



THE **CRUISADER**

NEWSLETTER

NO.1

JUNE-JULY 2025

**The Comintern Resolutions
on Black Nationhood:
A Century On**

**Revolution in Brazil,
Revolution Here**

A History of Juneteenth



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Editorial

Reintroducing The Crusader

"... You're living at a time of extremism, a time of revolution, a time when there's got to be a change. People in power have misused it, and now there has to be a change and a better world has to be built, and the only way it's going to be built is with extreme methods. And I, for one, will join in with anyone — I don't care what color you are — as long as you want to change this miserable condition that exists on this Earth." — Malcolm X, 1964

The Crusader was founded on February 21st, 2024. February 21st is a day of special significance to our movement: it is both the birth date of the Black Communist Claudia Jones and the date of the assassination of Malcolm X. We stand as a part of a glorious tradition laid down by them and many, many more, those who gave their lives and effort for a simple cause: freedom.

Our nation's history was a history of oppression: from the slave ships, where our ancestors were taken from our native Africa to the cotton plantation fields watered with blood and tears, to the inner city plagued by suffocating poverty, violence, and incarceration, the continued genocide that has been ongoing for 400 years. Our nation's history was a history of struggle: from the war cry in the first European colony of what would become of the United States, to the prophetic visions of Nat Turner, to the millions of Black workers and peasants organized by Communists and revolutionary nationalists, often with guns in hand. Our history is the history of this country that we built up, our people, who deserve so much more, and who have always failed in their pursuit of freedom and justice, have never bent down their knees for even a second.

Today, with the sharpening of all contradictions of US imperialism, and as it unleashes yet a new way of offensive against the proletariat and oppressed nations, we again find ourselves in a critical juncture; in the midst of a powder keg of exploitation, police brutality, and a torrent of revolutionary anger against this bloodthirsty system and all its manifestations that is growing daily. With every wave of mass uprising,

our masses' rebellious energy continues to grow and multiply.

Despite the guidance of past revolutionaries and the continuous struggle rooted in the determined spirit of the Black nation, we lack a strong class conscious and combative mass movement that can mobilize, organize and politicize our people to break from the "American nightmare" and fight for liberation. It is up to us, the revolutionaries-in-information, to answer the pressing demand of our nation by channeling our wrath into a militant mass movement. This movement can only be one that mobilizes millions of Black workers to answer our daily demands and connect them to the seizure of power; a movement that gathers and reorganizes the current efforts, separated from the mainstream of our nation, which is dispersed and in disarray under State attack and lacking a proletarian ideology. With Marxism-Leninism-Maoism at its helm, the movement must carefully analyze both successes and failures of the past, stand in the present of our daily struggle, and raise its gaze onto the future of liberation.

The Crusader has founded itself on two historical processes and perspectives: 1) socialist revolution, 2) Black national liberation. Most publications view things from one or the other, often relegating one to an afterthought. We, however, understand those two historical processes and perspectives to be two parts of one whole. We firmly stand by the line that the national question, and particularly the Black national question, is essential and indispensable to the socialist revolution. At the same time, it is the socialist revolution led by the multinational proletariat that will overthrow imperialism once and for all and serves as the cause we agitate towards.

It is with this perspective that we seek to relaunch *The Crusader* as a tool for the propagation, dissemination, and debate of revolutionary thought and practice in the service of the Black nation and especially the Black proletariat. It has been one year since our publication first launched. We have made some baby steps in our effort, publishing some articles

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on the national and international situation, and gathering a small crowd of readers and contributors. However, we have by no means been a “tribune of the people,” nor a worthy successor of the work started by the African Blood Brotherhood or the great Robert F. Williams. Our work was plagued by amateurishness, liberalism, and subjectivism. We have been isolated from the rest of the revolutionary movement and have by no means reached the broadest and most profound masses of our nation. These are the things we must ruthlessly and earnestly self-criticize for. But we can’t stop at self-criticism: we must use this as an opportunity for rectification, remolding, and positive change. On the road to revolution, let us dispense with all narrow and subjective criteria, unite with the broadest number of friends and comrades for the desire of struggling forward together.

Today, after months of patient work, we sincerely hope this relaunch will be the first step towards our genuine transformation, just like how Brother Malcolm transformed his life as an individual. Let us raise the question we originally asked in our Founding Statement last year: “Why *The Crusader*? Why now?” We answer in our youthful but unafraid voices: with this, we hope that with our meager effort, our firm faith can blossom into an actual revolutionary news service; one that is grounded in class struggle, plays a moderate role in the regrouping, unity, and development of the Black revolutionary movement; and, last but not least, as a worthy servant for the Black nation, the multinational proletariat, and all oppressed people of the world.

This issue of *The Crusader* is the first step of this reorientation. In this issue you will read:

- *Reintroducing The Crusader*
- *The Comintern Resolutions on Black Nationhood: A Century On*
- *The 1928 And 1930 Comintern Resolutions on The Black National Question in the United States*
- *Revolution in Brazil, Revolution Here*
- *A History of Juneteenth*
- *June 19th 2025: On the Day of Heroism*
- *On the Passing of Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o*
- *Black Bandits by Castro Alves*
- *Interview with Ghais Guevara*
- *An Artist of the People from A Nova Democracia*
- *I am Black by Solano Trindade, and*
- *A reader submission: Identity and Black Nation*

Submit your work to The Crusader!

We at The Crusader seek to turn our publication into a true “Tribune of the People,” as a trench for the debate, struggle, and circulation of progressive and revolutionary ideas.

As such, we are setting up a new column titled “Reader Submissions”: if there were anything you would like to share on the pages of The Crusader, whether it is an opinion piece, art, literature, or critique – feel free to write to us!

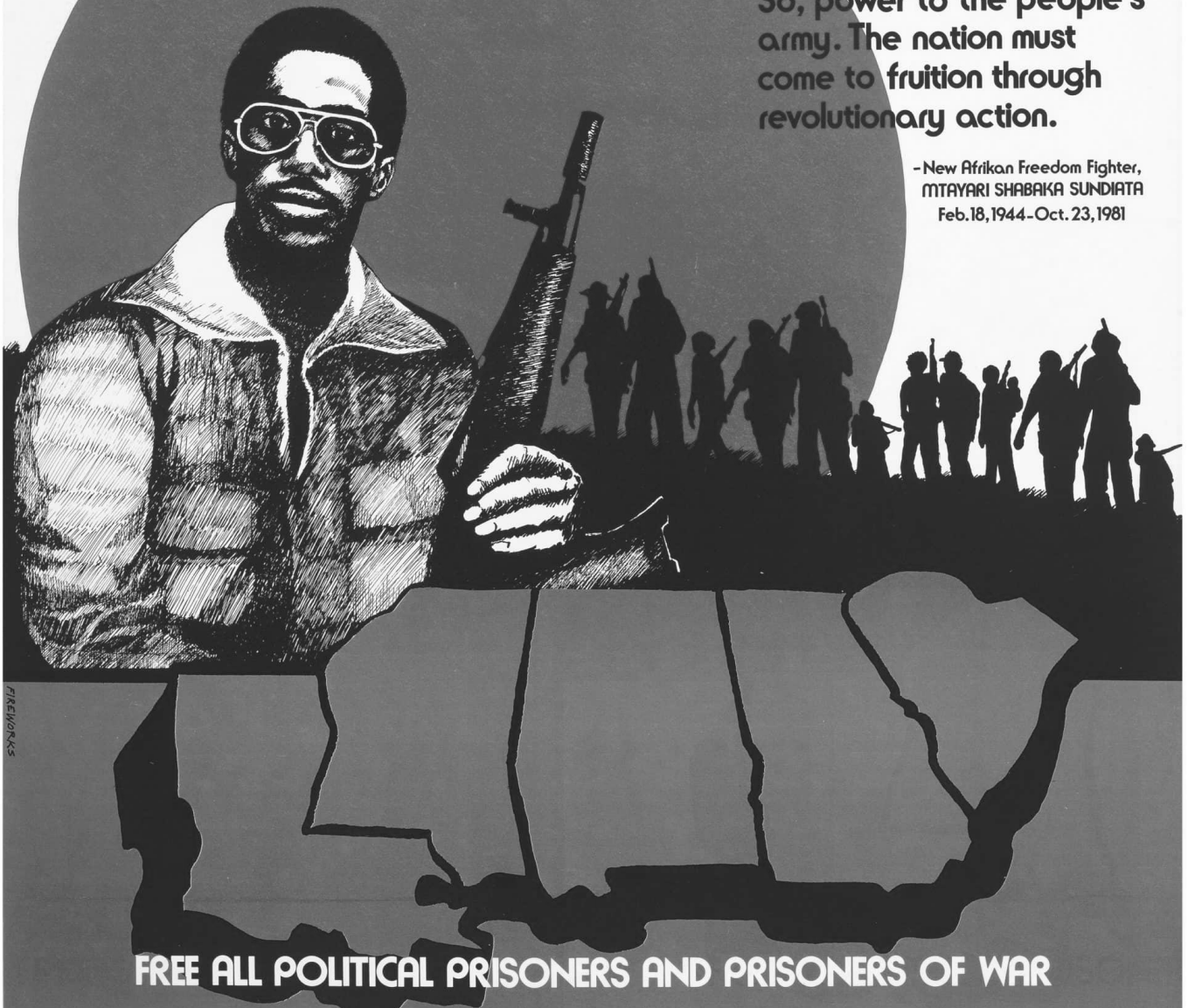
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SUPPORT THE BLACK LIBERATION ARMY & ALL NEW AFRIKAN FREEDOM FIGHTERS

Every nation has an army.
So, power to the people's
army. The nation must
come to fruition through
revolutionary action.

-New Afrikan Freedom Fighter,
MTAYARI SHABAKA SUNDIATA
Feb. 18, 1944 - Oct. 23, 1981



FIREWORKS

FREE ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS AND PRISONERS OF WAR
LAND AND INDEPENDENCE FOR THE BLACK NATION
THE REPUBLIC OF NEW AFRIKA



The Comintern Resolutions on Black

Today, just like in the 1920s, the US revolutionary movement grapples with the important question: what is the status of Black people in the United States, and what tasks are revolutionaries facing?

Some, like the modern revisionist CPUSA, argue that the Black nation either has never existed or has dissolved, due to one reason or another; that the only thing left to do is simply fight “racism” with no other fundamental tasks relating to the defense and development of Black national culture or economy, denying their right to self-determination. Others, influenced by a particular understanding of Pan-Africanism, abandon the Marxist definition of nation, and instead argue for a singular nation in both Africa and the African diasporas, subjecting revolutionary work among Black people under the banner of African revolution.

Amilcar Cabral, leader of the Bissau Guinean revolution, once famously said, “tell no lies. Expose lies whenever they are told. Mask no difficulties, mistakes, failures. Claim no easy victories.” The discussion on the Black national question is not an empty intellectual pursuit. Instead, it must be situated in the concrete conditions of the present, without telling lies and claiming easy victories. While there undeniably exists, admirable work done here or there, in this sector or that area, neither of these approaches have been able to forge a united, class-conscious, and stable movement with a mass character among Black people in the United States for the past few decades.

Meanwhile, the militancy, explosivity and anger of the Black masses in the US has swept across the country in waves of popular uprisings, each wave larger and

more intense than the last. From the 1992 LA uprisings to the George Floyd uprisings, the Black masses’ spirit and experience has continued to grow exponentially in the soil of national oppression and exploitation. Despite this, what we continue to witness is the continuous isolation of the revolutionary movement from the broad masses of Black workers, as it fails to truly address their concrete demands with the right to self-determination at its center.

Without revolutionary theory, there cannot be a revolutionary movement. For too long, revolutionaries in this country have faced a general philosophical poverty alongside their poverty in revolutionary practice, leading to vicious cycles of subjectivism and revisionism and reducing concrete life-and-death questions to a matter of empty debate. The history of the Black nation and its struggle for freedom must be seen as a part of the history of the international proletariat and all oppressed nations in the world. To paraphrase Cabral, we must “return to the source;” back to what was produced by the height of revolutionary struggle both internationally and at home, without neglecting either. Especially, we must see ourselves as a part of the same historical process of the World Proletarian Revolution, which had its height in the universal contributions of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, Mao, and Gonzalo.

With that being said, the importance to revisit and study the 1928 and 1930 Resolutions on the Negro Question by the Communist International cannot be understated. These resolutions did not come from a place of empty intellectual debate but were produced by the most advanced social practice to shape the world at the time: those who were building the first socialist

Nationhood: A Century On

State in human history, alongside revolutionaries who led mass anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist struggles in both old Europe and Third World countries. Similarly, it was in light of these resolutions and under the guidance of the Comintern that the Communist Party reached its highest peak, organizing millions of Black sharecroppers, proletarians, semi-proletarians and urban poor in a militant, class-conscious movement able to challenge US imperialism.

What is self-determination? Lenin famously explained: **“The right of nations to self-determination means only the right to independence in a political sense, the right to free, political secession from the oppressing nation. Concretely, this political, democratic demand implies complete freedom to carry on agitation in favour of secession, and freedom to settle the question of secession by means of a referendum of the nation that desires to secede.”** To say that the Black nation has a right to self-determination implies something very clear-cut and simple: the Black nation, as an oppressed nation, has the right to secede its national territory: in the Black Belt of Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, and South Carolina. Without this right, to speak of any form of liberation from national oppression is useless, and there can never be trust and unity between the workers of the oppressed nation and the oppressor nation. The right of self-determination is a democratic demand: it is a demand that concerns the entire nation. At the same time, it is part of the socialist revolution: it must be a struggle led by the Black working class, as the Black nation finds itself a part of the capitalist relation of production with the working class being the

overwhelming majority. Like Lenin taught, the socialist revolution is not a single action or a single fight; it is an entire historical period of class conflict that resolves democratic as well as socialist questions of the masses through expropriation of the bourgeoisie.

The right to self-determination is fundamentally different from the slogan of “racial equality” or other slogans proposed today by a variety of groups. The problems facing Black people today are not simply rooted in racist attitudes a few institutions and cannot be solved by combating white chauvinism. The problem must be seen from the perspective of national oppression: as the problem of a captive nation subjugated by America. Fundamentally, those who talk about the struggle for equality forget that a nation that oppresses another nation can never achieve liberation. It is on this basis that we, following the example of the Comintern, reject “integrationism”: we do not call for the simple merging of the struggle of Black and white workers. On the contrary, the true unity of the multinational proletariat can only be achieved by addressing the national question and standing for the right to self-determination.

To summarize, these two documents highlighted three basic principles central to the struggle for Black liberation:

- 1) Black people in the United States constitute a nation, having a national territory and the right of self-determination up to secession;**
- 2) The resolution of the national question, and**

especially of the Black national question, is central to the question of socialist revolution in the United States; and

3) The Black national question has as its center its proletariat which forms the majority of the nation.

Nearly a century after these resolutions, the Black nation has witnessed a tremendous change in its situation. fundamentally, however, the existence of a Black nation and its status as a captive, oppressed nation has remained unchanged. The basic feature of US imperialism, the highest stage of capitalism, has remained unchanged, and the validity of these Marxist principles remain ever valid as before. Despite waves of migration, the Black nation continues to constitute a majority or a plurality in its national territory (depending on how the national territory is defined). Especially, the Black nation continues to maintain its economic cohesion and interconnection, even after the extinction of the semi-feudal system of sharecropping, a phenomenon already beginning to rise/appear during the 1920s and 30s and was succinctly addressed by the resolutions. The political, economic and cultural development of the Black nation continues to be dominated by US imperialism, as the Black workers are doubly oppressed, both as a part of the oppressed nation and as a part of the working class.

In 1951, W.E.B. Du Bois, along with numerous other prominent Black leaders, Communists and revolutionaries presented a paper titled *We Charge Genocide* to the United Nations meeting in Paris. It detailed the four centuries of crimes and oppression endured by Black people in the United States and concluded that there was an ongoing genocide against Black people by the US government. 26 years later, Black revolutionary Atiba Shanna (pen name of James Yaki Sayles), himself a prisoner, wrote another paper titled *We Still Charge Genocide*. He cited the worsening economic exploitation, drug use in Black communities as a weapon of the State, lack of quality living and health conditions, and the disproportional rate of incarceration and police violence.

Still, 48 years later, after a Black president, numerous Black officials in every level of the government, and the emergence of the NGO industrial complex, Black people comprise 37% of the prison

population and 22% of the police killing victims; earn \$28,000 less than the national median income and are expected to live 4.7 years less than white Americans. Black neighborhoods continue to be plagued with State-sanctioned crimes, drug use, and incarceration, as Black workers continue to face systematic obstacles to getting good jobs. Today, we still charge genocide, as this country, built on the labor and blood of the Black nation, continues to exist as the foremost enemy of the people of the world. It can only end through a socialist revolution with the National Question as its center – and this, today, is the importance of revisiting the Comintern resolutions, at the service of rebuilding a militant, class-conscious, and nationalist movement guided by Marxism-Leninism-Maoism.

The 1928 And 1930 Comintern Resolutions on The Black National Question in the United States

THE 1928 COMINTERN RESOLUTION ON THE NEGRO QUESTION IN THE UNITED STATES.

1. The industrialization of the South, the concentration of a new Negro working class population in the big cities of the East and North, and the entrance of the Negroes into the basic industries on a mass scale, create the possibility for the Negro workers, under the leadership of the Communist Party, to assume the hegemony of all Negro liberation movements, and to increase their importance and role in the revolutionary struggle of the American proletariat.

The Negro working class has reached a stage of development which enables it, if properly organized and well led, to fulfill successfully its double historical mission:

(a) To play a considerable role in the class struggle against American imperialism as an important part of the American working class; and

(b) To lead the movement of the oppressed masses of the Negro population.

2. The bulk of the Negro population (86%) live in the Southern states; of this number, 74 per cent live in the rural districts and are dependent almost exclusively upon agriculture for a livelihood. Approximately one-half of these rural dwellers live in the so-called "Black Belt," in which area they constitute more than 50 per cent of the entire population. The great mass of the Negro agrarian population is subject to the most ruthless exploitation and persecution of a semi-slave character. In addition to the ordinary forms of capitalist exploitation, American imperialism utilizes every possible form of slave exploitation (peonage, sharecropping, landlord supervision of crops and marketing, etc.) for the purpose of extracting super-profits. On the basis of these slave remnants, there has grown up a super-structure of social and political

inequality that expresses itself in lynching, segregation, Jim Crowism, etc.

Necessary Conditions for National Revolutionary Movement.

3. The various forms of oppression of the Negro masses, who are concentrated mainly in the so-called "Black Belt," provide the necessary conditions for a national revolutionary movement among the Negroes. The Negro agricultural laborers and the tenant farmers feel most the pressure of white persecution and exploitation. Thus, the agrarian problem lies at the root of the Negro national movement. The great majority of Negroes in the rural districts of the South are not "reserves of capitalist reaction," but potential allies of the revolutionary proletariat. Their objective position facilitates their transformation into a revolutionary force, which, under the leadership of the proletariat, will be able to participate in the joint struggle with all other workers against capitalist exploitation.

4. It is the duty of the Negro workers to organize through the mobilization of the broad masses of the Negro population the struggle of the agricultural laborers and tenant farmers against all forms of semi-feudal oppression. On the other hand, it is the duty of the Communist Party of the U.S.A. to mobilize and rally the broad masses of the white workers for active participation in this struggle. For that reason the Party must consider the beginning of systematic work in the South as one of its main tasks, having regard for the fact that the bringing together of the workers and toiling masses of all nationalities for a joint struggle against the landowners and the bourgeoisie is one of the most important aims of the Communist International, as laid down in the resolutions on the national and colonial question of the Second and Sixth Congresses of the Comintern.

For Complete Emancipation of Oppressed Negro Race.

5. To accomplish this task, the Communist Party must come out as the champion of the right of the oppressed Negro race for full emancipation. While

continuing and intensifying the struggle under the slogan of full social and political equality for the Negroes, which must remain the central slogan of our Party for work among the masses, the Party must come out openly and unreservedly for the right of the Negroes to national self-determination in the Southern states, where the Negroes form a majority of the population. The struggle for equal rights and the propaganda for the slogan of self-determination must be linked up with the economic demands of the Negro masses, especially those directed against the slave remnants and all forms of national and racial oppression. Special stress must be laid upon organizing active resistance against lynching, Jim Crowism, segregation and all other forms of oppression of the Negro population.

6. All work among the Negroes, as well as the struggle for the Negro cause among the whites, must be used, based upon the changes which have taken place in the relationship of classes among the Negro population. The existence of a Negro industrial proletariat of almost two million workers makes it imperative that the main emphasis should be placed on these new proletarian forces. The Negro workers must be organized under the leadership of the Communist Party and thrown into joint struggle together with the white workers. The Party must learn to combine all demands of the Negroes with the economic and political struggle of the workers and the poor farmers.

American Negro Question Part of World Problem.

7. The Negro question in the United States must be treated in its relation to the Negro questions and struggles in other parts of the world. The Negro race everywhere is an oppressed race. Whether it is a minority (U.S.A., etc.), majority (South Africa) or inhabits a so-called independent state (Liberia, etc.), the Negroes are oppressed by imperialism. Thus, a common tie of interest is established for the revolutionary struggle of race and national liberation from imperialist domination of the Negroes in various parts of the world. A strong Negro revolutionary movement in the U.S.A. will be able to influence and direct the revolutionary movement in all those parts of the world where the Negroes are oppressed by imperialism.

8. The proletarianization of the Negro masses makes the trade unions the principal form of mass organization. It is the primary task of the Party to play an active part and lead in the work of organizing the

Negro workers and agricultural laborers in trade unions. Owing to the refusal of the majority of the white unions in the U.S.A., led by the reactionary leaders, to admit Negroes to membership, steps must be immediately taken to set up special unions for those Negro workers who are not allowed to join the white unions. At the same time, however, the struggles for the inclusion of Negro workers in the existing unions must be intensified and concentrated upon. Special attention must be given to those unions in which the statutes and rules set up special limitations against the admission of Negro workers. The primary duty of Communist Party in this connection is to wage a merciless struggle against the A. F. of L. bureaucracy, which prevents the Negro workers from joining the white workers' unions. The organization of special trade unions for the Negro masses must be carried out as part and parcel of the struggle against the restrictions imposed upon the Negro workers and for their admission to the white workers' unions. The creation of separate Negro unions should in no way weaken the struggle in the old unions for the admission of Negroes on equal terms. Every effort must be made to see that all the new unions organized by the Left wing and by the Communist Party should embrace the workers of all nationalities and of all races. The principle of one union for all workers in each industry, white and Black, should cease to be a mere slogan of propaganda, and must become a slogan of action.

Party Trade Union Work Among Negroes.

9. While organizing the Negroes into unions and conducting an aggressive struggle against the anti-Negro trade union policy of the A. F. of L., the Party must pay more attention than it has hitherto done to the work in the Negro workers' organizations, such as the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, Chicago Asphalt Workers' Union, and so on. The existence of two million Negro workers and the further industrialization of the Negroes demands a radical change in the work of the Party among the Negroes. The creation of working-class organizations and the extension of our influence in the existing working class Negro organizations are of much greater importance than the work in bourgeois and petty-bourgeois organizations, such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Pan-African Congress, etc.

10. The American Negro Labor Congress continues to exist only nominally. Every effort should be made to strengthen this organization as a medium through

which we can extend the work of the Party among the Negro masses and mobilize the Negro workers under our leadership. After careful preparatory work, which must be started at once, another convention of the American Negro Labor Congress should be held. A concrete plan must also be presented to the Congress for an intensified struggle for the economic, social, political and national demands of the Negro masses. The program of the American Negro Labor Congress must deal specially with the agrarian demands of the Negro farmers and tenants in the south.

11. The importance of trade union work imposes special tasks upon the Trade Union Educational League, The T.U.E.L. has completely neglected the work among the Negro workers, notwithstanding the fact that these workers are objectively in a position to play a very great part in carrying through the program of organizing the unorganized. The closest contact must be established between the T.U.E.L. and the Negro masses. The T.U.E.L. must become the champion in the struggle for the rights of the Negroes in the old unions, and in the organizing of new unions for both Negroes and whites, as well as separate Negro unions.

White Chauvinism Evidenced in the American Party.

The C.E.C. of the American Communist Party itself stated in its resolution of April 30, 1928, that "the Party as a whole has not sufficiently realized the significance of work among the Negroes." Such an attitude toward the Party work among the Negroes is, however, not satisfactory. The time is ripe to begin within the Party a courageous campaign of self-criticism concerning the work among the Negroes. Penetrating self-criticism is the necessary preliminary condition for directing the Negro work along new lines.

13. The Party must bear in mind that white chauvinism, which is the expression of the ideological influence of American imperialism among the workers, not only prevails among different strata of the white workers in the U.S.A., but is even reflected in various forms in the Party itself. White chauvinism has manifested itself even in open antagonism of some comrades to the Negro comrades. In some instances where Communists were called upon to champion and to lead in the most vigorous manner the fight against white chauvinism, they instead yielded to it. In Gary, white members of the Workers Party protested against Negroes eating in the restaurant controlled by the Party. In Detroit, Party members, yielding to pressure,

drove out Negro comrades from a social given in aid of the miners on strike.

Whilst the Party has taken certain measures against these manifestations of white chauvinism, nevertheless those manifestations must be regarded as indications of race prejudice even in the ranks of the Party, which must be fought with the utmost energy.

14. An aggressive fight against all forms of white chauvinism must be accompanied by a widespread and thorough educational campaign in the spirit of internationalism within the Party, utilizing for this purpose to the fullest possible extent the Party schools, the Party press and the public platform, to stamp out all forms of antagonism, or even indifference among our white comrades toward the Negro work. This educational work should be conducted simultaneously with a campaign to draw the white workers and the poor farmers into the struggle for the support of the demands of the Negro workers.

Tasks of Party in Relation to Negro Work.

15. The Communist Party of the U.S.A., in its treatment of the Negro question, must all the time bear in mind this twofold task:

(a) To fight for the full rights of the oppressed Negroes and for their right to self-determination and against all forms of chauvinism, especially among the workers of the oppressing nationality.

(b) The propaganda and the day-to-day practice of international class solidarity must be considered as one of the basic tasks of the American Communist Party. The fight -- by propaganda and by deeds -- should be directed first and foremost against the chauvinism of the workers of the oppressing nationality as well as against bourgeois segregation tendencies of the oppressed nationality. The propaganda of international class solidarity is the necessary prerequisite for the unity of the working class in the struggle.

"The center of gravity in educating the workers of the oppressing countries in the principles of internationalism must inevitably consist in the propaganda and defense by these workers of the right of segregation by the oppressed countries. We have the right and duty to treat every socialist of an oppressing nation, who does not conduct such propaganda, as an imperialist and as a scoundrel." (Lenin, selected articles on the national question.)

16. The Party must seriously take up the task of training a cadre of Negro comrades as leaders, bring them into the Party schools in the U.S.A. and abroad,

and make every effort to draw Negro proletarians into active and leading work in the Party, not confining the activities of the Negro comrades exclusively to the work among Negroes. Simultaneously, white workers must specially be trained for work among the Negroes.

17. Efforts must be made to transform the "Negro Champion" into a weekly mass organ of the Negro proletariat and tenant farmers. Every encouragement and inducement must be given to the Negro comrades to utilize the Party press generally.

Negro Work Part of General Work of Party.

18. The Party must link up the struggle on behalf of the Negroes with the general campaigns of the Party. The Negro problem must be part and parcel of all, and every campaign conducted by the Party. In the election campaigns, trade union work, the campaigns for the organization of the unorganized, anti-imperialist work, labor party campaign, International Labor Defense, etc.,[] the Central Executive Committee must work out plans designed to draw the Negroes into active participation in all these campaigns, and at the same time to bring the white workers into the struggle on behalf of the Negroes' demands. It must be borne in mind that the Negro masses will not be won for the revolutionary struggles until such time as the most conscious section of the white workers show, by action, that they are fighting with the Negroes against all racial discrimination and persecution. Every member of the Party must bear in mind that "the age-long oppression of the colonial and weak nationalities by the imperialist powers has given rise to a feeling of bitterness among the masses of the enslaved countries as well as a feeling of distrust toward the oppressing nations, in general, and toward the proletariat of those nations." (See resolution on Colonial and National Question of Second Congress.)

19. The Negro women in industry and on the farms constitute a powerful potential force in the struggle for Negro emancipation. By reason of being unorganized to an even greater extent than male Negro workers, they are the most exploited section. The A. F. of L. bureaucracy naturally exercises toward them a double hostility, by reason of both their color and sex. It therefore becomes an important task of the Party to bring the Negro women into the economic and political struggle.

20. Only by an active and strenuous fight on the part of the white workers against all forms of oppression directed against the Negroes will the Party

be able to draw into its ranks the most active and conscious Negro workers -- men and women -- and to increase its influence in those intermediary organizations which are necessary for the mobilization of the Negro masses in the struggle against segregation, lynching, Jim Crowism, etc.

21. In the present struggle in the mining industry, the Negro workers participate actively and in large numbers. The leading role the Party played in this struggle has helped greatly to increase its prestige. Nevertheless, the special efforts being made by the Party in the work among the Negro strikers cannot be considered as adequate. The Party did not send enough Negro organizers into the coalfields, and it did not sufficiently attempt, in the first stages of the fight, to develop the most able Negro strikers and to place them in leading positions. The Party must be especially criticized for its failure to put Negro workers on the Presidium of the Pittsburgh Miners' Conference, doing so only after such representation was demanded by the Negroes themselves.

22. In the work among the Negroes, special attention should be paid to the role played by the churches and preachers who are acting on behalf of American imperialism. The Party must conduct a continuous and carefully worked out campaign among the Negro masses, sharpened primarily against the preachers and the churchmen, who are the agents of the oppressors of the Negro race.

Party Work Among Negro Proletariat and Peasantry.

23. The Party must apply united front tactics for specific demands to the existing Negro petty bourgeois organizations. The purpose of these united front tactics should be the mobilizing of the Negro masses under the leadership of the Party, and to expose the treacherous petty bourgeois leadership of those organizations.

24. The Negro Miners Relief Committee and the Harlem Tenants League are examples of joint organizations of action which may serve as a means of drawing the Negro masses into struggle. In every case the utmost effort must be made to combine the struggle of the Negro workers with the struggle of the white workers, and to draw the white workers' organizations into such joint campaigns.

25. In order to reach the bulk of the Negro masses, special attention should be paid to the work among the Negroes in the South. For that purpose, the Party should establish a district organization in the most suitable locality in the South. Whilst continuing trade

union work among the Negro workers and the agricultural laborers, special organizations of tenant farmers must be set up. Special efforts must also be made to secure the support of the sharecroppers in the creation of such organizations. The Party must undertake the task of working out a definite program of immediate demands, directed against all slave remnants, which will serve as the rallying slogans for the formation of such peasant organizations.

Henceforth the Workers (Communist) Party must consider the struggle on behalf of the Negro masses, the task of organizing the Negro workers and peasants, and the drawing of these oppressed masses into the proletarian revolutionary struggle as one of its major tasks, remembering, in the words of the Second Congress resolution, that "the victory over capitalism cannot be fully achieved and carried to its ultimate goal unless the proletariat and the toiling masses of all nations of the world rally of their own accord in a concordant and close union. (Political Secretariat, Communist International, Moscow, U.S.S.R., Oct. 26, 1928.)

THE 1930 COMINTERN RESOLUTION ON THE NEGRO QUESTION IN THE UNITED STATES

The C.P. of the United States has always acted openly and energetically against negro oppression and has thereby won increasing sympathy among the Negro population. In its own ranks, too, the Party has relentlessly fought the slightest evidences of white chauvinism and has purged itself of the gross opportunism of the Lovestoneites. According to the assertions of these people, the "industrial revolution" will sweep away the remnants of slavery in the agricultural South, and will proletarianize the Negro peasantry, so that the Negro question, as a special national question, would thereby be presumably solved; or could be put off until the time of the socialist revolution in America. But the Party has not yet succeeded in overcoming in its own ranks all underestimation of the struggle for the slogan of the right of self-determination, and still less succeeded in doing away with all *lack of clarity* on the Negro question. In the Party discussion, the question was often wrongly

put and much erroneous counterpoising of phases of the question occurred; thus, for instance, should the slogan of social equality or the slogan of the right of self-determination of the Negroes be emphasized? Should only propaganda for the Negroes' right to self-determination be carried on, or should this slogan be considered as a slogan of action? Should separatist tendencies among the Negroes be supported or opposed? Is the Southern region, thickly populated by Negroes, to be looked upon as a colony, or as an "integral part of the national economy of the United States," where presumably a revolutionary situation cannot arise independent of the general revolutionary development in the United States?

In the interest of the utmost clarity of ideas on this question, the Negro question in the United States must be viewed from the standpoint of its peculiarity, namely as the question of an *oppressed nation*, which is in a peculiar and extraordinarily distressing situation of national oppression, not only in view of the prominent *racial distinctions* (marked difference in the color of skin, etc.), but above all because of considerable *social antagonism* (remnants of slavery). This introduces into the American Negro question an important, *peculiar* trait which is absent from the national question of other oppressed peoples. Furthermore, it is necessary to face clearly the inevitable distinction between the position of the Negro in the *South* and in the *North*, owing to the fact that at least three-fourths of the entire Negro population of the United States (12 million) live in compact masses in the South; most of them being peasants and agricultural laborers in a state of semi-serfdom, settled in the "Black Belt" and constituting the majority of the population, whereas the Negroes in the Northern States are for the most part industrial workers of the lowest categories who have recently come to the various industrial centers from the South (having often even fled from there).

The struggle of the Communists for the equal rights of the Negroes applies to all Negroes, in the North as well as in the South. The struggle for this slogan embraces all, or almost all of the important special interests of the Negroes in the North, but not in the South, where the main Communist slogan must be: *The right of self-determination of the Negroes in the Black Belt*. These two slogans, however, are most closely connected. The Negroes in the North are very much interested in winning the right of self-determination for the Negro population of the Black Belt and can thereby

hope for strong support for the establishment of true equality of the Negroes in the North. In the South the Negroes are suffering no less but still more than in the North from the glaring lack of all equality; for the most part, the struggle for their most urgent partial demands in the Black Belt is nothing more than the struggle for their equal rights, and only the fulfilment of their main slogan, the right of self-determination in the Black Belt, can assure them of true equality.

I. The Struggle for the Equal Rights of the Negroes.

2. The basis for the demand of equality of the Negroes is provided by the special yoke to which the Negroes in the United States are subjected by the ruling classes. In comparison with the situation of the other various nationalities and races oppressed by American imperialism, the yoke of the Negroes in the United States is of a peculiar nature and particularly oppressive. This is partly due to the historical past of the American Negroes as imported slaves, but is much more due to the still existing slavery of the American Negro which is immediately apparent, for example, in comparing their situation even with the situation of the Chinese and Japanese workers in the West of the United States, or with the lot of the Filipinos who are under colonial repression.

It is only a Yankee bourgeois lie to say that the yoke of Negro slavery has been lifted in the United States. Formally, it has been abolished; but in practice, the great majority of the Negro masses in the South are living in slavery in the literal sense of the word. Formally, they are "free" as "tenant farmers" or "contract laborers" on the big plantations of the white landowners, but actually, they are completely in the power of their exploiters. They are not permitted, or else it is made impossible for them to leave their exploiters; if they do leave the plantations, they are brought back and, in many cases, whipped. Many of them are simply taken prisoner under various pretexts, and bound together with long chains, they have to do compulsory labor on the roads. All through the South, the Negroes are not only deprived of all rights and subjected to the arbitrary will of the white exploiters, but they are also socially ostracized; that is, they are treated in general not as human beings, but as cattle. But this ostracism regarding Negroes is not limited to the South. Not only in the South, but throughout the United States, the lynching of Negroes is permitted to go unpunished. Everywhere, the American bourgeoisie

surrounds the Negroes with an atmosphere of social ostracism.

The 100 per cent Yankee arrogance divides the American population into a series of castes, among which the Negroes constitute, so to speak, the caste of the "untouchables," who are in a still lower category than the lowest categories of human society, the immigrant laborers, the yellow immigrants and the Indians. In all big cities the Negroes have to live in special segregated ghettos (and, of course, have to pay extremely high rent). In practice, marriage between Negroes and whites is prohibited, and in the South, this is even forbidden by law. In various other ways, the Negroes are segregated, and if they overstep the bounds of the segregation, they immediately run the risk of being ill-treated by the 100 percent bandits. As wage-earners, the Negroes are forced to perform the lowest and most difficult work; they generally receive lower wages than the white workers and don't always get the same wages as white workers doing similar work; and their treatment is the very worst. Many A. F. of L. trade unions do not admit Negro workers in their ranks, and a number have organized special trade unions for Negroes so that they will not have to let them into their "good white society."

This whole system of "segregation" and "Jim Crowism" is a special form of national and social oppression under which the American Negroes have much to suffer. The origin of all this is not difficult to find: this Yankee arrogance towards the Negroes stinks of the disgusting atmosphere of the old slave market. This is downright robbery and slave-whipping barbarism at the peak of capitalist "culture."

3. The demand for equal rights in our sense of the word means not only demanding the same rights for the Negroes as the whites have in the United States at the present time but also demanding that the Negroes should be granted all rights and other advantages which we demand for the corresponding oppressed classes of whites (workers and other toilers). Thus, in our sense of the word, the demand for equal rights means a continuous work of abolishment of all forms of economic and political oppression of the Negroes; as well as their social exclusion, the insults perpetrated against them and their segregation. This is to be obtained by constant struggle by the white and Black workers for effective legal protection for the Negroes in all fields, as well as actual enforcement of their equality and combating of every expression of Negrophobia.

One of the first Communist slogans is: Death for Negro lynching!

The struggle for the equal rights of the Negroes does not in any way exclude recognition and support for the Negroes' rights to their own special schools, government organs, etc., wherever the Negro masses put forward such national demands of their own accord. This will, however, in all probability occur to any great extent only in the Black Belt. In other parts of the country, the Negroes suffer above all from being shut out from the general social institutions and not from being prohibited to set up their own national institutions. With the development of the Negro intellectuals (principally in the "free" professions) and of a thin layer of small capitalist businesspeople, there have appeared lately, not only definite efforts for developing a purely national Negro culture but also outspoken bourgeois tendencies towards Negro nationalism. The broad masses of the Negro population in the big industrial centers of the North are, however, making no efforts whatsoever to maintain and cultivate a national aloofness; they are, on the contrary, working for assimilation. This effort of the Negro masses can do much in the future to facilitate the progressive process of amalgamating the whites and Negroes into one nation, and it is under no circumstances the task of the Communists to give support to bourgeois nationalism in its fight with the progressive assimilation tendencies of the Negro working masses.

4. The slogan of equal rights of the Negroes *without a relentless struggle in practice against all manifestations of Negrophobia on the part of the American bourgeoisie* can be nothing but a deceptive liberal gesture of a sly slave-owner or his agent. This slogan is in fact repeated by "socialist" and many other bourgeois politicians and philanthropists who want to get publicity for themselves by appealing to the "sense of justice" of the American bourgeoisie in the individual treatment of the Negroes, and thereby side-track attention from the one effective struggle against the shameful system of "white superiority": from the *class struggle against the American bourgeoisie*. The struggle for equal rights for the Negroes is in fact, one of the most important parts of the proletarian class struggle of the United States. The struggle for the equal rights for the Negroes must certainly take the form of common struggle by the white and black workers.

The increasing unity of the various working-class elements provokes constant attempts on the part of the

American bourgeoisie to play one group against another, particularly the white workers against the Black and the Black workers against the immigrant workers and vice versa; and thus, to promote divisions within the working class, which contributes to the bolstering up of American capitalist rule. The Party must carry on a ruthless struggle against all these attempts of the bourgeoisie and do everything to strengthen the bonds of class solidarity of the working-class upon a lasting basis.

In the struggle for equal rights for the Negroes, however, it is the duty of the *white* workers to march at *the head* on this struggle. They must everywhere make a breach in the walls of segregation and "Jim Crowism" which have been set up by bourgeois slave-market morality. They must most ruthlessly unmask and condemn the hypocritical reformists and bourgeois "friends of Negroes" who, in reality, are only interested in strengthening the power of the enemies of the Negroes. They, the white workers, must boldly jump at the throat of the 100 percent bandits who strike a Negro in the face. This struggle will be the test of the real international solidarity of the American white workers. It is the special duty of the revolutionary Negro workers to carry on tireless activity among the Negro working masses to free them of their distrust of the white proletariat and draw them into the common front of the revolutionary class struggle against the bourgeoisie. They must emphasize with all force that the first rule of proletarian morality is that no worker who wants to be an equal member of his class must ever serve as a strike-breaker or a supporter of bourgeois politics. They must ruthlessly unmask all Negro politicians corrupted or directly bribed by American bourgeois ideology, who systematically interfere with the real proletarian struggle for the equal rights for the Negroes.

Furthermore, the Communist Party must resist all tendencies within its own ranks to ignore the Negro question as a national question in the United States, not only in the South, but also in the North. It is advisable for the Communist Party in the North to abstain from the establishment of any special Negro organizations, and in place of this to bring the black and white workers together in common organizations of struggle and joint action. Effective steps must be taken for the organization of Negro workers in the T.U.U.L. and revolutionary trade unions. Under-estimation of this work takes various forms: lack of energy in recruiting

Negro workers, in keeping them in our ranks and in drawing them into the full life of the trade unions, in selecting, educating and promoting Negro forces to leading functions in the organization. The Party must make itself entirely responsible for the carrying through of this very important work. It is most urgently necessary to publish a popular mass paper dealing with the Negro question, edited by white and Black comrades, and to have all active followers of this paper grouped organizationally.

2. The Struggle for the Right of Self-determination of the Negroes in the Black Belt.

5. It is not correct to consider the Negro zone of the South as a colony of the United States. Such a characterization of the Black Belt could be based in some respects only upon artificially construed analogies, and would create superfluous difficulties for the clarification of ideas. In rejecting this estimation, however, it should not be overlooked that it would be nonetheless false to try to make a fundamental distinction between the character of national oppression to which the colonial peoples are subjected, and the yoke of other oppressed nations. Fundamentally, national oppression in both cases is of the same character; and is in the Black Belt, in many respects worse than in a number of actual colonies. On the one hand the Black Belt is not in itself, either economically or politically, such a united whole as to warrant its being called a special colony of the United States, but on the other hand this zone is not, either economically or politically, such an integral part of the whole United States as any other part of the country. Industrialization in the Black Belt is not, as is generally the case in colonies properly speaking, in contradiction with the ruling interests of the imperialist bourgeoisie, which has in its hands the monopoly of the entire industry; but insofar as industry is developed here, it will in no way bring a solution to the question of living conditions of the oppressed Negro majority, or to the agrarian question, which lies at the basis of the national question. On the contrary, this question is still further aggravated as a result of the increase of the contradictions arising from the pre-capitalist forms of exploitation of the Negro peasantry and of a considerable portion of the Negro proletariat (miners, forestry workers, etc.) in the Black Belt, and at the same time owing to the industrial development here, the growth of the most important driving force of the national revolution, the Black working-class, is

especially strengthened. Thus, the prospect for the future is not an inevitable dying away of the national revolutionary Negro movement in the South, as Lovestone prophesied; but, on the contrary, a great advance of this movement and the rapid approach of a revolutionary crisis in the Black Belt.

6. Owing to the peculiar situation in the Black Belt (the fact that the majority of the resident Negro population are farmers and agricultural laborers and that the capitalist economic system as well as political class rule there is not only of a special kind, but to a great extent still has pre-capitalist and semi-colonial features), the right of self-determination of the Negroes as the main slogan of the Communist Party in the Black Belt is appropriate. This, however, does not in any way mean that the struggle for equal rights of the Negroes in the Black Belt is less necessary or less well founded than it is in the North. On the contrary, here, owing to the whole situation, this struggle is even better founded, but the form of this slogan does not sufficiently correspond with the concrete requirements of the liberation struggle of the Negro population. Anyway, it is clear that in most cases it is a question of the daily conflicts of interest between the Negroes and the white rulers in the Black Belt on the subject of infringement of the most elementary equality rights of the Negroes by the whites. Daily events of the kind are: all Negro persecutions, all arbitrary economic acts of robbery by the white exploiters ("Black Man's Burden") and the whole system of so-called "Jim Crowism." Here, however, it is very important in connection with all these concrete cases of conflict to concentrate the attention of the Negro masses not so much to the general demands of mere equality, but much more to some of the revolutionary basic demands arising from the concrete situation.

The slogan of the right of self-determination occupies the central place in the liberation struggle of the Negro population in the Black Belt against the yoke of American imperialism, but this slogan, as we see it, must be carried out only in connection with two other basic demands. Thus, there are three basic demands to be kept in mind in the Black Belt; namely, the following:

(1) *Confiscation of the landed property of the white landowners and capitalists for the benefit of the Negro farmers.* The landed property in the hands of the white American exploiters constitutes the most important material basis of the entire system of national oppression and serfdom of the Negroes in the Black

Belt. More than three-quarters of all Negro farmers here are bound in actual serfdom to the farms and plantations of the white exploiters by the feudal system of "share cropping." Only on paper and not in practice are they freed from the yoke of their former slavery. The same holds completely true for the great mass of black contract laborers; here the contract is only the capitalist expression of the chains of the old slavery, which even today are not infrequently applied in their natural iron form on the roads of the Black Belt (chain-gang work). These are the main forms of present Negro slavery in the Black Belt and no breaking of the chains of this slavery is possible without confiscating all the landed property of the white masters. Without this revolutionary measure, without the agrarian revolution, the right of self-determination of the Negro population would be only a Utopia; or, at best, would remain only on paper without changing in any way the actual enslavement.

(2) *Establishment of the State Unity of the Black Belt.* At the present time this Negro zone -- precisely for the purpose of facilitating national oppression -- is artificially split up and divided into a number of various states which include distant localities having a majority-white population. If the right of self-determination of the Negroes is to be put into force, it is necessary wherever possible to bring together into one governmental unit all districts of the South where the majority of the settled population consists of Negroes. Within the limits of this state there will of course remain a fairly significant white minority which must submit to the right of self-determination of the Negro majority. There is no other possible way of carrying out in a democratic manner the right of self-determination of the Negroes. Every plan regarding the establishment of the Negro State with an exclusively Negro population in America (and, of course, still more exporting it to Africa) is nothing but an unreal and reactionary caricature of the fulfilment of the right of self-determination of the Negroes and every attempt to isolate and transport the Negroes would have the most damaging effect upon their interests; above all, it would violate the right of the Negro farmers in the Black Belt not only to their present residences and their land but also to the land owned by the white landlords and cultivated by Negro labor.

(3) *Right of Self-Determination.* This means complete and unlimited right of the Negro majority to exercise governmental authority in the entire territory of the

Black Belt, as well as to decide upon the relations between their territory and other nations, particularly the United States. It would not be right of self-determination in our sense of the word if the Negroes in the Black Belt had the right of determination only in cases which concerned *exclusively* the Negroes and did not affect the whites, because the most important cases arising here are bound to affect the Negroes as well as the whites. First of all, true right to self-determination means that the Negro majority and not the white minority in the entire territory of the administratively united Black Belt exercises the right of administering governmental, legislative and judicial authority. At the present time, all this power here is concentrated in the hands of the white bourgeoisie and landlords. It is they who appoint all officials; it is they who dispose of public property, it is they who determine the taxes, it is they who govern and make the laws. Therefore, *the overthrow of this class rule* in the Black Belt is unconditionally necessary in the struggle for the Negroes' right to self-determination. This however means, at the same time, the overthrow of the yoke of American imperialism in the Black Belt on which the forces of the local white bourgeoisie depend. Only in this way, only if the Negro population of the Black Belt wins its freedom from American imperialism even to the point of deciding itself the relations between its country and other governments, especially the United States, will it win real and complete self-determination. One should demand from the beginning that no armed forces of American imperialism should remain on the territory of the Black Belt.

7. As stated in the letter of the Polit. Secretariat of the E.C.C.I. of March 16th, 1930, the Communists must "*unreservedly* carry on a struggle" for the self-determination of the Negro population in the Black Belt in accordance with what has been set forth above. It is incorrect and harmful to interpret the Communist standpoint to mean that the Communists stand for the right of self-determination of the Negroes only up to a certain point, but not beyond this, for example, to the right of separation. It is also incorrect to say that the Communists are so far only to carry on propaganda or agitation for the right of self-determination, but not to develop any activity to bring this about. No, it is of the utmost importance for the Communist Party to reject any such limitation of its struggle for this slogan. Even if the situation does not yet warrant the raising of the question of uprising, one should not limit oneself at

present to propaganda for the demand: "right to self-determination;" but should organize mass-actions such as demonstrations, strikes, tax-boycott-movements, etc. Moreover, the Party cannot make its stand for this slogan dependent upon any conditions, even the condition that the proletariat has the hegemony in the national revolutionary Negro movement or that the majority of the Negroes in the Black Belt adopt the Soviet form (as Pepper demanded), etc. It goes without saying that the Communists in the Black Belt will and must try to win over all working elements of the Negroes, that is, the majority of the population, to their side and to convince them not only that they must win the right of self-determination, but also that they must make use of this right in accordance with the Communist programme. But this cannot be made a *condition* for the stand of the Communists in favor of the right of self-determination of the Negro population; if, or so long as the majority of this population wishes to handle the situation in the Black Belt in a different manner from that which we Communists would like, its complete right to self-determination must be recognized. This right we must defend as a free democratic right.

8. In general, the C.P. of the United States has kept to this correct line recently in its struggle for the right of self-determination of the Negroes even though this line -- in some cases -- has been unclearly or erroneously expressed. In particular, some misunderstanding has arisen from the failure to make a clear distinction between the demand for "right of self-determination" and the demand for governmental separation, simply treating these two demands in the same way. However, these two demands are not identical. Complete right to self-determination includes also the right to governmental separation, but does not necessarily imply that the Negro population should *make use of this* right under all circumstances. That is, that it must actually separate or attempt to separate the Black Belt from the existing governmental federation with the United States. If it desires to separate it must be free to do so; but if it prefers to remain federated with the United States it must also be free to do that. This is the correct meaning of the idea of self-determination, and it must be recognized quite independently of whether the United States are still a capitalist state or if a proletarian dictatorship has already been established there.

It is, however, another matter if it is not a case of the *right* of the oppressed nation concerned to separate or to maintain governmental contact; but if the question is treated on its merits, whether it is to work for state separation, whether it is to struggle *for this* or not. This is another question, on which the stand of the Communists must vary according to the concrete conditions. If the proletariat has come into power in the United States, the Communist Negroes will not come out for but *against* separation of the Negro Republic federation with the United States. But the *right* of the Negroes to governmental separation will be *unconditionally realized* by the Communist Party. It will unconditionally give the Negro population of the Black Belt freedom of choice even on this question. Only when the proletariat has come into power in the United States the Communists will carry on propaganda among the working masses of the Negro population against separation, in order to convince them that it is much better and in the interest of the Negro nation for the Black Belt to be a free republic, where the Negro majority has complete right of self-determination, but remains governmentally federated with the great proletarian republic of the United States. The bourgeois counter-revolutionists, on the other hand, will then be interested in boosting the separation tendencies in the ranks of the various nationalities in order to utilize separatist nationalism as a barrier for the bourgeois counter-revolution against the consolidation of the proletarian dictatorship.

But the question at the present time is not this. As long as capitalism rules in the United States the Communists cannot come out against governmental separation of the Negro zone from the United States. They recognize that this separation from the imperialist United States would be preferable from the standpoint of the national interests of the Negro population, to their present oppressed state, and therefore, the Communists are ready at any time to offer all their support if only the working masses of the Negro population are ready to take up the struggle for governmental independence of the Black Belt. At the present time, however, the situation in the national struggle in the South is not such as to win mass support of the working Negroes for this separatist struggle, and it is not the task of the Communists to call upon them to separate without taking into consideration the existing situation and the desires of the Negro masses. The situation in the Negro question of the United

States, however, may undergo a radical change. It is even probable that the separatist efforts to obtain complete State independence of the Black Belt will gain ground among the Negro masses of the South in the near future. This is connected with the prospective sharpening of the national conflicts in the South, with the advance of the national revolutionary Negro movement and with the exceptionally brutal fascists aggressiveness of the white exploiters of the South, as well as with the support of this aggressiveness by the central government authority of the United States. In this sharpening of the situation in the South, Negro separatism will presumably increase, and the question of the independence of the Black Belt will become the question of the day. Then, the Communist Party must also face this question, and if the circumstances seem favorable, must stand up with all strength and courage for the struggle to win independence and for the establishment of a Negro republic in the Black Belt.

9. The general relation of Communists to separatist tendencies among the Negroes, described above, cannot mean that Communists associate themselves at present, or generally speaking, during capitalism, indiscriminately and without criticism with all the separatist currents of the various bourgeois or petty-bourgeois Negro groups. For there is not only a national revolutionary, but also a reactionary Negro separatism. For instance, that represented by Garvey: his Utopia of an isolated Negro State (regardless if in Africa or America, if it is supposed to consist of Negroes only) pursues the only political aim of diverting the Negro masses from the real liberation struggle against American imperialism.

It would be a mistake to imagine that the right of self-determination slogan is a truly revolutionary slogan only in connection with the demand for complete separation. The question of power is decided not only through the demand of separation, but just as much through the demand of the right to decide the separation question and self-determination in general. A direct question of power is also the demand of confiscation of the land of the white exploiters in the South, as well as the demand of the Negroes that the entire Black Belt be amalgamated into a state unit. Hereby, every single fundamental demand of the liberation struggle of the Negroes in the Black Belt is such that -- if once thoroughly understood by the Negro masses and adopted as their slogan -- it will lead them into the struggle for the overthrow of the power of the

ruling bourgeoisie, which is impossible without such revolutionary struggle. One cannot deny that it is just possible for the Negro population of the Black Belt to win the right to self-determination already during capitalism, but it is perfectly clear and indubitable that this is possible only through successful revolutionary struggle for power against the American bourgeoisie through wresting the Negroes' right to self-determination from the American imperialism. Thus, the slogan of right to self-determination is a real slogan of national rebellion, which, to be considered as such, need not be supplemented by proclaiming struggle for the complete separation of the Negro zone; at least not at present. But it must be made perfectly clear to the Negro masses that the slogan "right to self-determination" includes the demand of full freedom for them to decide even the question of complete separation. "We demand freedom of separation, real right to self-determination" -- wrote Lenin: "certainly not in order to 'recommend' separation, but on the contrary; in order to facilitate and accelerate the democratic rapprochement and unification of nations." For the same purpose, Lenin's Party, the C.P. of the Soviet Union, bestowed after its seizure of power on all the peoples hitherto oppressed by Russian Tsarism the full right to self-determination, including the right of complete separation, and achieved thereby its enormous successes with regard to the democratic rapprochement and voluntary unification of nations.

10. The slogan for the self-determination right and the other fundamental slogans of the Negro question in the Black Belt does not exclude but rather pre-supposes an energetic development of the struggle for concrete partial demands linked up with the daily needs and afflictions of wide masses of working Negroes. In order to avoid, in this connection, the danger of opportunist backslidings, Communists must above all remember this:

(a) The direct aims and partial demands around which a partial struggle develops are to be linked up in the course of the struggle with the revolutionary fundamental slogans brought up by the question of power, in a popular manner corresponding to the mood of the masses. (Confiscation of the big land holdings, establishment of governmental unity of the Black Belt, right of self-determination of the Negro population in the Black Belt.) Bourgeois-socialist tendencies to oppose such a revolutionary widening and deepening of the fighting demands must be fought.

(b) One should not venture to draw up a complete programme of some kind or a system of "positive" partial demands. Such programmes on the part of petty-bourgeois politicians should be exposed as attempts to divert the masses from the necessary hard struggles by fostering reformist and democratic illusions among them. Every positive partial demand which might crop up is to be considered from the viewpoint of whether it is in keeping with our revolutionary fundamental slogans, or whether it is of a reformist or reactionary tendency. Every kind of national oppression which arouses the indignation of the Negro masses can be used as a suitable point of departure for the development of partial struggles, during which the abolition of such oppression, as well as their prevention through revolutionary struggle against the ruling exploiting dictatorship must be demanded.

(c) Everything should be done to bring wide masses of Negroes into these partial struggles -- this is important -- and not to carry the various partial demands to such an ultra-radical point, that the mass of working Negroes are no longer able to recognize them as *their own*. Without a real mobilization of the mass-movements -- in spite of the sabotage of the bourgeois reformist Negro politicians -- even the best Communist partial demands get hung up. On the other hand, even some relatively insignificant acts of the Ku-Klux-Klan bandits in the Black Belt can become the occasion of important political movements, provided the Communists are able to organize the resistance of the indignant Negro masses. In such cases, mass movements of this kind can easily develop into real rebellion. This rests on the fact that -- as Lenin said -- "Every act of national oppression calls forth resistance on the part of the masses of the population, and the tendency of every act of resistance on the part of oppressed peoples is the national uprising."

d) Communists must fight in the *forefront* of the national-liberation movement and must do their utmost for the progress of this mass movement and its revolutionization. Negro Communists must *clearly dissociate* themselves from all bourgeois currents in the Negro movement, must indefatigably oppose the spread of the influence of the bourgeois groups on the working Negroes, and in dealing with them must apply the Communist tactic laid down by the Sixth C.I. Congress with regard to the colonial question, in order to guarantee the *hegemony of the Negro proletariat* in the

national liberation movement of the Negro population, and to co-ordinate wide masses of the Negro peasantry in a steady fighting alliance with the proletariat.

e) One must work with the utmost energy for the establishment and consolidation of *Communist Party organizations and revolutionary trade unions* in the South. Furthermore, immediate measures must be taken for the organization of proletarian and peasant *self-defense* of whites and blacks against the Ku-Klux-Klan; for this purpose, the C.P. is to give further instructions.

11. It is particularly incumbent on Negro Communists to criticize consistently the half-heartedness and hesitations of the petty-bourgeois national-revolutionary Negro leaders in the liberation struggle of the Black Belt, exposing them before the masses. All national reformist currents as, for instance, Garveyism, which are an obstacle to the revolutionization of the Negro masses, must be fought systematically and with the utmost energy. Simultaneously, Negro Communists must carry on among the Negro masses an energetic struggle against nationalist moods directed indiscriminately against all whites, workers as well as capitalists, Communists, as well as imperialists. Their constant call to the Negro masses must be: *revolutionary struggle against the ruling white bourgeoisie, through a fighting alliance with the revolutionary white proletariat!* Negro Communists must indefatigably explain to the mass of the Negro population that even if many white workers in America are still infected with Negrophobia, the American proletariat, as a class, which owing to its struggle against the American bourgeoisie represents the only truly revolutionary class, will be the only real mainstay of Negro liberation. In as far as successes in the national-revolutionary struggle of the Negro population of the South for its right to self-determination are already possible under capitalism, they can be achieved only if this struggle is effectively supported by proletarian mass actions on a large scale in the other parts of the United States. But it is also clear that "only a victorious proletarian revolution will *finally* decide the agrarian question and the national question in the South of the United States, in the interest of the predominating mass of the Negro population of the country." (Colonial Theses of the Sixth World Congress.)

12. The struggle regarding the Negro question in the North must be linked up with the liberation

struggle in the South, in order to endow the Negro movement throughout the United States with the necessary effective strength. After all, in the North as well as in the South, it is a question of the real emancipation of the American Negroes which has in fact never taken place before. The Communist Party of the United States must bring into play its entire revolutionary energy in order to mobilize the widest possible masses of the white and black proletariat of the United States, not by words, but by deeds, for real effective support of the struggle for the liberation of the Negroes. Enslavement of the Negroes is one of the most important foundations of the imperialist dictatorship of U.S.A. capitalism. The more American imperialism fastens its yoke on the millions strong Negro masses, the more must the Communist Party develop the mass struggle for Negro emancipation, and the better use it must make of all conflicts which arise out of national differences, as an incentive for revolutionary mass actions against the bourgeoisie. This is as much in the direct interest of the proletarian revolution in America. Whether the rebellion of the Negroes is to be the outcome of a general revolutionary situation in the United States; whether it is to originate in the whirlpool of decisive fights for power by the working class, for proletarian dictatorship, or whether on the contrary; the Negro rebellion will be the prelude of gigantic struggles for power by the American proletariat, cannot be foretold now. But in either contingency, it is essential for the Communist Party *to make an energetic beginning already now* with the organization of *joint mass struggles* of white and Black workers against Negro oppression.

This alone will enable us to get rid of the bourgeois white chauvinism which is polluting the ranks of the white workers of America, to overcome the distrust of the Negro masses caused by the inhuman barbarous Negro slave traffic still carried on by the American bourgeoisie -- in as far as it is directed even against all white workers -- and to win over to our side these millions of Negroes as active fellow fighters in the struggle for the overthrow of bourgeois power throughout America.

Fred Hampton: It's a Class Struggle, Godamnit!

When the Party started to talk about class struggle, we found that we had to start talking about some guns. If we never negated the fact that there was racism in America, but we said that when you, the by-product, what comes off of capitalism, that happens to be racism, that capitalism comes first and next is racism. That when they brought slaves over here, it was to take money. So first the idea came that we want to make money, then the slaves came in order to make that money. That means that capitalism had to, through historical fact, racism had to come from capitalism. It had to be capitalism first and racism was a by-product of that.

(Excerpt from Speech delivered at Northern Illinois University, November, 1969)



Revolution in Brazil, Revolution Here

Brazil is a country of many records. It is the largest country in Latin America and its largest economy. But hidden behind its prized modern cities and a matured tourism industry is a seemingly infinite green interior. It has the largest rain forest in the world, and on each inch of its growing corpse, the largest soybean production in the world that continues to expand by the day at the expense of the original peoples of the Amazons.

The land, then, needs hands to work on it. A significant amount of Brazil's population are still peasants, the majority of them descending from African slaves – it is the country with the largest number of Africans outside Africa – and Indigenous people robbed of their land. They work in plantations,

“latifundias” in Portuguese, the same word as the feudal manors of the 17th century under the Portuguese Empire. While these peasants today have access to the internet and cheaply manufactured American toothpaste, their living and working conditions remain the same. They work on a land that does not belong to them, crushed under suffocating usury. The majority of their harvest go to a small group of white landowners and representatives of US

Image:

“For the End of the Crimes by the Landlords!”
by Antonio Kuschnir



transnational corporations that have the State and its laws in their pockets.

The peasants are bound to the plantations in general if not one in particular. Unlike workers in the United States, they do not have the luxury of choosing their exploiters. For those whose entire possessions are taken from them by inherited debt, the only way to postpone certain death is to escape to the overflowing and starving favelas of the cities. There, the police launch genocidal waves of periodical incursions to “combat” the equally bloodthirsty organized crime, but mostly, the colored residents. After all, the words of the landowners are law, and to disobey them is to have serious consequences: sometimes it is being blacklisted from all sources of

sustenance; some other times, if one is lucky, it is an arm. We shouldn’t forget that Brazil is the latest country in the hemisphere to abolish slavery in 1888, and just like in the postbellum American South, one form of absolute personal subjugation easily transforms into another.

But Brazil sets another record: it is the country in the Western Hemisphere with the greatest revolutionary movement. Today, from the Northeast inland, where the maroons of old once resisted slavery, to the depth of the Amazons still being opened in the same way by Christopher Columbus, and to the far south of the country famous for the carnivals of Sao Paulo, the sons and daughters of those who once resisted continue to rise up in new

conditions, under the banners of the League of Poor Peasants (LCP) and the Movement of Landless Workers (MST), with simple slogans: “conquer the land,” and “land belongs to those who work and live on it.” To its participants, this movement is called “Agrarian Revolution.” The revolution does not just exist in slogans. All over Brazil, it is already being transformed into a new, warlike reality by the countless coarse, callused hands holding their machetes and muskets.

In the Renato Nathan Revolutionary Area, located in the interior of the beautiful coastal state of Alagoas, thousands of peasant families occupied large plantations and organized their lives according to their own wishes for 15 years. Production was collective and democratically decided, just like every decision made in the Area: people’s courts and people’s self-defense were set up, both concepts foreign to this broad land. Children receive education for the first time, organized by revolutionary students and workers from the cities, on the Portuguese language, math, sciences, and the path towards building a new world without rich or poor. This is but one example of dozens of big and small revolutionary encampments across the country. The Brazilian people proved a Marxist law with their own experience: the masses create history, not a few selected individuals from the “talented-tenth” of the ruling-class.

In October 2024, the Renato Nathan Revolutionary Area was surrounded by the death squads of the landowners and the police armed to the teeth, accompanying a legal injunction made in the fancy courtrooms of the bourgeois-feudal State. For 15 years the peasants fought for their continued existence; but this time the enemy came more prepared than ever, and their homes and fields were razed to the ground in a matter of days. Shortly after, another encampment in the State of Sao Paulo was violently raided, 3 peasant leaders killed by the reactionary gangs. This is another Marxist law: there is no empty room in this rotten society of exploitation for revolutionaries to take advantage of. The enemy will sniff out and destroy every attempt to “build bases” or “accumulate forces”, and every inch of free space will have to be taken from the hands of the enemy.

Two months later, the Renato Nathan Revolutionary Area was taken back after an intense

battle against the military police. In front of the barricades, the class enemy ran away. The peasants began to rebuild what was destroyed, red flags and a banner depicting Zumbi dos Palmares – the greatest hero of the *Quilombolas* (maroons) who defended his settlement for 67 years against Portuguese slavers – were among the first things to be erected again on the land. Here we again witness a Marxist law: everything is lost and gained in fierce class struggle: if the working class doesn’t impose this struggle against its enemy, it is imposed against the working class. In a society enforced through reactionary violence of the few, the highest form of class struggle is revolutionary violence of the many. Indeed, it is the only way to sweep away the Old Society everywhere, from a single plantation to any given country in the world.

In Brazil as well as here, the society is divided into two. There are two main forces: the exploiter capitalists and the exploited working class and their allies.

Similarly, the Brazilian peasants are not merely won over by propaganda, studies, and community events operating under the legal bounds of the Old Society. In tens of thousands, their ties with each other were baptized and tried in their common struggle, in the blood and tears they have shed together, and in their collective strength they have demonstrated with each plow and each bullet. A quote from the Peruvian revolution, borrowed by the Brazilian revolutionaries, is befitting here: may the actions speak. The actions have spoken, not words, and it is in this way the revolutionary movement grows by the day and reaches the most remote corners of the countryside and cities.

The Brazilian revolution is relatively less known among Black workers and intellectuals in this country. Equally less known are its lessons, particular in form, but universal in essence. The story of Zumbi dos Palmares is the same story as Nat Turner, who took up the highest form of struggle. Let us look at our own history, going back all the way to the first slave rebellion in continental North America in 1526. After that, the Chesapeake rebellion, the Stono rebellion, the German Coast uprising. The Civil War itself was fought through the mass struggle and war of the enslaved Black masses, as African slaves were both

joining the Union Army en masse and forming militias to annihilate the southern plantation-owning class.

Looking at the contemporary Brazilian peasants, we can't help but be reminded of the struggle of our sharecroppers in the 1930s. Under the leadership of Communists – just like in Brazil today – the Sharecropper Union responded to the white landowners enforced by the police and the Klan with guns in hand, not merely resisting under these harsh conditions but taking the offensive through combat: every single struggle built up and paved the way towards the confiscation of landed property through revolutionary violence. Just like in Brazil, they rejected the Manichean separation common among the nationalist movement today that draws a Chinese wall between first resisting and then combating, first passively ensuring survival and only then recuperating the strength to struggle. The December 1930 issue of *The Southern Worker*, an organ of the Communist Party, featured this quote from a Black worker: “we workers here have seen fight... but because we lost, then, doesn't mean we will lose again. We must organize, the white and Negro workers together from the very beginning, or the bosses will use one race of workers as scabs against the other in order to break the strike. We got to organize and fight real.”

The Brazilian people's struggle is centered on agriculture, and it is from there that originates the phrase, “Agrarian Revolution.” Taking land has a concrete economic and social significance: agriculture is what a plurality of the population engages in, what takes up a majority of the territory, and what constitutes a significant portion of the country's economy. As the peasantry flock to the cities, similar semi-feudal relations, dependent on personal subjugation, are recreated and maintained in the cities as well. A struggle to transform the countryside and agricultural production is a struggle that frees the land and the people, a struggle that destroys the pillar of society that the capitalists and landowners depend on.

The situation in the United States is different. The majority of people in the United States, the Black nation included, today reside in cities. Most people in this country are workers and the economic arteries are industry and logistics. To learn from the lesson of the Brazilian revolution is to have a concrete analysis of the concrete situation. Today the industrial proletariat and especially the Black industrial proletariat are the

ones who are concentrated in both work and life, intimately familiar with technology and structures of the economy: they are the class with the historical task of overthrowing the capitalist class and building a New State. They have this historical task to lead the socialist revolution because of their closeness to the mechanisms of capitalism, of taking active part in the production and distribution of commodities. We cannot be dogmatic in our analysis. Clearly, our revolution, although with a national character, is not a Democratic Revolution, but a Socialist one. The Black workers have long been familiar with capitalism. The answer is not to resolve the agrarian problem or to develop a separate Black capitalist class: it is to organize the majority of the population wherever they work and live, to seize the factories and shops that they already work at. It is also here that Black workers alongside their white and Latino coworkers will deal a decisive blow to the imperialist Power structure.

Instead of simply raising awareness on the national problem, the masses' day-to-day issues must be addressed just like in Brazil: through militant and class-conscious struggle against the class enemy, as the only way to grow our ranks towards developing the highest form of struggle, the struggle for State Power.

In Brazil as well as here, the society is divided into two. There are two main forces: the exploiter capitalists and the exploited working class and their allies. There are two roads and two destinies. First, the road of the ruling class, that continues its genocide against oppressed people here and across the world and continues the capitalist system built on human suffering. Second, the road of the working class, the road of creating a new world with no exploitation and oppression, that places the ownership of the society in the collective hands of the great majority of workers who already work and live in the most collective way possible.

This is the way forward demonstrated by Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, the guiding ideology of the Brazilian revolution. Walk the path of the Chinese! This is the answer. This is not a conclusion came about lightly, nor is it unique. The Mozambican, Nigerien, Peruvian, and Filipino people reached the same conclusions after years of long and intense class struggle in the form of People's Wars.

The Brazilian peasants understand that there are not many Communisms. There is one reality and one

truth, drawn from the history and practice of the working class of all countries, and all oppressed classes before it. At the same time, the experience of each nation and people, through studying and applying the universal ideology of the working class, not only particularizes it in each country but enriches it overall towards the further development of Marxism. This is especially important for Black workers in the United States to understand. As our exploiters are the same ones that today enslave all oppressed people of the world, we are fighting in different trenches of the same World Proletarian Revolution, sharing one destiny and on the same road toward the victory of luminous communism.

There is many more that can be written about the struggle in Brazil. But for brevity's sake, let us "return to the source": we look to Brazil for a reason beyond simply gaining more knowledge of what's going on in that corner of the world. Only by grasping these lessons, as the revolutionaries of Brazil have, will we be able to reach the heights our struggle requires. Only then can we retake the heights of the slave revolts before and during the Civil War, the heights of the 1970s, and especially, the heights of the struggle led by the Communist Party in the early 1930s: in fact, we need to go above and beyond the past efforts. We must walk the path lay forth by Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, a revolutionary tradition of not only our people, but the whole world's proletariat and oppressed classes. The Black Nation has struggled and will continue to struggle but it is up to us as revolutionaries to mobilize, politicize and organize the masses into struggle for a new society and for the liberation of our Black Nation.



Join the New Labor Organizing Committee!

The New Labor Organizing Committee (NLOC) is a newly founded committee that works as a coordinating body for independent labor organizations and class-conscious workers within the United States and its overseas territories (Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, etc.)

to get involved with NLOC you must believe in the importance of the struggle of workers around the world against the owners and their imperialist system, take a stand against the actions and ideas of opportunists in the labor movement, believe in the mission of creating an independent, class-conscious, democratic and combative labor movement, and be willing to get to work actually making that mission a reality.

To learn more about NLOC or reach out about getting involved, please email newlaboroc@proton.me!

The New Labor Press
For a Revolutionary Labor Movement



History

A History of Juneteenth

Juneteenth was made a federal holiday in 2021, and yet Black people in America continue to struggle against the exploitative and oppressive system this country was built on. We will discuss a brief, non-exhaustive history of Juneteenth, especially as it pertains to Texas, and explore what lessons this holiday has for us as revolutionaries today.

The Civil War & Emancipation

After Abraham Lincoln was elected president of the United States in 1860, several southern states decided it was time to secede from the Union. The Republican party's anti-slavery platform had already been unpopular with the 11 southern states that had no intention of abolishing slavery, and by 1861, South Carolina, Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, and Texas seceded in that order (PBS). Later that same year, the forces of the newly formed Confederacy attacked Fort Sumter, tipping the country into civil war. Two years later, Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, declaring that all enslaved Black people in Confederate territory would be freed if the rebelling states did not surrender.

This outline of events sounds straightforward, easy, familiar - but it needs an innumerable number of caveats. Pushing back against the idea of Lincoln as a kindly Great Emancipator is hardly controversial these days. One of the most well-known examples of his general position is in his response to abolitionist Horace Greeley's criticisms in 1862:

"My paramount object in this struggle is to save the Union, and is not either to save or to destroy slavery. If I could save the Union without freeing any slave I would do, it, and if I could save it by freeing all the slaves I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone, I would also do that." (Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum)

A more honest examination of Lincoln, and more generally, Northern "anti-slavery" attitudes shows that they mostly happened to coincide with the region's economic interest. After building industrialized cities on the backs of slave labor, the capitalists deemed

slavery largely unnecessary. The agricultural economy of the South, on the other hand, was dependent on this continued exploitation to keep running (Secession in the United States: EBSCO) Ultimately, Lincoln worked in the class interests of the North: without slavery, the Confederacy would not be able to keep up the war effort (PBS).

Up until the Proclamation was declared, the federal army did not formally accept Black soldiers. As DuBois points out in *The Economics of Negro Emancipation in the United States*, "So far as the great mass of people in the United States were concerned, the war had begun with no thought of emancipation...[b]ut after about two years of this the white men were glad to accept 200,000 Black bodies to stop bullets." Black men enlisted in droves when finally accepted - by 1865, over 186,000 of them had joined the army, half of which were from Confederate states (PBS).



Inevitably, the army took every opportunity to subjugate these Black troops. Black soldiers were initially paid as laborers instead of soldiers: they were paid \$7 per month while white soldiers, by comparison, were paid \$13. Today, this would roughly be equivalent to \$220 per month for Black soldiers versus \$408 for white soldiers (Consumer price index, 1800-: Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis). In response, the Fifty-fourth Massachusetts Colored Regiment, the first all-Black unit in the army, served a year without pay, and many other Black people refused to enlist outright.

Finally, equal wages were sanctioned for Black soldiers in 1864.

In the midst of all this, the masses were hit by wartime scarcity, primarily in the South. While Northerners faced inflation and some labor shortages, those in the South had to fear the looming threat of starvation. Besides a drought in 1862, Southerners were unable to exploit Black labor to the same inhumane degree on their plantations for food. This brings us to Texas, one of the last strongholds of chattel slavery in the country.

Galveston, Texas, and the U.S Today

While Black people throughout the North celebrated the Proclamation soon after it was declared, it took much longer for the news to reach enslaved people in Confederate states. Up until 1821, slavery had not been established as an institution proper in Texas when it was a Spanish province. White American settlers received eighty acres of land for every enslaved person they brought into Texas: by 1825, enslaved people made up about 25% of the population in Austin (Campbell). Of course, these settlers' primary motivation was to make as much money as possible from cotton plantations. Through slave labor, cotton economy strengthened and entrenched slavery in Texas and became the most important commodity in America in this century.

Throughout this period, about 3,000 to 5,000 slaves fled the clutches of plantation masters to Mexico, which maintained a general anti-slavery stance upon its independence and refused to return fugitive slaves back to slaveholders (Burnett). However, despite slavery being illegal to different degrees since 1823 in then-Mexican Texas (i.e. the State of Coahuila and Texas), several leaders helped colonists circumvent and gain exemption from anti-slavery laws.

Capitalist slaveholders of the antebellum era dominated white society and made millions as the century went on while ensuring Black people had no legal rights or basic freedoms. Despite their conditions under the Slave Codes, which need no retreading in this piece, enslaved people resisted in many ways throughout this period. Often, they disrupted the plantation system: they "slowed down their work pace, disabled machinery, feigned sickness, [and] destroyed crops" (PBS). While there is no record of an organized rebellion in Texas, there are instances of instances of individual enslaved people violently revolting against slaveholders (Campbell).

With enslaved people making up much of the population and outnumbering the ruling class of slaveholders, virulent anti-blackness, and the Civil War brewing, white plantation owners lived in constant fear of a slave insurrection in the mid-1800s. It is worth pointing out that Texas was surrounded by anti-slavery sentiment from all sides, even if the sentiment in question lacked any real backbone. As mentioned earlier, there was the Union to the North and Mexico at their southern border, but even the deeply imperialist nation of Britain refused to recognize Texas as an independent nation due to its reliance on slave labor (Burnett). Slaveholders in Texas were incredibly defensive about their "peculiar institution" and created a sense of social panic so all-consuming that they blamed a series of fires in North Texas on a group of enslaved people and abolitionists in 1860. They took the opportunity to hunt down and hang at least 30 people for this conspiracy, even though there was no evidence that these fires resulted from a planned slave uprising ("1860: Big Trouble").

Against this backdrop, General Gordon Granger landed in Galveston with Union forces to occupy Texas on June 18, 1865 - 2 months after the Confederate army surrendered in Virginia, and 2 years after the Emancipation Proclamation was first declared. The next day, Granger issued General Order No. 3, officially

*To achieve true liberation, we are tasked
to end this capitalist system and the
oppression that feeds it, and we can
settle for nothing less.*

stating that all enslaved people in Texas were now free.

In Limestone County, TX, a slaveholder named Logan Stroud cried as he read out the proclamation to the 100 Black people, he had enslaved to build an empire of over 11,000 acres (Bell). Newly freed Black communities in the area started celebrating their emancipation began as soon as 1866, with festivities in the outskirts of town (Acosta).

Then, in 1892, 89 Black people bought acres of land in this same country to create a permanent site for Juneteenth celebrations that were "like a giant family reunion, held on hallowed ground" (Hall). The community formed the Nineteenth of June Organization, one of the first official committees

created for this holiday. They have hosted the longest running Juneteenth celebration in the country at that same site, now called Booker T. Washington Park (Wilson).

Similar acts of remembrance spread throughout the state and to the rest of the country. Juneteenth had already been celebrated since 1867 in Austin with the support of the Freedmen's Bureau, but the first purchase of land to celebrate emancipation was made in the early 1900s by the Travis County Emancipation Celebration Association (Acosta). Black people also took the tradition to other states during the Great Migration, yet it is also worth noting that Black people in other states had been celebrating their emancipation on different days due to how staggered the actual process of emancipation was for enslaved Black people. For example, Black communities in Tampa celebrated an Emancipation Day in May, to commemorate the arrival of federal troops on May 6, 1864 (Cimitile).



Attendance at Texas celebrations grew throughout the 1900s and often featured storytelling from elders about their experiences during slavery, prayer, dances, and games ("Texas observes Juneteenth"). This was an event everyone in the community looked forward to as it felt like a county fair, with people hitching rides with each other to head to the park and buying fried fish, popcorn, and homemade ice cream from concession stands (Hall).

Juneteenth celebrations have also been historically used political rallies and to educate Black people on their rights and history. In Mexia, Limestone County, the Emancipation Proclamation was read out every year along with the names of the founders of Booker T. Washington Park. More recently, the celebrations have

commemorated the somber memory of the Comanche 3, three Black teenagers who drowned in police custody in 1981 – Anthony Freeman, Carl Baker, and Steve Booker.

As this tragedy highlights, Juneteenth and the process of emancipation did not eradicate the anti-blackness in the fabric of Texas and of the United States as a whole. The history of these celebrations occur against the backdrop of the brutal sharecropping system at the beginning and continue through Jim Crow and segregation. As DuBois writes, "the slave was emancipated without being given a foot of land or a cent of capital."

A Juneteenth for the People

The experiences of Black people throughout U.S history continue to demonstrate that this country only makes concessions that reform capitalism to fit the era and not to serve the interests of the Black masses.

It took until 1980 for Juneteenth to become a state holiday in Texas, its own birthplace, and until 2021 for it to become a holiday nationwide. We must question the ultimate usefulness of any formal recognition of Black history, especially when Black communities have been honoring traditions without any need for official sanction. What does a broad acceptance of Juneteenth as a day off of work mean when we have been seeing capitalist institutions co-opt and water down the ideas behind Black movements for years?

While the ruling class continues to accumulate wealth at the expense of the Black masses, they enlist the repressive power of the police state to protect themselves and further debilitate Black communities. Black schoolchildren struggle to get access to the education they need to succeed in a country that seeks to constantly undermine their future. The extent to which this system strategically attacks Black freedoms cannot be adequately summed up here. The need for liberation remains urgent.

On Juneteenth, instead of accepting an imperialist country's efforts to placate the nation it oppresses, we can instead look to the efforts of the Black people who paved the way for us to continue the struggle today. Enslaved Black people did not wait for emancipation before choosing to sabotage slaveholders' plantations or establish routes to help their people flee. Black people today cannot wait for the institutions that dehumanize them to somehow hand them the keys to their freedom. To achieve true liberation, we are tasked

to end this capitalist system and the oppression that feeds it, and we can settle for nothing less.

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June 19th 2025: On the Day of Heroism

On June 19, 1986, prisoners of war and political prisoners in the El Fronton, Lurigancho and Callao prisons in Peru waged a fierce resistance against the attempted extermination and genocide by the reactionary Peruvian State. For two days the prisoners used nothing but bare hands, wooden sticks, and a handful of guns taken from the prison guards, fighting and resisting the genocidal army and marines invading from all directions armed with powerful weapons, helicopters, and armored cars. The number of deaths, including both those killed in the fight and those summarily and extrajudicially executed afterwards, is well above 300 people. This day was later named as the Day of Heroism in their honor. For the Peruvian people, it was seen not as a defeat but a great moral and political victory in the People's War led by the Communist Party of Peru, demonstrating the immense bravery and heroism of those who gave their lives for the cause of freedom and happiness of the working people.

Who were these prisoners? Simply put, they were ordinary people from all walks of life. Some, like Gustavo Escobedo Tambo and Alberto Guerrero Hurtado, were working class organizers who were detained for agitating fellow workers against exploitation, hunger, and the bourgeois elections. Antonio Diaz Martinez was an acclaimed anthropologist who studied the poverty in the Peruvian countryside for decades. Jose Valdivia Dominguez was a famed peasant poet who was known for his sharp lyrics exposing landlords and bosses. There were also captured commanders and fighters of the People's Guerrilla Army. All these prisoners shared the same crime, of fighting against the three mountains weighing on the backs of the Peruvian people of imperialism, semi-feudalism, and bureaucrat-capitalism, and for a better world without exploitation and oppression.

For years, the Peruvian prisoners of war and political prisoners transformed the dark prisons of the reactionaries into shining trenches of combat, effectively organizing study groups, exercises, theaters, and other activities under the tight grasp of the class

enemy. Despite their physical isolation from the day-to-day struggles of the masses, these revolutionaries waged constant struggles against mistreatment and abuse by the prison authorities through iron discipline and their strong collective spirit. A bourgeois journalist, Gustavo Gorriti, who visited the prison of El Fronton in 1982, described it as almost "liberated territory," as the prisoners were able to gradually take control of the prison and their daily routine.

The indomitable spirit and revolutionary activities made these prisoners a thorn in the side of the reactionary State. In June 1986, the prisoners of Lurigancho, El Fronton, and Callao learned about the impending plans by the Old Peruvian State to massacre them. Instead of waiting to be slaughtered, they rose up and took over the prisons and defended their own lives with their collective power until the very last breath.

It is with the same heroism and steadfastness that Chairman Gonzalo, leader of the Peruvian revolution, resisted 29 years of solitary confinement after being captured by the Old State, until he gave his life on September 11, 2021.

In the United States, we are not unfamiliar with similar feats of resistance and heroism inside the prisons here. Revolutionaries and progressives who fight for liberation were often given life (or otherwise lengthy) sentences. Today, many former members of the Black Panther Party and fighters of the Black Liberation Army are still imprisoned for their revolutionary activities in the 1970s and 1980s, such as the cases of Comrades Mumia Abu Jamal and Kamau Sadiki. Many more, like Comrade Albert "Nuh" Washington, have passed away prematurely in prisons due to the isolation, exploitation, and abuse suffered at the hands of the class enemy. Like the Peruvian prison system, the US prison system clearly demonstrates the true nature of the State as the violent apparatus of the capitalist class to enforce its dictatorship on the multinational working class. In fact, it is commonly known to be only place where slavery is still legal.

Just like their Peruvian counterparts, prisoners in the United States have never yielded to the brutal

repression of the class enemy. Imprisoned revolutionaries like Mumia Abu Jamal, Kamau Sadiki, and Kevin "Rashid" Johnson continued to contribute to the revolutionary movement through writing and wage struggles against the prison system in various forms including hunger strikes. There have been those who rose up in fierce and heroic resistance defying the Old State, such as George Jackson, who fought for his freedom with guns in hand until the last minute on August 21, 1971. These examples are likewise not far away from us: just a few days ago, on June 12, immigrants detained by ICE in Delaney Hall detention center staged a heroic uprising in the face of extreme living conditions and lack of basic sustenance, which led to the escape of 4 immigrants from State custody.

Today, the Day of Heroism is celebrated across Latin America and in other parts of the world, and it is becoming more and more well known in the United States. It is a day of remembrance, solidarity, and empowerment. The true meaning of the Day of Heroism is to celebrate those who fight for freedom as well as those who fight against the loss of their own freedom, and it serves as a torch that inspires more people to continue in their footsteps until the final victory. It is the duty for the new generation of revolutionaries-in-formation to build up a class-conscious and militant mass movement able to confront the class enemy, defend the multinational working class, and bring freedom and justice to all political prisoners and victims of US imperialism. It is as George Jackson once said, quoting the Vietnamese revolutionary leader Ho Chi Minh: "when the prison doors are open, the dragons will fly out."



Liberation CALENDAR

July

July 1

1917: Riot in East St. Louis kills approximately 200 Blacks

July 2

1908: Thurgood Marshall born

1925: Patrice Lumumba born

July 4

1723: African slaves executed in Boston for setting fire to owner's house

1900: Daniel Louis Armstrong born

July 9

1792: Three Africans executed for attacking Virginia slave patrol

July 10

1875: Mary McLeod Bethune born

July 11

1905: Niagara Movement organized by W.E.B. Dubois and William Monroe Trotter

July 12

1967: Rebellion in Newark, 26 dead

July 13

1863: Numerous Black people killed in New York Draft Riots

July 16

1862: Birth of Ida B. Wells

July 17

2014: Eric Garner choked to death by NYPD

July 20

1925: Franz Fanon born

July 23

1967: 43 Blacks murdered by police in the Detroit Rebellion

July 24

1900: Several Blacks killed and over 30 homes and schools burned in New Orleans

July 28

1970: Carl Hampton, founder of People's Party II in Houston assassinated by the State

July 29

1946: Black sharecropper Harrison Johnson shot 6 times in Estonton, GA

July 30

1866: New Orleans riot kills more than 35 Blacks and wounds over 100

We are men, we are not beasts
and we shall not be beaten
and driven as such.

- L.D. Barkley



Image: *Day of Heroism*. UOC Colombia

Culture

On the Passing of Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o

In 1956, the West African poet David Diop wrote these powerful words in the pages of *Présence Africaine*:

We know that some people wish to see us abandon militant poetry (a term that makes the "purists" sneer) in favor of exercises in style and formal discussions. Their hopes will be disappointed because for us poetry does not come down to 'training the language animal' but to reflect on the world and to keep the memory of Africa.

Like the splinter in the wound.

Like a tutelary fetish in the center of the village.

Only in this way can we fully exercise our responsibilities and prepare the renewal of our civilizations.

This short paragraph encapsulates the life and work of the Kenyan writer Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, who recently passed on May 28th, 2025.

Ngũgĩ was perhaps most well-known for his numerous international prizes. In fact, he was often considered a likely candidate for the Nobel Prize in literature. But Ngũgĩ was more than just one of the most important literary figures in contemporary Africa – a place he nonetheless rightfully deserves. He was many things at once: the sibling of a victim of British colonial violence; a political prisoner under the fascist Moi dictatorship; a friend of the poor peasants in their struggle for land; an inheritor of Bertolt Brecht and the curator of the first revolutionary theater in rural Kenya. He was a professor, an exile, and a Communist revolutionary of the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist tradition.

Born in 1938 in colonial Kenya, Ngũgĩ came of age during the Mau Mau uprising, an experience that would deeply inform his critique of imperialism and class oppression. Initially writing in English and gaining international acclaim with novels like *Weep Not, Child* and *A Grain of Wheat*, Ngũgĩ began writing exclusively in Gikuyu, his native language, since the 1970s; arguing that language is not just a medium but a weapon in the struggle for decolonization.

For Ngũgĩ, literature comes from life but is higher than life. It serves to reflect reality; to uncover and

preserve the history and struggle of those seemingly without history, those whose societies were uprooted from their natural development, disrupted and malformed by the bloody crimes of colonialism and imperialism. At the same time, it is a weapon to direct and serve the revolutionary



transformation of reality, for the proletariat and its allied classes to shake the world upside down and to create everything anew in their image, rooted in the fertile soil of Africa's living culture which has stubbornly defied all attempts of "civilization." In his own words, the role of literature is to "decolonize the mind."

He carefully used his words, with little garnishment, to evoke clear images and clear emotions: to keep the memory of Africa, to fully exercise his responsibilities and to prepare for the renewal of our civilizations. He navigated, took apart and pieced together in a higher form the local, tribal, national, and universal identities across the continent through the masterful use of language. Common themes in his work include an entanglement of flashbacks, violence, and magic sometimes indiscernible from reality, like the story of so many in the age of strife that had befallen his homeland of Kenya and of Africa as a whole in the crossroad of colonialism and decolonization. Like the story of the violent and brutal rule of the white man who transplanted a foreign system onto entire peoples and of the seeming independence, the blood shed in vain, the replacement of white claws with native African ones under the national flag, the confusion, betrayal, and agony with the deepening of bureaucrat capitalism that plunges the continent into an ever-worsening crisis. Like the story of his own brother, who was killed by the British for not listening and obeying to the order to stop at a checkpoint due to his own deafness and him who was thrown into the prisons of

the supposed heroes of independence; like the story of Kihika, and then, of Kĩgũũnda.

Ngũgĩ did not stop at interpreting the world, like so many acclaimed intellectuals mired in the post-modernist tradition, who present a picture of “noble savages” for the imperialist metropolises, or like those who indulged in symbols of the fleeting past as a static dogma. He was Ngũgĩ the revolutionary, who sat on the Central Committee of the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist December Twelfth Movement and pointed out with unmatched clarity the primary contradiction between imperialism and the oppressed nations, the main task of agrarian revolution, and the path of New Democratic Revolution through Protracted People’s War, uninterruptedly passing to Socialist Revolution until achieving shining communism. It was towards this goal that he dedicated all his effort.

Ngũgĩ has lived many lives, but like Chairman Gonzalo (whom his organization once stood in solidarity with), he did not live to see the victory of the revolution and the end of neocolonial domination. Today, Africa, like her diaspora in the Americas, continues to live in poverty and crisis, with no real alternative appearing on the horizon. From this lack of revolutionary alternative, many pretenders have risen to take place as the false prophet, much like Jomo Kenyatta more than a half century ago; a petit-bourgeois nurtured by imperialist education, desperate in its *fin de siècle* spirit, reaches out for an abstract idea of freedom with no clearly defined path to get there. Meanwhile, the masses, there as well as here, are clamoring for change, for organization, for *struggle*. Especially worthy of note is Ngũgĩ’s own homeland, Kenya, who has seen nothing but more imperialist plunder with the passing of each year, who is rising up in fierce and heroic armed resistance just as these pages are being written. It is then appropriate to conclude this obituary with the concluding line in Ngũgĩ’s famous work, *Decolonising the Mind*:

[This book] is a call for the rediscovery of the real language of humankind: the language of struggle. It is the universal language underlying all speech and words of our history. Struggle. Struggle makes history. Struggle makes us. In struggle is our history, our language and our being. That struggle begins wherever we are; in whatever we do: then we become part of those millions whom Martin Carter once saw sleeping not to dream but dreaming to change the world.

In order to win we've got to destroy the prestige of the oppressor in our own minds, and we've got to have an adequate defensive/offensive apparatus. Revolutionary violence is an instrument of People's Justice. Revolutionary violence is both a means of destroying the sense of legitimacy we hold towards the enemy. and of showing ourselves that we can govern and protect ourselves – and it's the best means of assuring that the enemy gives us enough room to do so.

Black Bandits

By Castro Alves

Let the earth tremble, terrified with fright...

My fast mare, disheveled,

Black, dark, flew through the caves.

Let the sky tremble... oh ruin! oh disgrace!

Because the Black bandit is the one who passes,

Because the Black bandit shouted:

Fall, dew of the slave's blood,

Fall, dew, on the face of the executioner.

Grow, grow, red field,

Grow, grow, fierce vengeance.

Lightning sleeps in the black storm...

We are Black... the lightning ferments

In these chests covered in horror.

Launch the cry of the free cohort,

Launch, oh wind, deathly pampeiro,

This iron glove at the lord.

Fall, dew of the slave's blood,

Fall, dew, on the face of the executioner.

Grow, grow, red field,

Grow, grow, fierce vengeance.

Onward! oh race that never trembles!

For the warrior, a tent of shadows

Night sets up in the vast expanse.

Onward! swarm from the four horizons,

Come out of the vast crater of the mountains,

Where the condor leaps, the volcano.

Fall, dew of the slave's blood,

Fall, dew, on the face of the executioner.

Grow, grow, red field,

Grow, grow, fierce vengeance.

And the lord who sings at the feast

Stops the arm that raises the cup,

Crowned with blue flowers.

And murmurs, thinking he is in dreams:

"What demons are these, dreadful,

Who pass there, hungry and naked?"

Fall, dew of the slave's blood,

Fall, dew, on the face of the executioner.

Grow, grow, red field,

Grow, grow, fierce vengeance.

It is us, my lord, but do not tremble,

We broke our chains

To demand your wives or mothers.

This one is the son of the elder you killed.

This one — brother of the woman you defiled...

Oh! do not tremble, lord, we are your dogs.

Fall, dew of the slave's blood,

Fall, dew, on the face of the executioner.

Grow, grow, red field,

Grow, grow, fierce vengeance.

We are your dogs, who are cold and hungry,

Whom thirst consumes for ten centuries...

We want a vast, ferocious banquet...

Bring the cloak to cover our shoulders.

For you was made the purple of royalty,

A cloak of blood was made for us.

Fall, dew of the slave's blood,

Fall, dew, on the face of the executioner.

Grow, grow, red field,

Grow, grow, fierce vengeance.

My African lions, be alert!

Night keeps watch... the plain is deserted.

When the moon hides its light

Let the cry of life be torn out

In the banquet of death, served

Beside the crow, its mournful brother.

Fall, dew of the slave's blood,

Fall, dew, on the face of the executioner.

Grow, grow, red field,

Grow, grow, fierce vengeance.

Let the valley tremble, the steep cliff,

Let the sky tremble, heavy with thunder,

At the passing of the blast of heroes,

Who on fatal, disheveled mares

Go brandishing those white swords

Sharpened on the tombs of their ancestors.

Fall, dew of the slave's blood,

Fall, dew, on the face of the executioner.

Grow, grow, red field,

Grow, grow, fierce vengeance.

Castro Alves was one of the most famous Brazilian abolitionist and republican poets of the 19th century. in the words of Joaquim Nabuco, he was "the greatest Brazilian poet, lyric and epic."

Interview With Ghais Guevara

We interviewed North Philly rapper Ghais Guevara about his new album *Goyard Ibn Said*, creating Black Art, and looking towards the future as Black people for *The Crusader*. His art consistently pushes the limits of hip-hop as he deftly critiques imperialism and colonialism while exploring the deeply personal.

Crusader: First off, we wanted to know how you navigated that transition between *There Will Be No Super Slave* and *Goyard Ibn Said*? What kind of mindset did you go into the new album with?

Ghais: At first, it was kind of like an “I wanted to showcase versatility” thing, but it became narcissistic. Like pretentious - I don’t know, trying to act like there’s this barrier between different types of hip hop, as if one can’t be appreciated alongside the other. So, I kind of just decided to group them all into one cohesive showcase instead of a mainstream versus underground thing, and it ended up becoming something that’s more of a spectrum than, you know, two different sides.

C: Right, especially because people are convinced that there has to be a dichotomy.



G: Yeah. It was just weird being the human that existed between the planes, you know? So, it didn’t make any sense to just keep it as if I had to pick a side.

C: On this album, you were kind of experimenting with production. What type of influences did you draw on?

G: It really depended on the song or how I wanted to approach it. Like, a lot of 808s. On *Camera Shy*, I would listen to a lot of Chief Keef’s beats and how he would mix his shit. It’s just kind of scattered all over the

place, random books that I was reading at the time and things that I just thought contributed to the theme of the album overall.

C: What were you reading?

G: *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat*. And I was big on *Persona*;



the movie you know the Ingmar Bergman film? And you know, just big on a lot of early 2000s rappers and their lyricism and how they approached their shit.

C: With the rollout of this album, do you feel like there was something kind of under-acknowledged or glossed over in the way people approached it?

G: Yeah, I do definitely think people weren't really paying attention to the fact that there is a core story there... I'm seeing complaints about, like, Luke's involvement in the album - same complaints. They simply don't understand the album. It's like, well, I'm kind of telling you, literally. But other than just people outright not putting that effort in, I don't think, nah. I think pretty much everybody came to the similar conclusion that I wanted to present with the album.

C: I guess when it comes to art, you can't really predict the reactions.

G: Yeah, sometimes you're just too distant from a culture to really get it. I'm learning that sometimes, if you just don't get it, you're not there yet. You know, I'm out in Europe, I'm seeing some shit, and I'm just like, I don't get it yet, I'm not there yet. Maybe I will in the future.

C: Since you're in the UK right now, what are your thoughts on the interactions of Black people in the diaspora? Or what kind of lessons do you think we could probably pick up on?

G: In my experience, a lot of the diaspora folks over here are very much looking for an outlet. I guess that's just the nature of my career though, making music and shit. A lot of us don't mind living for others, living through others. You know what I mean? There's a thing of that "non-individualism" amongst all of them, and just no place where they can have that individualism just for a little a bit. I think they all feel a bit hassled, a bit overworked.

C: How is it being with other Black people who aren't American?

G: It's not even a fair comparison, because I spent the majority of my life in America, in impoverished neighborhoods, undereducated neighborhoods, so on and so forth. And over here, where I live at I'm in better places, better spaces, you know? It's still that thing of, "if you know, you know." I still kind of feel at home, so to speak. That's why I never get the differences, other than the surface level ethnic and linguistic differences and all of that.

C: If you had to think about how your art functions in service of Black radical thought - not to say that that is what your music *should be*, but when you're reflecting on it - how do you feel about how it intersects with revolutionary action?

G: If I'm being honest, the answer is always going to be more intangible than physical. I think the closest material means you can get is from an individual sense within your community and from a financial sense. But once you get into an organizational sense you can't, you can't balance that industry, you know. I wish it was a world in which you could be more directly impactful. And I think now, with the more direct consumer ways that we're consuming music, you can do more of a impactful giving back thing strictly from your music. Your proceeds can go to this and can be tied to this and fund things. There're ways, especially with the internet, but definitely as of now, the answer is probably, you know, the same old, lifting people up, giving them hope [laugh].

C: People already figure that, being a Black artist, your work has a political tinge to it. With that in mind, do you feel like that ever significantly impacts your writing process?

G: it used to definitely. I used to force myself to be like, 'I gotta have something to say. 'But at a certain point you just realize that's like the cop in your head. You know, it's a pretty narcissistic trait. Nowadays I'm kind of letting it come to me. You know what I mean, how close it is to home or whatever. I don't have to really chase tragedy. It's not something that I really force now, but definitely I used to.

C: We're kind of looking at a more explicit rightward shift worldwide. What are some things standing out to you the most?

G: It's one word I've been saying over and over: cannibalization. It's like people are just doing, growing, expanding, getting greedier and greedier. And then shit is like, oh, it's no more. And then they're like, oh, shit, I spent so much time chasing instant gratification that I didn't spend my time preparing for when that shit runs out. I be seeing that across industries, across people with themselves and their health and how they're treating themselves, I think we definitely have reached the thing of rushing towards glory and not understanding that it takes time. It takes each other.

We've created a system where the people that that grew up not having to recognize that; You know what

I mean, the Elons, the Trumps, they grew up in their shit. We've opened the door enough for them to literally sit there and be the rulers.

C: How was it growing up being taken along to rallies and protests, etc?

G: Yeah, I went to a bunch of MOVE rallies, for Mumia [Abu-Jamal] and all that. It makes you so much bolder. It's kind of weird thinking - being that young and already thinking your above authority [laugh] and just abusing it. And it's kind of weird, because children are, at the same time, they are an oppressed class. Like, definitely children are *the* most oppressed, but at the end of the day, people that value their kids, they know the kid is the fucking boss, like we have to figure out how this works around them, type of shit. So I was given a lot of room. You know, it helps to be that way. It's always times to be bold, it's always time to be louder and to question something. At a certain point you realize you can't fight everything. And, you know, fight every battle and start every argument. It's just like you gotta let people be stupid.

C: Does it help you articulate your positions whenever you need to?

G: Yeah, definitely. I mean, joining those helps to have those conversations forever. And then it loads up for later. That's what I think a lot of people don't understand about talking to me, is - well, that's what I had to figure out about a lot of people. A lot of us are literally just making it up as we go. So being able to have that ammo, because we've done it so many times, and they had those conversations so many times, definitely helps.

C: How do you bridge that gap (even though it's usually not a big one) between being more politically aware all your life, versus folks who weren't on that type of time?

G: I mean, I love meeting people where they where they're at, I love when a person doesn't understand. Sure, let me explain, give me the reassurance that you're trying to meet me where I'm at. So, you know, I don't see the incentive in being condescending. It's only reserved for, like, showing off, but it's really no purpose in everyday life.

C: Are there any texts you would ask other Black people to try and pick up in this climate?

G: Oh, I forgot to mention - *Black Skin, White Masks*. That was another big influence. I think that's a big one, because we're coming to a point I think a lot of Black

people, I was talking to FARO, I think we as Black folk, have finally fought ourselves to the point where we are allowed to think about our existential existence beyond, like, certain types of oppression. It's just more and more well-off Black folk now It's producing certain kinds of communities and shit like that. You know what I mean? Sons of rappers and sons of ball players, and they're going out and they're having their experiences, their fun. It's fucking loaded. It's not the same anymore.

C: It's wild when you meet Black people who only have class aspirations.

G: It's slipping into more and more of us having those actual identity crises. I just think the book really does do a good job at, like, dialing it back and just understanding where certain things come from. That [book], Dubois, *The Souls of Black Folk* too. I think it's big on that too. Yeah, powerful shit.

C: Thank you! Is there anything you wanna end on?

G: I'm supposed to be doing a mixtape soon, I'm very excited about it.

C: When is that coming out?

G: Um, I don't know. [laugh] They want me to do a couple songs first, then we'll figure it all out. I want to have some summer songs.

An Artist of the People – A *Nova Democracia*

We republish this article from Brazilian democratic and revolutionary newspaper A Nova Democracia (The New Democracy in English). Founded by a mix of veteran revolutionaries from the 1970s, worker and peasant leaders, as well as progressive intellectuals, A Nova Democracia has been the leading voice for the Brazilian revolutionary movement for more than two decades.

Solano Trindade was a communist militant, poet, painter and theatrical artist. He opposed social and racial injustice and loved the arts. His story is intertwined with the artistic vocation of the city of Embu das Artes. His daughter, Raquel Trindade, who continued his work, tells us about his career, which is intertwined with her own. And vice versa.

Born in Recife in 1908, Solano learned to dance Pastoril and Bumba-meu-boi from an early age with his father, the shoemaker Manuel Abílio. With his mother, Emerenciana, a baker, he began to read cordel literature and romantic poetry. However, unlike his parents, Solano was revolutionary for his time.

While still living in the Northeast, he took part in black cultural movements, such as the First and Second Afro-Brazilian Congresses in 1934 and 1937, organized and proposed by Gilberto Freire, and in 1936 he created the Pernambuco Black Front with José Vicente Limas, Barros Mulato, and a few other comrades of the time. The Front was aimed at the anti-racist struggle and the search for African cultural roots.

After publishing some poems, he began his pilgrimage. He traveled to Minas Gerais and then to Rio Grande do Sul, where he set up a Popular Art Group.

But Solano really left his family in the northeast to try life in Rio de Janeiro. Raquel, his daughter, tells us:

"After he left, Mom thought he was taking too long, and we came by ship after him. She only knew that he met at the Vermelinho [bar and café], which was opposite the Brazilian Press Association, she went there and Grande Otelo said: "he comes here every day, in the afternoon". He welcomed us as if he himself had sent for us. His friends raised money and he rented a rooming house in Rua do Livramento, in Rio de Janeiro, in Gamboa."

Political activism

Vermelinho was a place where young left-wing artists, poets, intellectuals and journalists gathered. There he was friends with people like Barão de Itararé and Santa Rosa, Aníbal Machado, the writer Eneida ... Raquel remembers them discussing the Second World War, the Soviet Union, Stalin and Trotsky.

In the 1940s, Solano Trindade joined the Communist Party. Shortly afterwards, he and his family moved to the city of Duque de Caxias, in the Baixada Fluminense. He belonged to the cell Tiradentes, which functioned in his own home, where peasants, intellectuals and workers gathered. Raquel remembers this period of his militancy:

"He had tasks that the party passed on. There was a lot we didn't know. There were Prestes' birthday parties. There were the rallies, there was the time of "O petróleo é nosso" (oil is ours), I even helped to collect signatures, there was a time later against the atomic bomb. There was a lot I didn't know, but I was a young girl and I wasn't connected yet."



Cast of the Teatro Popular S. T.

Solano was arrested twice, once in Niterói and again during the Dutra government's communist persecution, when he lived in Duque de Caxias. Raquel says that the police arrived and her brother, Liberto, was sick with measles. The police turned over the mattress with the boy and everything to see if there were any weapons.

"They took him into custody. At first we thought it was because of the poem (Tem gente com fome), but now with a survey at Dops I found out that it was a complaint, from a person who lived in the vermelinho," says Raquel. Mother and daughter went through all the prisons to find their father, worried about torture. They found him and he wasn't tortured."

Solano left the party because he believed that the problem of black people wasn't just economic, it was also racial. He believed that poor people also needed to have more access to culture and the arts in order to have equality "We will not fight racial battles, but we will teach our black brothers and sisters that there is no superior or inferior race and what distinguishes one from the other is cultural development. These are legitimate desires that no one in good faith can refuse to cooperate with," said Solano.

Solano died a socialist, but outside the party.

Art of Solano

As well as painting and writing his poems, Solano was also a militant of the arts and fought hard to ensure that popular and folk art was widely disseminated.

Shortly after arriving in Rio de Janeiro in '45, he set up the Brazilian Folkloric Theater with his wife and Haroldo Costa. By this time, Solano's paintings had been sold internationally in group exhibitions and one of his books had been published, **Poemas d'uma vida simplesn** . The "Brasiliana" group left the Folkloric Theater with the Polish director Askanasi, a dance group that became famous for numerous performances abroad. However, with the director the group lost its authenticity, the folkloric traditions were stylized and Solano decided to leave the group and form his most important and successful movement, the Brazilian Popular Theatre.

Although it didn't present plays, it was called a theater because "it encompassed plastic arts, literature and dance and because what the people do is a theater, it's a popular theater, that's why it's the Brazilian Popular Theater," explains Raquel. Created by Solano, Margarida Trindade and sociologist Édson Carneiro, the TPB performed readings of dances such as maracatu, lundu and bumba-meu-boi. It was made up of maids, workers, students and teachers. They rehearsed in Rua da Constituição, in Rio, when it was formed in 1950, but soon moved to Duque de Caxias.

With TPB, Solano went to Eastern Europe in 1955. They toured Poland and Czechoslovakia in 21 different cities. He took part in the International Popular Dance Competition and performed to an audience of 5,000.

Embu of the Arts

Back in Brazil, at a performance in São Paulo, he met the sculptor Assis, who already lived in Embu and invited him to come to the city. Solano fell in love with Embu and took the whole cast there.

"We had a three-day party, dancing in the streets, painting, which began to attract tourists from all over the world. And today Embu is Embu das Artes (Embu of the Arts) thanks to my father" - says Raquel.

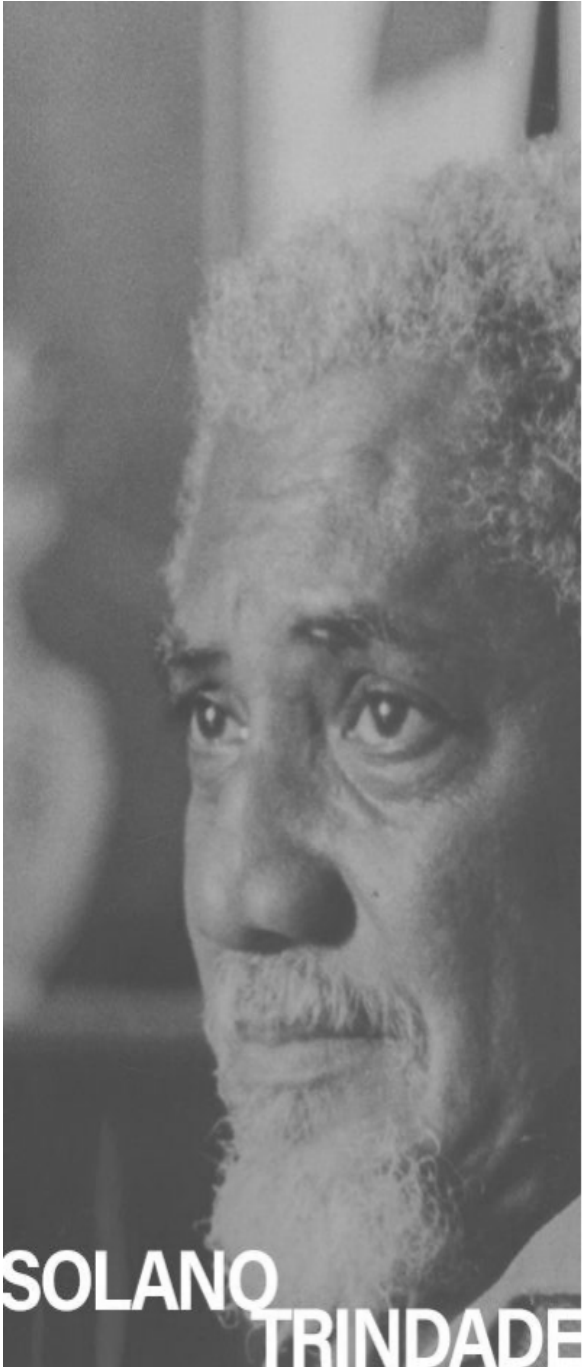
Ever since Duque de Caxias, he wanted to create a city dedicated to the arts and he succeeded in Embu. The craft fair came later. Together with Solano, the artists from Embu had started a movement in Praça da República in São Paulo in 1966.

"We'd go there in the morning and come back to Embu in the afternoon - Raquel recalls - so Assis was worried that the movement there would hinder tourists coming to Embu. This was the start of the craft fair in Embu. We'd go to the Republic in the morning and come back with the rippies from the 60s with their handicrafts, and then it broke out in '68, '69. Dad's group danced in the streets, we painted..."

The Brazilian Popular Theater continued to perform in colleges, on the street, in almost all the theaters in São Paulo at the time and many across the country. Always with a large audience, according to Raquel Trindade. When Solano died in 1974, Raquel Trindade created the Solano Trindade Popular Theater in 1975 to continue his work. She continued the path of knowledge, passing on cultural and folkloric traditions from father to son, which are now even found in Raquel Trindade's grandchildren.

For Raquel, her father's greatest social contribution was to help preserve popular culture and all his work for black people's self-esteem, to make them stronger.

"But it's not just for black people, it's for all ethnic groups. There was a phrase of his that we still use today: 'Research the source of origin, give back in the form of art'" - adds Raquel.



I am Black
my grandparents were burned
by the African sun
my soul received the baptism of drums
atabaques, gonguês and agogôs

They told me that my grandparents
came from Luanda
as cheap merchandise
they planted sugarcane for the master of the new
plantation
and founded the first *Maracatu*

Then my grandfather fought like a madman
on the lands of Zumbi
he was fierce as could be
in *capoeira* or with a knife
read not, wrote not
he let the stick talk
He wasn't a meek and
humble Uncle Tom

My grandma
was no joke
in the Malê Revolt
she stood out

In my soul remained
samba
batucada
the sway of the hips
and the longing for liberation...

Reader Submissions

Identity and Black Nation

By Charlie Himes

At the beginning of the great Black American novel *Invisible Man*, the main character opens with a question fundamental to the Black American experience, "Who am I?" (Ellison 1995). A simple yet frustrating question. Answering this, to the main character, "was like trying to identify one particular cell that coursed through the torpid veins" of his body (Ibid).

The main character in *Invisible Man* is never named, he is *nameless*. Black American literature constantly struggles and grapples with the questions the unnamed main character of Ralph Ellison's novel asks. Themes in writing among a people are not random, oftentimes they correspond to a socio-historical experience. The struggle of self-identification corresponds to the unique experience of chattel slavery and national oppression we face as Black folks. It makes sense why this is a persistent theme, and why Black American literature isn't "exclusively about roses and moonlight" (Hughes 1947). The many voices of our great authors, poets, playwrights, and songwriters give light to this question in such a way we cannot ignore should we wish to tackle the pressing questions Black folks face.

In the late 40s, Black American author and intellectual James Baldwin travelled to Europe to stay in Paris. Faced with the many challenges of being a Black American, he sought out a societal experience in which he wasn't solely defined by his Black identity. According to Baldwin, he did not want to be "merely a Negro; or, even, merely a Negro writer."

During his tenure in Europe, Baldwin produced a series of essays, one of which being "The Discovery of What It Means to Be an American."¹ In this essay, we see Baldwin wrestle with the question of self-identification. Baldwin struggles with his own identity, emphasizing it was largely alien to him while being "merely a Negro" in America (Baldwin 1961).

Despite Baldwin speaking positively of his time in Europe, he admits to never coming to a "Discovery of What it Means to Be an American" (Ibid). The question for him "was not solved" because he extracted himself

"from the social forces which menaced" him (Ibid). The trajectory of Baldwin's realizations here is important. Baldwin recognizes he is unable to understand his identity beyond national oppression in America, so he leaves. Once being removed from the context of American society, he comes no closer to his answer, instead coming full circle to the realization that the answer only lies in confronting the oppression that denies us identity. Baldwin would place this essay in a compilation of essays he would call "Nobody Knows My Name".

The lack of identity among our people has created in many ways crisis and confusion. Faced with this problem, our people have turned to claiming separate identities entirely, to cynical nonconfrontation with the question at all. We can turn to Alex Haley's *Roots* to get a better sense of this. *Roots* is a historiographical novel by Alex Haley that follows the life of a Madinka man named Kunta Kinte, captured and sold into slavery in America.

TV adaptations of the novel often portray a fundamental opening scene of Kunta refusing to be referred to by his slave name, Toby, instead bearing a beating from the white slaveholder. Why does he take this beating? Quite simply, it is because he remembers his real name. It is illogical at that moment to pretend to be someone he is not. He can fight to be Kunta because he knows he is Kunta. For Black folks today, the socio-historical moment in which we were concretely connected to our African cultures is over. We no longer know our names like Kunta or lineage due to a concerted effort of severance through oppression and exploitation.

In the novel, when Kunta first begins to be called Toby, he is adamant, correcting other enslaved folks with his real name. Upon hearing this, one Brown man says, "to forgit all dat African talk" or else he'll "Make white folks mad" (Haley 1977). Even his frustration of

becoming "Toby" serves a microcosm for the larger historical process in which an entire generation was forcefully stripped of their identities. One scene depicts Kunta trying to sleep, but is too tormented by the name "Toby". When he expresses his rage by kicking his legs, "the movement only gouged the iron cuffs deeper into his ankles, which made him cry again" (Haley). This bitter experience encapsulates how the anger of this generation, while righteous, "gouged the iron cuffs deeper", and created a moment of purging, a loss of identity.

Toward the end of the novel, we see that Kunta's legacy is carried on by his daughter, who is given an Madinka name, Kizzy. Kunta's capture and forced severance from his heritage represent a historical process by which connection to the various African identities we descend from dies. Despite giving his daughter a Madinka first name, she is officially given the name "Kizzy Waller" by his master, americanizing her. Between one generation we in an instant became Kizzy Waller from Kunta Kinte.

In light of this process, efforts to learn Yoruba, or don ourselves in what we vaguely believe to be "African" attire appear misguided. Much like how Baldwin realized he couldn't run from being a "Negro", we must realize only by confronting our reality through the struggle for socialism as Black Americans can we grasp our identity. Malcolm X himself dealt with this struggle in a profound way, refusing to choose an African name disconnected from him, instead donning the placeholder "X" to indicate a lack of identity.

In 1933, a young Black author who had fled the South named Richard Wright had met writer Nelson Algren in the Chicago John Reed Club, a cultural organization apart of the united front of the Communist Party of the U.S.A. Algren had an idea for his novel about living in Texas during the great depression, hoping to name it *Native Son*. He ended up ceding the name to Wright, who'd end up publishing the book under the name in 1940.

When he was not writing articles for the communist publication *The Daily Worker*, Richard Wright took time to create *Native Son*. Set in the 1930s, the main character Bigger Thomas is a young Black man living in a poor neighborhood in Chicago. Throughout the novel, Bigger struggles with the reality of national

oppression. At one point he expresses his frustration that the white ruling class "don't let us do nothing" and says he reckons Black folks are the "only things in this city that can't go where we want to go and do what we want to do" (Wright 2005). Bigger's reference to Black folks at "things" is indicative of the thematic lack of identity we continue to see. He reduces his people to mere objects that are passive, completely subject to the whims of the white ruling class.

The only time we see Bigger break free from the inanimate existence he describes is when he "felt things hard enough to kill for" things (Ibid). When describing the real-life inspirations he had for the character of Bigger, Richard Wright describes the type of person as someone who "knew that some day he'd have to pay for his freedom" (Ibid). The acts Bigger takes to break free from his social reality are oftentimes heated by blind rage to the immediate oppression he faced, hoping to rob his landlord, or kill a white woman in fear of getting caught with her. It was in "actions such as these he felt that there was a way to escape" from the reality of Blackness. Bigger is by no means a hero, and his violence is ill-aimed, patriarchal, and by no means liberating. The communist lawyer of the novel who defends Bigger in his trial makes the argument that he is a product of the particular social relations that denied him his personhood.

In his writings on Frantz Fanon's *Wretched of the Earth*, James Yaki Sayles points out how Fanon distinguishes between the Native and Ex-Native, with a "mental pathology which is the direct product of oppression" separating the two (Fanon 2004). Tangled up in this mental pathology, we must learn from the incorrect response Bigger represents to the national oppression that denies us our personhood. Bigger's violence is not building an "identity apart from that of the colonizer" or a part of a struggle to "become a new person and to build a new society" (Sayles 2010). We must find our identity in a struggle to build a new society through socialist revolution led by the multinational working class, not in mimicry like Bigger. It is correct to identify violence as a purifying force by which we will find ourselves, something which Wright's novel offers us an inkling of. However, it is only violence employed in an organized way in the process of *becoming* and *building* that Sayles describes, not the sporadic violence Bigger employs. We must struggle to mold ourselves to build "the new earth" that Black Communist poet Margaret Walker wrote of, as

opposed to a "people blundering and groping and floundering".

Our identity shall be found through our struggle. The premature stage of the subjective forces of the Black liberation movement correspond to the weak understanding of our national identity we see now. Today, we see how this plays out with the Trump administration's attack on the education system. To merely acknowledge the legacy of slavery in curriculums is now grounds for the revocation of funding. Without a strong National movement to defend ourselves from these attacks, how will we even get close to answering questions pertaining to our struggle? What purpose will our narrative be if the capitalist education system ends up teaching our children the complete opposite?

When Baldwin says that "A people deprived of political sovereignty finds it very nearly impossible to recreate, for itself, the image of its past", we must take this as a call to action (Baldwin 1961). The struggle for recreation is only possible through the struggle for political sovereignty. It is only by the shovels of our revolution will be unearth the truth of our past, and with its hammers will we will forge it into our future. Baldwin also remarked that in American society "the individual must fight for his identity", we must modify this today to say that the Black working class and its allies must fight for our identity through socialist revolution (Ibid).

To the unnamed character of Ralph Ellison's novel, your question still remains unanswered. We are a people who have yet to find out who we are. This is by no means an indication of despair or dread. Only by acknowledging our shortcomings and the concrete limitations of our national struggle can we overcome them.

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Liberation CALENDAR

August

August 1

1927: Founding of the People's Liberation Army of China

August 7

1970: Jonathan Jackson, William Christmas and James McClain killed in liberation attempt at Marin County Courthouse

August 8

1946: John C. Jones lynched near Minden, LA, after legal frame-up attempt failed

August 11

1842: Robert Brown Elliot born

August 14

1862: Lincoln meets with Black representatives and urges emigration to Africa or Central America

August 15

1730: Slave conspiracy discovered in Charlestown, SC

August 17

1887: Marcus Garvey born

August 18

1971: Republic of New Afrika leaders attacked by FBI in Jackson, Mississippi

August 21

1971: Assassination of George Jackson
1831: Beginning of Nat Turner's Rebellion

August 22

1791: Beginning of the Haitian Revolution

1843: Henry Highland Garnet makes speech in Buffalo, NY and calls for slave revolt and general strike

August 26

1874: 16 Blacks taken from a Tennessee jail by racist mob and shot

1966: Start of the armed struggle in Namibia

August 28

1955: Death of Emmett Till, 14, at the hands of racist mob

August 30

1800: Unsuccessful slave rebellion in Richmond, VA led by Gabriel Prosser

Join class-conscious and militant Mass Organizations!



New Labor Organizing Committee

<https://newlaborpress.org/>

Instagram: @newlaborpress

Email: newlaboroc@proton.me

The New Labor Organizing Committee (NLOC) is a newly founded committee that works as a coordinating body for independent labor organizations and class-conscious workers within the United States and its overseas territories (Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, etc.). To get involved with NLOC you must believe in the importance of the struggle of workers around the world against the owners and their imperialist system, take a stand against the actions and ideas of opportunists in the labor movement, believe in the mission of creating an independent, class-conscious, democratic and combative labor movement, and be willing to get to work actually making that mission a reality.

Revolutionary Student Union

<https://revolutionarystudentsunion.wordpress.com/>

Instagram: @rsu.usa

Email: revolutionarystudentsunion@proton.me

The Revolutionary Student Union (RSU) is mass organization of revolutionary students in the US and Canada. It's core beliefs include the necessity of revolution to overcome capitalism, the importance of supporting the working class movement, the need to combat racism and national oppression, support for women and LGBTQ liberation through revolution, and the importance of countering opportunism within the revolutionary movement. It also emphasize the mass line (exchanging ideas to and from the masses) as a means of maintaining direct communication with the masses and supporting militant self-defense of the working class and oppressed peoples.

People's Defense Committee

Instagram: @peoplesdefensecommittee

Email: PDCnational@proton.me

The PDC's sector of work is to organize the proletariat and the oppressed masses where we live and spend our time outside of work. The people's defense committees thus have a dual purpose: they mobilize, politicize and organize the tenant masses around their demands using the *tenant union/committee* form and they use the *popular assembly* form to mobilize, politicize and organize the broader masses around their community grievances, whether those be related to austerity and infrastructure neglect, national liberation, defense of the rights of oppressed groups such as women, migrants, oppressed nations, LGBT people, etc.

**"A Pira da Civilização Burguesa" –
("The Pyre of Bourgeois Civilization" in
English)**

Oil and Acrylic on Canvas
30×60cm

By Bellini

You can see more of his art at:
[@bellini_arte](#) on Instagram

*"...nothing ever happened to the main culprits,
for the simple reason that they were always
incited, encouraged, stimulated, and then
protected by politicians, financiers, and
authorities—and above all, by the reactionary
press."*

*"15,000 people—men, women, and children—
cheered when gasoline was poured over the Black
man and the fire set. They fought, shouted, and
pushed to get closer..."*

*"Men of all social classes, women, and
children were present at the scene."*

Source of the quotes: Ho Chi Minh –
Writings Vol. I – Nova Cultura Editions.

