialists are supposedly telling a lie. This is a common union bargaining tactic – to point to increased profits by the employers, and then demand a share by claiming they haven't gotten any of the increased profits.

Yet even Lenin in his day believes that there is “trickle-down” prosperity. He believed the superprofits trickled into the workers' life in the imperialist countries through a “million” different forms of “bribery.” He was quite explicit that the “Great Powers” all set aside some money for such bribery. Speaking of the typical Great Power, Lenin said, “its superprofits most likely amount to about a thousand million. And how this little sop is divided among the labour ministers, 'labour representatives,' (remember Engels' splendid analysis of the term), labour members of war industries committees, labour officials, workers belonging to the narrow craft unions, office employees, [which by themselves are over half of Euro-American workers since the 1980 census –MC5] etc. etc., is a secondary question.”(3)

So here we get to the reactionary kernel of the RCP position. According to the RCP, exploitation of the Mexican workers will increase, but that will not mean greater bribery of the Euro-American workers. Unexplained in the article, there will be a greater surplus-value extracted, but not greater bribery. The reason it won't be explained is that it is not based in fact, but in the necessity for the RCP to adopt a bargaining position for the Euro-American labor aristocracy.

Indeed, the RCP's position goes farther as we have already shown. According to the RCP, the surplus-value from the Mexican workers will increase, but the wages of the American workers have already and will continue to decrease. This mythology has already been debunked in MIM Theory 1.

That bargaining position and political tailing of the labor aristocracy caused the RCP to side with one faction of the bourgeoisie against another: “Clearly, everything about NAFTA is against the interests of oppressed people. Revolutionaries need to expose and oppose NAFTA.” Yet NAFTA was a treaty

between ruling classes. It was with regard to inter-bourgeois relations. It replaced one set of bourgeois relations with another. If the NAFTA did not pass, the existing set of bourgeois relations, tariffs, etc., would have prevailed. Why did the RCP feel obliged to oppose the NAFTA in particular? The reason is clear: tailing the labor aristocracy leads to reformism – social-democracy and social-chauvinism.

Contrast the RCP stand with the MIM analysis back in its August 1993 issue:

“MIM opposes the effort to 'save' American jobs. Those labor aristocracy jobs are what separates American workers from the cause of the proletariat everywhere. Rather than taking the piecemeal approach to fighting capitalism by opposing various trade agreements such as NAFTA, MIM calls on all anti-imperialists to build public opinion for revolution instead.”

The RCP should look a little more seriously at what it said toward the end of its article, when it most sounded like MIM, if only for rhetorical purposes, for the purposes of fooling the most oppressed workers in order to use them for labor aristocracy purposes. If there are indeed even substantial “sections” of Euro-American workers using the NAFTA treaty, a treaty to change bourgeois relations, to make a point, then what was the principal responsibility of the RCP vis-a-vis the international proletariat?

What was the peculiar aspect of American workers' situation in comparison with say, the Mexican workers' situation? The RCP concluded that its responsibility was to side with those chauvinist workers by taking a stand on a strictly intra-bourgeois struggle in America.

Notes:

1. Order the “RCP Study Pack” from MIM by sending a \$15 check made out to “MIM Distributors” to P.O. Box 3576, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-3576.
2. “The North American Bloodsuckers Trade Agreement,” *Revolutionary Worker* 11/28/93, p. 3.
3. V. I. Lenin, “Imperialism and the Split in Socialism,” in John Riddell, ed., *Lenin's Struggle for a Revolutionary International*, Monad Press: New York, 1984, p. 500.

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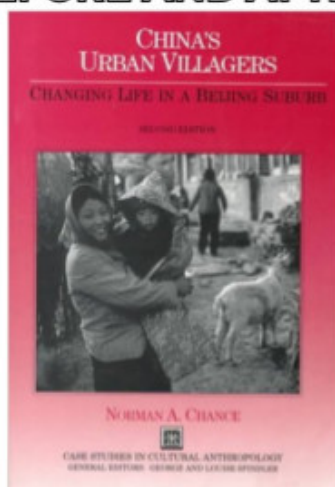
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