

Program for Black Liberation

FEBRUARY 1969

The struggle of Black people for their liberation has reached unprecedented heights. Beginning with the 1964 Harlem uprising, millions have engaged in open—and frequently armed—resistance to ruling-class oppression. Black rebellions represent the most advanced aspect of class struggle in the U.S. at the present time. They have shaken the ruling class as have no other events in the past 30 years.

Despite government claims, conditions of life for most Black people have worsened over the years. This is true for the entire working class, but because of the special oppression of Black people it is worse for them. They bear the brunt of the contradictions of U.S. imperialism.

U.S. imperialism has received many important setbacks around the world. Two in particular have created enormous problems for the U.S. ruling class: the People's War in Vietnam, and such increasing competition from other imperialist countries that the U.S. can no longer completely dominate Western Europe and Japan.

The resulting loss of profits has forced this country's rulers to bear down even harder on their workers, as they must if they are to continue to make the maximum profits necessary to maintain capitalism. For that system can only survive by seeking not just the average but maximum profits. This is the reason for the oppression of Black workers at home and the oppression of the people in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Nor is such oppression an aberration of capitalism or the work of particularly deranged imperialists; it is the normal and necessary operation of imperialism.

Exploitation and systematic robbery of Black workers at home is the most profitable and most vital domestic business of U.S. imperialism. By discriminating against Black people the ruling class is able to force on them a per capita income of \$1,000 less per year than that of white people. When that figure is multiplied by the 22 million Black people it becomes clear that racism earns the bosses \$22 billion each year. Because the ruling class is able

to depress Black workers' wages, it forces down wages of all workers. Who can calculate the billions amassed by bosses each year by this method? Additional billions are saved each year by bosses who limit the life-giving social services available to Black people. Then there is the robbery of higher food prices and higher rents for inferior housing, all of which shows the enormity of Black oppression.

The cruel meaning of this for Black workers is more unemployment, lower wages, and worse living conditions. It means worse schools, worse medical facilities, more garbage on the streets, little or no decent low-rent housing, more and worse slums, high infant mortality, lower life expectancy and more police terror to prevent or contain the inevitable resistance to this state of affairs.

Such has been the treatment meted out to Black people for over 350 years, first as slaves, then as wage slaves. If one could calculate the hundreds of billions in profits derived from the super-exploitation of Black workers during the last three and a half centuries, one would see that imperialism relies on these profits for its vigor. Similarly the plunder of colonial nations in Asia, Africa and Latin America is the most profitable external business of U.S. imperialism, which explains the fierceness of the Vietnam War and the lengths to which the U.S. will go to retain its influence and control there.

The imperialists use racist ideas to justify their brutal exploitation of national minorities at home and workers and oppressed people abroad. They do this in order to set one group of workers against another and so cover up the fact that the basic and common enemy of all workers is the class of big businessmen and the imperialist system of private ownership.

Only when this imperialist system is eliminated, the government* that protects it smashed and the working class in absolute control will all the workers, for the first time, be able to lead a decent life. This means building socialism, because imperialism can only be replaced by socialism.

Imperialism exists to the degree that it can continue racist exploitation. Three and a half centuries of drumming home to

* By "government" we mean the entire state power—every repressive force on every level of government that can be used to blunt and defeat the workers' fight for their class interests: the army; National Guard; state, county and city police; courts; jails; laws (injunctions, martial law, etc.).

Black and white workers the myth of Black inferiority enables the ruling class to continue its oppression; and unless the working class learns to reject racism it cannot end that oppression. No worker, Black or white, should have any illusion that U.S. imperialism can ever grant full equality to Black workers. To do so would end the maximum profits made possible only by Black exploitation.

Black rebellions are currently the most advanced expression of class struggle. They are a serious threat to the ruling class, which, after the Harlem rebellion, prepared a massive effort to suppress future Black rebellions. It well understood that Black working people were not going to take their worsening conditions lying down. Though the ruling class acted to pacify some leaders and militants with the "War on Poverty" programs, it realized the limits of its economic resources. It could bribe a few leaders and co-opt many others, but 95 per cent of the 22 million Black people are part of the working class; and you can't buy off that many people! So the ruling class moved a massive police and army apparatus into action to prevent or smash the Black working people's rebellions. Ruling-class strategy, as always, was to use the dual tactic of bribery and, ultimately, terror.

In each city across the country and in many rural areas the ruling class has mustered a huge army of police, National Guard and regular Army units to suppress the forces of ever-threatening Black rebellion. In addition, the ruling class, finding itself weak, feels it necessary to augment these agencies of state power with "unofficial" vigilante groups. This serves the purpose of diverting Black and white workers from fighting the ruling class to fighting each other.

U.S. imperialism, therefore, is faced with a serious second military front at home. This limits what it can throw against other oppressed people in Asia, Africa, Latin America and socialist China and Albania. Black rebellions help the fight of all people who try to free themselves from U.S. domination. And, in turn, the efforts of any people around the world who fight the U.S. rulers help Black workers at home, since U.S. imperialists must weaken themselves trying to put down these rebellions.

Unquestionably, the heroic efforts of the Vietnamese people inspired the battle of Black workers at home. Millions of Black workers now identify with the struggles of the Vietnamese people, and many recognize that U.S. imperialism is their common enemy.

Recently, in response to the statement of Mao Tse-tung in support of the Black Liberation Movement, revolutionary forces all over the world added their voices in support of Black liberation.

The revolution in Vietnam has exposed the myth of U.S. "democracy," thereby spurring millions around the world to organize against U.S. imperialism, weakening and isolating it politically. Even a U.S. deal in Vietnam made with the help of revisionists in Hanoi and Moscow cannot perfume the stench of U.S. democracy.

Shatters U.S.A. Myth

Because Black worker rebellions occur in the heart of U.S. imperialism, they directly affect both the class struggle at home and the international class struggle. Because of this simultaneous attack on its maximum profits, U.S. rulers repress them violently, despite the political consequences. But this repression by the U.S. rulers is another blow to their phony democratic image. Black action exposes the actual character of the U.S. imperialists. This political awareness will eventually lead to even sharper efforts against the U.S. bosses at home and abroad.

The action of millions of Black workers is also a shattering blow to the myth of U.S. invincibility. Black rebellion destroys the idea of "American exceptionalism"—the idea that U.S. imperialism is "enlightened" and can master its internal contradictions. Black rebellions have pointed up the possibilities for revolution. They show the ruling class is not omnipotent, and easily panics in the face of sharp struggle. Black rebellions finish forever the racist notion that Black people are docile, servile, trained by their circumstances to endless passivity.

A life free of exploitation and oppression is only possible when the capitalist state has been smashed, capitalism outlawed, the country ruled absolutely by the workers, and socialism is being built. Capitalism and imperialism, the bosses' private ownership of industry, can only be replaced by its opposite—socialism, the workers' public ownership of industry. The most important point to be concerned about in fighting imperialism is political power. Either the imperialists have political power and use it to protect imperialism by repressing the workers, as in Vietnam, or the workers have political power and use it to repress the imperialists, outlaw capitalism and build socialism, as in China and Albania.

This workers' political power is called the proletarian (or workers') dictatorship (which means dictatorship over the imperialists).

Countries that checked imperialism but did not establish a dictatorship of the workers halted imperialism only momentarily; they are again controlled by the imperialists. Algeria, Egypt, Guinea, Ghana, India, etc., are all controlled by some imperialist or by all of them. The U.S., Britain, France and the USSR really run these countries. What has changed is the position of the national bourgeoisie (the "home-grown" bosses of the colonial country) who used to be oppressed by imperialism and now front for it.

In these countries the masses of people are in desperate straits. Their rulers call themselves socialists merely as a concession to the people's socialist beliefs and sense of international solidarity. In none of these countries do the workers hold political power. And since there are only two classes capable of holding state power—the working class or the capitalist class—it is the latter that continues to rule. The working class is still exploited and does not own or control the means of production and the state power that is needed to enforce that control. That, too, is the state of affairs, in countries once socialist, like the USSR, where the dictatorship of the workers has been overthrown and turned into its opposite—the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

In the supposedly "liberated" colonial countries and in the former socialist countries, the ruling bourgeoisie spreads the idea of loyalty to "our nation." But since only one class can hold power in any nation, "loyalty to the nation" can only mean loyalty to the class that holds power in that nation—which means to the bourgeoisie, in all countries not ruled by the workers' dictatorship. Such "national loyalty," which really means loyalty to imperialism, is expressed in the United States by supporting reactionary, racist, fascist and anti-working-class groups.

The ruling capitalist class urges on the workers a nationalist ideology to replace their loyalty to the international working class. The latter loyalty—internationalism—is a fundamental Marxist-Leninist idea that runs exactly counter to nationalism. Consequently it is in the class interests of U.S. imperialists to promote nationalist ideas among workers since it diverts them from loyalty to their own class. Nationalism is a bourgeois idea, which infects workers and prevents them from winning their freedom from the capitalist class.

Although Black workers today are usually consciously pro-

pelled into struggle because of their nationalist beliefs, this nationalism has its material base in the fact of special class oppression of Black workers by the ruling class. The initial reaction of Black workers to this oppression may take the form of a proud affirmation of the "blackness" which the bourgeoisie uses to set them apart for special oppression. Unless the fundamental, but usually ignored, working-class content of the Black workers' struggle becomes the conscious basis for action, the ruling class will co-opt the movement. The imperialists can always turn the initial nationalist reaction to class oppression into a reactionary movement if the nationalism is not transformed into conscious loyalty to the entire working class and to the class struggle.

In the course of the fight against class oppression, Black workers put forward special demands to meet their special class oppression. They understand these demands to be nationalist demands. There are three types of such demands: (1) the demand for more Black supervisors; (2) the demand for an end to oppressive working conditions such as speedup (which may even take the form of saying "speedup is an attempt to destroy the Black workers"); and (3) the demand for preferential hiring and up-grading.

The first type of demand will not help end special class oppression of Black workers. On the contrary, it will intensify it; it is a bourgeois demand. It creates a group of Black straw bosses who will be more effective than white straw bosses in running the factories and overcoming Black workers' resentment against the bosses. This must be opposed.

The second type of demand is clearly in the interests of the entire working class; we support it. The fight against such conditions as speedup is a fight against oppression of all workers, even though some Black workers may see speedup merely as a special attack on them.

The third type of demand is in the interests of the entire working class, although this is not always clearly understood by white and Black workers. Such demands are in opposition to the special class oppression of Black workers. Imperialism requires this special oppression to maintain itself. The struggle against this special oppression, to improve the conditions of Black workers, is a struggle against the imperialist system that is responsible for the common oppression of all workers. White workers must therefore support such demands.

The real answer to the ruling class' nationalist ideology, which corrupts the struggle for class demands, lies in Marxism-Leninism, which rests on internationalism and loyalty to the working class and is the only serious enemy of imperialism. It is only Marxism-Leninism that can take the imperialists' state power from them and place it in the hands of the workers.

Therefore, it is decisive for Marxist-Leninists to be actively involved in all aspects of the class struggle in our country and through these struggles learn how to win millions of people to the fight for the workers' dictatorship. All history proves conclusively that no people can determine its own destiny without the dictatorship of the workers.

Black Workers' Key Role

Black people in our county are overwhelmingly workers, with almost two million in the organized labor movement. Many are in basic industry, often in the most decisive sections. Therefore, the essence of Black liberation is working-class liberation. And a correct revolutionary strategy must be working-class struggle based on the needs of Black workers.

A worker-led Black Liberation Movement, however, will not easily spring up. The revisionist (anti-Marxist-Leninist) notion of "all-class unity" is still the prevailing idea of Black militants within the movement. For years the Communist Party pushed this idea. It claims that since all Blacks are oppressed by being Black, and since all Blacks are equally oppressed, it is irrelevant to differentiate them into classes. Rather, the common bond provided by ruling class oppression unifies all Black people; and if Black people are not unified they are weakened.

This theory contains a fundamental error: It disputes the pre-eminence of Black workers, thereby requiring and justifying the leadership of the petty bourgeoisie. And this means accepting the reactionary bunk of middle-class Black nationalists.

All-class unity means obscuring class demands and accepting ruling-class ideology. First it meant encouraging the non-violent integrationist leadership. As the various Rev. King types lost their footing among large sections of militants, they were replaced by Black Power advocates. Their aim was not to defeat imperialism but to reform it and get "in" using more militant tactics than their predecessors.

The ostensible goal of the "all class unity" theory was the "completion of the bourgeois-democratic revolution." Although the C.P. and others occasionally mouthed the idea of Black workers being in leadership, what they actually had in mind was gaining equality under capitalism for Black people. But this is impossible. The outlook must be to smash capitalism, get rid of the existing state apparatus and replace it with the dictatorship of the proletariat. And this can only be done under the leadership of the working class—Black and white.

Later, demands of Black Power advocates were outlined as Black capitalism. This has been further refined to demands for "community control" or "decentralization." Most leaders of these movements were virtually bought off. This was done through the various government anti-poverty agencies, private foundations like the Ford Foundation, or simply working for the government.

Many petty-bourgeois forces used the militancy and national feelings of Black masses to bargain for a place in the bourgeois sun. Obviously, ruling class strategy is not reduced to terror. To contain Black liberation, the ruling class works to impose on Black people a phony leadership. They have already succeeded in doing this to white workers.

A Black bourgeoisie never developed in the U.S., although many people talk about one. Black people do not own any significant portion of the means of production. They are not a factor in the basic economic ownership of the country. There is no national Black bourgeoisie in the United States; and even if there were there would be no justification for its leadership of the Black Liberation Movement.

In many colonial countries the national bourgeoisie often struggles against the imperialists for a larger share of the profits. At some stage in this struggle the national bourgeoisie may attempt to enlist the support of workers. However, the national bourgeoisie will always betray any workers with whom it has formed a temporary alliance. This occurs when workers begin to rid themselves of nationalism and adopt working-class struggle attitudes and practices towards imperialists and towards the national bourgeoisie. In other words, when workers of an oppressed country fight for class leadership, for the dictatorship of the proletariat, the national bourgeoisie will unite with the imperialists to stop it. For example: In Egypt the national bourgeoisie, under Nasser's leadership, with the USSR as its main

economic and military backer, has been murdering communists and militants for years while mouthing an anti-imperialist line. In Indonesia when the national bourgeoisie felt the power of the communist movement and of the workers and peasants was too strong, it slaughtered 500,000, using Soviet and U.S. imperialist aid. And the bloodbaths and jailings aren't over. The Indian ruling class has wiped out each electoral victory of the people with killings and jailings. There, too, the military arsenal is furnished by the Soviet Union and the U.S. All this proves that the national bourgeoisie is the implacable enemy of the people. And you surely can't vote them out.

As long as the Black Liberation Movement remains under the leadership of fake radicals, basing themselves on the petty bourgeoisie, it is no threat to the ruling class. Within the Black community there is a tiny group of small businessmen who want a monopoly market in the Black community. There is a larger group of offspring of this small middle class and of other relatively privileged families who want to "make it" in the white capitalist world. These petty-bourgeois forces, often reactionary "intellectuals" like LeRoi Jones, demagogically identify with the militancy of the Black masses. They are articulate and, with the cooperation of the bourgeois publicity media, they emerge as the "leaders" and "spokesmen" of the Black masses. After they get a little footing among the people—when they have 40 or 50 followers—they demand that the bosses give them jobs. One could fill the pages of a book with the names of Black "leaders" who now work for the government or the Ford Foundation.

The burning militancy of the Black masses impels the ruling class to engage in this farce because it is in the ruling class' interests. It slows the development of working-class leaders thoroughly dedicated to the defeat of imperialism. It slows the development of long-range strategy and planning. It limits unity of Black and white workers. These Black middle-class elements manipulate the understandable anti-white feeling in the Black community in order to share the plunder of racist imperialism. The sight of leader after leader selling out reinforces cynicism and defeatism already found among sections of the Black community.

The idea of "all-class unity" under petty-bourgeois leadership must be replaced by a Black Liberation Movement that is a workers' movement. It will be led by workers and compel support

from the Black middle class. Gradually, the ideology of nationalism must give way to Marxism-Leninism. Only the ideas of Marxism-Leninism can liberate the working class from imperialism. Furthermore, only such a development can save the petty bourgeoisie from vacillation and corruption, for it is only this development that can pull the petty bourgeoisie out of the arms of the ruling class and unify it with Black workers. When working-class leadership emerges from factories to organize the ghetto, the shackles of nationalism will begin to fall away.

If the Black people are to play their historic role in the defeat of imperialism the Black Liberation Movement must be a workers' movement. It must have workers' leadership.

Black workers are equipped to lead the fight for the workers' dictatorship. They are disciplined and organized by conditions of work. The enemy is clear to them since they are at the point of production and they see more easily that the enemy is the boss. Black workers have to fight on the job. This means taking on the boss, his foremen and flunky union misleaders. And because of their special oppression within the working class they understand now how the boss uses the state apparatus to hold power. Open repression by the police, the National Guard and the Army are now a part of their life conditions, especially since 1964.

Studies of Black rebellions have proven that stable Black workers were thoroughly involved. Black workers are trained by life conditions to shoulder the job of leadership. They are involved in the class struggle on all fronts. They have the best experience for building solid class organizations in the shops and communities, and can give active, correct leadership to the struggles in the ghettos. This is what the ruling class fears.

Black workers work side by side with white workers. They are more aware of the need for unity to win the smallest demand. All the demands that are in the interest of Black workers correspond to the needs of white workers. This creates the possibility for future unity. Their common struggle is the arena in which racism, an extreme form of nationalism (and after anti-communism the main internal danger in the working-class movement), can be defeated. As fighting unity grows between Black and white workers, Black nationalism, a reaction to racism, will recede.

Just as the Black workers can use their experience in fighting the ruling class in the shop to give leadership to the whole Black Liberation Movement, so, too, do the Black workers—specially

oppressed in all aspects of life—bring a special militance and class understanding to the working-class movement at the point of production. In many instances using the form of Black caucuses, they have advanced class demands against the bosses (and fought their “labor lieutenants”) in a way that has drawn tens of thousands of white workers into militant class struggle.

Black workers in the auto industry, reacting specifically to racist oppression, have organized wildcat strikes at Dodge in Michigan, at Ford’s Mahwah (N.J.) plant and elsewhere throughout the country after the assassination of King. Most of these walkouts have occurred over oppressive working conditions on the assembly line and most have inexorably drawn the white workers into the action, for they too feel the implacable tension and harassment on the line. These are actions that worry Reuther and partially explain why he is organizing a “dynamic” second labor federation. Just another attempt to cover up the racist character of the top leadership of the labor movement.

The strike of 1,300 Black sanitationmen in Memphis against the ruling-class structure of the anti-union and unorganized South was a milestone in stimulating trade unionism and class struggle all over that region among Black and white workers. The sanitationmen brought not only the militance of the Black Liberation Movement into a trade union struggle but organized the active mass support of the whole Black community. Without both that militance and backing they never could have won. The ruling class in Memphis fought tooth and nail against the sanitationmen because they feared the thrust of the militance and class understanding of the Black Liberation Movement in setting an example for unionization all over the low-wage South.

The rebellion of 15,000 shipbuilding workers in Newport News (Va.) in July 1967 was sparked by the refusal to work compulsory overtime by 200 Black workers in the transportation department. Actually that issue was but the latest of a long list of grievances suffered at the hands of the biggest employer in the state (and the biggest shipbuilder in the world) and his helpers in the sellout company union. What began as a departmental walkout quickly spread to become the first shutdown of that company in its 81-year history. When the white majority saw that the Black workers’ demands were on behalf of all workers, they united to fight the company, the union misleaders, the courts, the governor and the full power of the state cops and

state troopers. A two-day rebellion ensued in which white and Black workers smashed the pawnshop and finance company loan sharks that fed like leeches on the workers’ paychecks across the street from the plant. “They fought us like brothers,” said the police chief.

Examples such as these are becoming even more numerous: the 1968 summer’s wildcat strikes in Chicago involving drivers for the city’s bus company and for Railway Express, both sparked by Black caucuses and both supported by white workers; the walkouts and threatened walkouts of New York hospital workers, overwhelmingly Black and Latin, which have set the pace in militance for all low-paid workers; and the titanic battle of 800 garment workers against a world-wide imperialist outfit, Kayser-Roth, as well as their sweetheart partners-in-crime, the International Ladies Garment Workers Union sellout misleadership. This fight, too, was supported by white workers wherever the issue was brought to them.

The growth of a working-class Black Liberation Movement under the leadership of workers will be a powerful stimulus to the class struggle in the country. It will sharpen it and will clarify for all workers the problem of who the enemy is. The development of a worker-led Black Liberation Movement is a pre-condition for the unity and victory of the working class, a pre-condition for Black liberation.

Elements of Program

White chauvinism—the idea that being white makes one superior—is rampant among white workers. The struggle of white workers lags behind Blacks. Certainly white workers have not begun to grasp the Marxian truth that the worker in the white skin can never be free until the worker in the Black skin is free. Consequently at this stage the Black Liberation Movement is developing as national in form and working class in content.

The organization of a national network of Black caucuses in shops across the country would be a most welcome development. For many years Black caucuses have existed in basic industry, with particularly strong roots in steel and auto. Though most have been short-lived, they are once again springing up. The most

notable of these are in auto. In the past year there have been major walkouts by Dodge workers, mainly Black, under the leadership of a Black caucus. Their program is a working-class program and includes more jobs, better pay, an end to speed-up, no compulsory overtime, shorter hours and an end to abuses from foremen. And there are also good demands based on the special oppression and needs of Black workers, such as equality in hiring, upgrading and job training. Of course, when boss-inspired nationalist ideology stimulates such demands as Black foremen and stock options, they must be resisted and defeated. These caucuses could amalgamate locally and eventually lead to the re-birth of a new powerful nationwide Black workers' organization.

One element of a program based on a caucus movement in the shops would be to fight against the special oppression of Black workers. This would include equal pay, upgrading, preferential hiring in all industries (especially the ones that exclude Black workers), special training and rank-and-file representation in unions.

The following have been demanded by Black caucuses and can immediately unite all workers: higher wages, shorter hours with no loss in pay and demands dealing with problems of speedup, automation and safety.

A second area in the program of the Black Liberation Movement is anti-U.S. imperialism. An important aspect of this is how the ruling class tries to make mercenaries of Black workers to suppress colonial workers and peasants. The main demands today would be for the U.S. to get out of Vietnam now, organization of Black troops against the war, utilization of skills learned in the army by Black troops to defend whatever gains were won by the Black Liberation Movement and to protect the community from police terror, and U.S. out of Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic and other occupied countries.

Within the community a program is needed to prevent the pacification of the ghetto by placing in its midst huge bourgeois institutions, like the State Office Building in the middle of Harlem. A fight must be made for funds to improve and build more schools, hospitals, parks, for improved garbage collection and more and better housing. This program should include plans for low-rent housing and punishment for slumlords.

A key aspect of any program for Black liberation is armed

self-defense, a concept in opposition to the liberal-revisionist clamor for more Black cops or for decentralization of the police. Decentralization of police control would still keep the police under the control of the ruling class because they would pick, train and pay the new Black policemen. But more important, the Black policemen would still enforce the laws of imperialist private property. In fact, many in the ruling class feel this can now be done better by Black cops. This would be another slick maneuver to prevent the people from organizing their own protection and would reduce their fighting capacity by creating the illusion that they controlled the police.

The essence of a program for Black liberation is anti-imperialism, and is based mainly on working-class demands. It would steer clear of "democratic" demands for decentralization, more Black representation in legislative bodies, and federal money and foundation funds to support Black organizations. It would shun and resist bourgeois demands for Black foremen or Black bosses and businesses. This immediately distinguishes it from any other program. Its particular significance is that it is based on, and is led by, Black workers.

This program could create the basis for a united front between Marxist-Leninist revolutionaries and the broadest stratum of the Black workers, as well as with a significant section of the middle class.

Black Students

During the past few years Black students in Black colleges across the country have rebelled, in many cases going far beyond the militancy of SDS demonstrations. Through a few of the actions reached the level of armed confrontations with the police, students' demands were generally limited to improving their education.

In addition, Black student groups have come forward at many of the major white institutions all over the country. These groups have fought for more Black student enrollment, improved curriculum relating to Black history and culture and, at Columbia and San Francisco State, elements of an anti-imperialist program.

The major weakness of these movements is that they don't have a working-class orientation. Nationalism is strong, some-

times leading the struggle into the dead-end of "Black student power." Basically the goals of the Black students are limited to securing a better deal for themselves from the schools and from the ruling class. They are not aimed at defeating the system.

Within these movements attempts should be made to promote alliances with Black workers. Almost all major labor action includes large sections of Black workers. The Newport News shipyard strike of Black and white workers could have been a great rallying point for all militant Black students in the South. Suffice it to say there are no shortages of similar battles taking place, or soon to occur.

Black students—as well as white—must start the long process of determining with whom they are going to ally. Will they fight the ruling class for crumbs but support the framework of capitalism, or will they ally with workers? Helping workers win immediate demands, as well as their own at school, creates the basis for a political transformation of students and workers. This alliance will speed the growth of political consciousness.

Racism is an essential part of the liberal apology for imperialism disseminated by universities; it must be fought by white students as well as Black. Alliances should be formed between Black students and anti-racist white students based on a principled fight over this issue against the campus administration. In fact there is no way to build a radical movement on campus and a worker-student alliance without a strong fight to defeat racism.

Such a united front between Black workers, including communists, and a section of the middle class will exclude those who rely on the ruling class, which includes those few who still parade under the slogan of integration or those pushing "community control" and "decentralization." And because this movement is aimed at the bosses and their government it will limit the indiscriminate "hate white" bunch. Though we can expect considerable antagonism against white workers, they are not the enemy and must be criticized with the aim of winning them. A serious Black leadership must have the outlook of fighting racism among white workers to help gain strength for specific and long-range battles.

This will be a Left-Center coalition with varying points of view within it. It must include communists, who, together with their closest allies, must defeat anti-communists within the Black Liberation Movement—or that movement will fail. No movement can win if it is saturated with anti-communism. The anti-com-

munist of Roy Wilkins has given way to the more subtle anti-communism of Black clerics like King. And now there is an extremely bellicose "revolutionary" anti-communism produced by so-called militants like Stokely Carmichael. Anti-communism, no matter how much it is covered over with verbal militancy, is still imperialism's primary ideological weapon against any people. You cannot win with the ideas and tools of the master.

For years the ruling class has harped on the idea of the "outside agitator," with the specific aim of excluding communists from the Black Liberation Movement. Men like Roy Wilkins and King dedicatedly carried out this line. Communists not only threatened their leadership but more important, threatened their bosses. The ruling class tries to exclude communists from all movements by creating the notion that Marxism-Leninism is a foreign idea and alien to our people. It knows that it can only retain control if it keeps revolutionary ideas and organization out of the people's movements.

A Left-Center coalition will provide an effective cutting edge against the ruling class and be the vehicle to defeat right-wing Black forces like the Muslims, cultural nationalists like LeRoi Jones, the various successors of Rev. King, phony radicals like Carmichael, and Black-capitalist spokesmen like McKissick.

The Ford Fraud

The growing militancy of Black workers and the corresponding drop in influence of Rev. King's successors have compelled the ruling class to take a more flexible attitude to Black Power advocates. It has not always been skillful in using them. At one time the ruling class felt that between the praying of Rev. King, the general bribing of the middle-class leaders and the guns, clubs, dogs and police, they could keep the Black people in line. But the eruption of armed rebellion forced the ruling class to reevaluate its team of frontmen. One could say the limited outbreak of sniping forced this. Guns are a dangerous business. So, within a short time everyone was for "Black Power." All the politicians became "soul brothers."

It soon became obvious that the anti-poverty programs could only buy off a relatively small number of militants. The ruling class knew it would have to do better. Recognizing that education

was a burning issue within the ghetto for millions of Black working-class families, the ruling class decided that this was a good place to harness the new nationalism and buy off the new nationalists. In "reorganized" schools the ruling class could continue the miseducation of millions of children with the full cooperation of the Black Power nationalists. The Ford Foundation, the leading bourgeois ideological and management center outside the government, was chosen to do the job. It adopted the slogan "community control."

The Foundation devised a plan by which the Board of Education would create local governing boards. The local board would have some paid staffers and some parents elected by a few people in the community. The plan also called for introducing aspects of Black history and culture into the curriculum together with more Black teachers. The more ardently nationalistic the teachers, the more anti-communist and anti-working class they were. What could be the big danger to the ruling class? The children would be in school and presumably more interested in the new curriculum. The parents would be happier, because it would appear that they had some say in the schooling process. And the nationalists could have all their psychotherapeutic name-calling of "whitey" institutionalized. They would get pretty good pay. And some of the administrators would have the "privilege" of embezzling from the Foundation like their white counterparts.

Applying this scheme in New York City, the ruling class received some fringe benefits. Setting up local boards deflected the mounting criticism of the central board and the city administration. The city, state and federal government still controlled all the money, still controlled the entire teacher-training apparatus. However, by skillfully manipulating the teachers' racist ideology, which led them to be controlled by racist union leadership, they got Black and Puerto Rican parents to fight the teachers as the main enemy. This let the government off the hook and obscured the key issues of anti-communism, the Vietnam war, ruling-class control of the school system, and the poor working and learning conditions of teachers and students. The ruling class, by creating the illusion of community control, has manipulated the teachers into fighting the parents instead of the Board of Education, thereby laying the basis for the destruction of any decent type of union.

The two hundred thousand dollars the Ford Foundation will spend in New York, and the tens of millions it will spend around

the country, is a cheap price to pay to continue the miseducation of Black children with anti-communist, anti-working class ideas. It is a cheap price to pacify some Black people. It is a very cheap price if it keeps Black people within the framework of the system, creating the illusion that the system is flexible enough to be forced into meeting them part way. It is even a cheaper price if this slows down the class struggle in the auto shops and in all industry.

Unfortunately, many people are taken in by the Ford Foundation, and especially by its money. They rationalize the money grab: "Now we're getting a little of it back." But by now we should have learned the lesson that the enemy gives nothing for free. If you take his money or his "aid," you are working for him, no matter how well-intentioned you are.

The school decentralization plan is reaping quick returns. There is now a move to do something similar with the police. Isn't it better, the ruling class reasons, to have Black cops drawn from the ranks of the most militant, having respect in the community? Let them maintain the ruling-class interests. The ruling class has a great opening here. And most Black nationalists, having no understanding of the class structure of society, greedily see a way to get some jobs and money. Most call for more Black cops in the ghetto.

The ruling class reasons well when it recognizes that the current advocates of Black Power "want in" on imperialism's spoils, like the integrationists. There are only some differences in form and tactics between the integrationists and the Black Power advocates. They are both the same in content. Having a Ford in your future means having capitalism in your future. Having Ford's better idea means not having working-class ideas and never winning your freedom.

Within the ruling class there are tactical differences about how to handle the new Black nationalists. But as the Black masses keep up the pressure all the ruling-class factions will eventually make greater use of nationalists.

Revisionism Means Slavery

Over the past 25 years the Communist Party has lost its base among Black people primarily because of its consistent selling-out of the Black people's struggles. During the past decade it pinned

its hopes on the integrationist leadership. It slobbered over Rev. King. However, it should be noted that at the beginning of the integration movement the C.P. branded it "adventurous." It considered the first Freedom Rides a "provocation." But when the integration movement became established and politically conservative, the C.P. hopped on the bandwagon, reasoning that the Black people were in ferment and King could put his non-violent, pro-imperialist ideas over on the people without running afoul of the imperialists. By supporting him the C.P. hoped to curry favor with the base of his movement.

When the rebellions broke out in Harlem in 1964, the C.P., King and the rest of the ruling class attacked them. They attacked the masses and called on police power to put them down. The C.P. attacked the PLP, accusing it of fomenting disorders with "Chinese money," and got the Kremlin "leaders" to attack the Black masses. The District Attorney used the C.P.'s lies and opportunism in court against the PLP.

But as the tide of rebellion became irresistible the C.P., like the ruling class, had to hedge its bets. Since it could no longer rely completely on King & Co., the C.P., like Ford and the U.S. Government, began to hail "Black Power." It became a "soul brother" and like the Ford Foundation hopped on the community control bandwagon. Petty bourgeois nationalism posed no serious obstacle for this "Communist" Party. Because the C.P. has no base among Black workers it is not visible in the movement. Consequently there is a tendency to underestimate its influence. Like the Ford Foundation, it buys its way in, often with lawyers who are always willing to "help" a Black victim out.

Because of the C.P.'s financial resources, it is able to co-opt some of the nationalist leaders in the community. Probably some of the community control bureaucrats are on two or three payrolls. They get paid by the C.P., the Ford Foundation and the Government. Fortunately, the C.P.'s consistent record of betrayal and its support of the shameful imperialism of the Soviet bosses isolate it from the people.

But because there is so much corruption at the top, money turns the trick. The C.P. does influence some nationalists to push community control or whatever new nationalist gimmick that comes along. It has gotten the Black Panthers to institute court actions for police decentralization in New York and California, and has influenced them to meet with Lindsay and the New York

police commissioner to discuss "mutual problems." The C.P. role is one of guaranteeing the leadership of the liberal bourgeoisie, which in New York means the Lindsay administration. It is no accident that the C.P. is one of the biggest boosters of community control of the schools in New York. Unfortunately it is doing a lot of damage to the development of the Black Panthers. C.P. lawyers have persuaded some Panther leaders to rely on court action rather than mass action. The current actions for decentralization of the cops are C.P. inspired.

Anti-communism was given a big boost among Black workers because of the sellouts they suffered at the hands of the revisionist C.P. from World War II until the present day. The C.P. either never fought anti-communism or denied its existence.

Unless anti-communism is met head-on and defeated, it will cripple and destroy revolutionary movements. Only communist organization and ideology, based on class analysis and the need for workers to seize state power, can lead to victory over imperialism. Thus, those who tolerate or advocate anti-communism are advocating the continued exploitation and suppression of the Black as well as the white workers. Nationalism and anti-communism are inseparable.

About Our Party

In the past we in the Progressive Labor Party have been guilty of creating illusions about Black nationalism and nationalists. In our early period we were one-sided; because we supported the resistance of nationalists like the Muslims and Robert Williams, we viewed them as generally good. We failed to understand that nationalism is reactionary, and that this is its main aspect. We made similar errors internationally. We were wrong in evaluating Ben Bella, and then Boumediene. We were wrong in our evaluation of Sukarno.

The political and economic basis of nationalism is capitalism. It is bourgeois ideology. Often we tried to understand the Black Liberation Movement through the experiences of other countries. We believed nationalism here would play the same role that it has appeared to play in other countries, where a national bourgeoisie often resisted complete foreign domination.

Loyalty to one's class and the international working class

must replace narrow allegiance to a nation or a grouping within a nation. As long as oppressed people are limited to defending the nation—that is, the ruling class of that nation—they will remain enslaved. As long as people remain loyal only to themselves as an oppressed national minority, they will fail. Unless they aim to liberate all of oppressed mankind they will be unable to liberate even themselves. Although the nationalists may win some small initial gains, even these will be lost unless the strategy of the dictatorship of the proletariat emerges, for this is the only strategy for victory. The outlook of Black Power advocates today narrows down finally to “get what you can,” a form of Black capitalism.

In any event, there is no national bourgeoisie here. There is only a relatively small Black petty bourgeoisie. We have been guilty of spending too much effort with them and failing to work sufficiently among Black workers, especially in the shops. We made these errors because we did not fully understand that Black liberation could not be won without the dictatorship of the proletariat. By making these errors we limited our base-building among workers and left the petty bourgeoisie open to co-option. Without a strong working-class leadership, the petty bourgeoisie will always vacillate and limit its efforts against the ruling class.

When the special oppression of a particular group among the masses becomes the initial stimulus for action, the capitalist class attempts immediately to saturate that group with nationalist ideology—loyalty to the bourgeoisie. Unless that initial stimulus is transformed into conscious class struggle it is co-opted by the ruling class, which has learned from experience that it can quickly turn such an initial progressive response into its opposite—into nationalist loyalty to capitalism.

An even more significant error is that we have not fought vigorously against white chauvinism among workers and students. This is because we are still weak in understanding how racism is used to maintain ruling-class power. Though we have singled out nationalism as the chief internal weakness in the Black Liberation Movement, we dare not fail to understand that white chauvinism is, after anti-communism, the main weakness within the entire working class. Nationalism can never be defeated without defeating white chauvinism and its foundation, U.S. imperialism.

The working class will eventually unite into an unbeatable force as Black and white workers become more politically conscious. This can only be achieved by sharpening the struggle.

Future unity is a goal, but this should in no way imply the slowing down of the Black Liberation Movement. On the contrary, the path to unity is through increased struggle on all fronts. Naturally there will be struggles between different groups of workers, but this is an inevitable feature in the process of developing greater political consciousness.

Unity will be achieved by the creation of centers for Black struggles, especially in the shops. Virtually all actions of Black caucuses can be aimed at the boss. This fact of life will create the condition for the unity of Black and white workers, as communists in the workers' movement give political leadership.

The next important moves for our Party are to step up the struggle against nationalism and to focus our work among Black workers. As the political consciousness of the workers grows under the leadership of Black caucuses and the work of communists, organizational unity of the workers will be realizeable. Even today wherever there is the possibility of unity between Black and white workers that form should be used. In every case a study of the situation must be made to find the form that best advances the class struggle.

Though we still use the concept self-determination we believe that the dictatorship of the proletariat is the only solution for Black workers and the Black people generally. In the future, however, the petty-bourgeois tendency for separation (Black capitalism) may grow strong and come into sharp conflict with the ruling class. If the imperialists acted to physically destroy this movement we would support it against imperialism. We would support it by fighting for the dictatorship of the proletariat as the only solution.

This is our attitude in regard to Vietnam. Though we no longer believe that the Vietnamese leadership is fighting for the dictatorship of the proletariat, we support the efforts of the people against imperialism and demand that the U.S. get out now, regardless of what type government the Vietnamese wish to set up. We also call upon the Vietnamese workers and peasants to fight for the dictatorship of the proletariat as the only way they can determine their own destiny.

We regard this as a principled concession to nationalism because it is within the framework of a serious fight against imperialism. If not for the anti-imperialist struggle there would be no reason for the concession.

The Question of Black Women

Women have always been a specially-exploited section of the working class. U.S. imperialism has maintained and extended this special exploitation by barring women from certain types of work, paying lower wages for work similar to men's, and by using them as a special "reserve" force against militant male workers. There has always been, too, a systematic ideological campaign to place women socially, politically and economically beneath the status of the male population in general. As Engels said, "within the family, he is the bourgeoisie, and she is the proletariat."

While this special exploitation of women is true in general, it is more brutal when applied to Black women; they must face super-exploitation as workers who are Black, together with the additional burden of being women. The super-exploitation of women and the triple-exploitation of Black women workers can only end with the destruction of imperialism and the construction of a workers' dictatorship.

It is precisely because of the special position of women and the brutal exploitation of Black women that they therefore are the most potentially revolutionary section of the working class; they are the most oppressed and therefore will fight back the hardest. Recent history has shown that Black women have taken leading roles in the fight for better housing, welfare, against police brutality and drug addiction. As a result, U.S. imperialism, attempting to use its "divide and conquer" technique, is attempting to utilize the old male supremacist standby to split Black women from Black men.

Ruling-class "scholars" and press are telling Black men to regain their "rightful male position" in their lives and "not permit their own emasculation." And, at the same time, the so-called "revolutionaries" in the ghetto, the "cultural nationalists," preach that Black women should stand behind their men and play a supporting role. Some even claim that this is in the historical "African tradition." It is much the same argument that the ruling class uses when it tells Black Americans that their forefathers on the Southern plantations "liked the warm, leisurely way of life."

In seeking to find African roots for the ruling-class inspired campaign of oppression, the Black nationalists distort the feelings

of internationalism that Black people have for their brethren in Africa, and the other colored peoples of Asia and Latin America. In line with this insidious plot, they foist drugs, which were forced upon the people of Latin America and Asia, as a "traditional Asian experience" and even prostitution of Black women, in the name of the "traditional polygamous forms of marriage" in Africa.

These ruling-class inspired plots to split Black men from women will not work in the long run. As Black and white workers will fight to defeat the common class enemy, so Black men and women will defeat the splittist tactics of the enemy. As the working class generally will be led by communist Black workers, leaders among these Black working-class revolutionaries will be Black women.

While racism is the greatest source of profit for the ruling class, it is also its Achilles Heel. Racism has created a huge politically advanced force for the working class. Black people have shown the greatest persistence and courage against imperialism. This advance force of fighting Blacks is having the same effect in the U.S. as the Vietnamese are having in the world. The ruling class can buy up some of the loudmouths, but it can't buy off 22 million fighting Blacks—any more than it can buy off tens of millions of other workers and students.

Black workers are beginning to see that to achieve their liberation the only answer lies in Marxism-Leninism—the science of class struggle and proletarian revolution. This is the science of the international working class of which Black working people in the United States are an integral part.