

MAIN LINE

TRANSFORMING THE CRIMINAL MENTALITY INTO
A REVOLUTIONARY MENTALITY

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INTRODUCTION

This is the tenth issue of Main Line. Since our first issue went to print we have seen and experienced many developments inside and outside of these razor wire plantations. There have been many ebbs and flows, many gains and losses, and all along the way, many valuable lessons learned for those of us who remain committed to this work and willing to be ruthlessly scientific.

Among our losses have been a number of cadre who broke ranks largely because they were unwilling to genuinely commit class suicide and accept the discipline and sacrifices of membership in a vanguard Party. Weeding these tendencies and elements out is the purpose of engaging in continual 2-line struggle and rectification campaigns within a Party. Although Party membership is wholly voluntary, once accepted it compels iron discipline and willingness to align one's interests completely with that of the workers and oppressed, which demands a level of principled discipline and self-sacrifice that not many are willing and able to make. A lot of people posture and make loud proclamations to give the appearance of being willing to do this, but as with everything in the objective world, proof is given in their practice. And it has always been so.

In every revolutionary movement, true revolutionaries come few and far between. Many who join the movement's ranks often are those who either grasp the political line but aren't committed to the sacrifices of its practice, or are those who have the commitment in practice but don't grasp the line. So we have those inclined to theory but not practice on one hand, and those inclined to practice but don't have correct theory. To operate as revolutionary cadre, one must embrace both revolutionary theory and revolutionary practice. Theory without practice is only so much talk, practice without theory is blind reaction.

So, having accepted the inevitability of losses alongside gains, we continue in a dialectical manner to study and learn from both our errors and our correct actions, with the aim of learning from our mistakes so as not to repeat them and to build upon what was correct so as to continue to advance our work and the struggle.

Dare to struggle Dare to Win!
All Power to the People!

The Revolutionary Intercommunal Black Panther Party (RIBPP) and Panther Solidarity Organization (PSO) publish several newsletters including Main Line and Serve the People. These publications are available free of cost to prisoners and can be requested from BP Publishers, P.O. Box 32, Chesterfield, VA 23832. Any donations of stamps or funds are welcome to help sustain subscriptions. Stamps may be sent to the post office box and funds by Cashapp \$TheJayRene. All Power to the People!

IF YOU ARE LOOKING FOR A GOOD TIME, THIS PARTY IS NOT FOR YOU! (2024)

By Halisi Olugbala Uhuru

June 19, 2024

Revolutionary Intercommunal Black Panther Party

"The Negro youth and moderates must be made to realize that if they succumb to revolutionary teaching, they will be dead revolutionaries." – FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover

"A revolutionary must realize that if he is sincere, death is imminent due to the fact that the things he is saying and doing are extremely dangerous. Without coming to this realization, it is impossible to proceed as a revolutionary". – Defense Minister Huey P. Newton, co – founder of the original Black Panther Party.

We cannot call ourselves revolutionaries if we are not ready and willing to die for the cause. Revolution is against the law. After all, the law is here to maintain the ruling class's hold on society and the wealth produced by the exploited labor of the masses. Anything that challenges this social order and threatens the right of a few to own the wealth produced by the working class will be met with the full force of the of the ruling class's repressive agencies, i.e., the police,

courts, FBI, CIA, etc. Death and imprisonment are the price of revolution. This isn't a game. This isn't something that we do on our spare time like a part-time job or a hobby. We don't do this for likes on Instagram, or to impress others with our political theories.

We do this because we feel intensely the suffering of humanity. We feel the hunger, powerlessness, homelessness, fear, pain, hopelessness, sickness, and exhaustion of the millions of peoples on this planet who are suffering in the ghettos, hoods, barrios, favelas, shantytowns, tent cities, skid rows, refugee camps, jails, prisons, immigration camps, sweat shops, assembly lines, red light districts, mines, dead-end jobs, poverty-stricken and war-torn areas of the world. We are them, and we know that the cause of our collective suffering is capitalism and capitalist man; his governments, armies, world markets, international bodies, and puppet-regimes. We have declared war against all forces and institutions of capitalist-imperialist oppression and exploitation, and therefore, we are marked men and women, marked for death and imprisonment.

We have accepted this fate because we refuse to close our eyes to what's going on and make amends with this monster. We do this because we envision a world without racism, sexism, imperialist wars of aggression, poverty, oppression, exploitation, inequality, and environmental destruction. We do this because the future of the world and all that lives upon it depends on it. The is no other recourse, and we are already too late.

The life of a revolutionary is one of complete commitment, hard work, struggle and sacrifice. If you have come for a good time, this Party is not for you. If you are not willing to dedicate your entire life and possessions to the revolution, then this is not for you. If you are not willing to go amongst the suffering masses and toil with them, serve them, educate them, be educated by them, fight beside them and die for them, then this is not for you. Go home, get dressed in your nicest outfit and hit the club, because this is not the Party you are looking for. Those is not a game or an event. This is a struggle. And if we are not serious, deadly serious, about what we are saying and doing as revolutionaries, then we have no legitimate claim to being such. This Party demands our complete dedication and discipline. The liberation of humanity depends on it.

Dare to struggle, Dare to win.
All Power to the People!

RECTIFY THE PARTY'S LEADERSHIP METHOD (2024)

By Kevin "Rashid" Johnson

June 6, 2024

"Our point of departure is to serve the people wholeheartedly and never for a moment divorce ourselves from the masses, to proceed in all cases from the interests of the people and not from one's own self-interest or from the interests of a small group, and to identify our own responsibility to the leading organs of the party." Mao Tse-tung

INTRODUCTION

There are some members of the Revolutionary Intercommunal Black Panther Party (RIBPP) who've forgotten the purpose, role and duties of our Party. They have strayed from or resisted the Party's mass leadership style and its commitment to serve and remain accountable to the masses. They have defied the collective leadership of the Party, placed their personal interests above the people's, and while paying lip service to the revolutionary principles we uphold, have practiced the exact opposite.

These are serious problems that reflect individualism and opportunism. They are corrosives within our Party that, if not struggled against and rectified, will corrode our organization, betraying its role and duties to the people.

We must, therefore, initiate a campaign to identify and rectify opportunism and individualism.

THE NEED AND ROLE OF THE RIBPP

Why is there a need for a Panther vanguard Party? The essential role of a revolutionary party is to raise the consciousness of the working class and the broad masses of oppressed people, to unite and organize them to seize political power and to replace capitalist imperialism with a socialist economy.

In this era of neoliberalism, enhanced automation has replaced and pushed vast numbers of workers into perpetual unemployment and peasants off their land into marginalized urban areas. As a result, there is a growing mass of chronically unemployed people who are forced to survive by desperate often "criminal" and predatory means. These people desperately need social and political education and power, and immediate access to and control of basic survival necessities.

With few exceptions, traditional revolutionary parties have looked askance at these desperate layers of the people as destructive, politically unstable and unreliable, and also because they do not exist at the point of production, they have been dismissed as having little revolutionary purpose. These parties have therefore focused their work almost exclusively on active workers and peasants as the main social force of revolutionary struggle

The original Black Panther Party (OBPP) changed this trend. Huey P. Newton, the OBPP's leading theoretician, recognized that changing global conditions under the U.S. dominated, imperialist system was fueling the unprecedented rise of permanently unemployed people. He predicted that they would soon outnumber the regularly employed people. He also recognized that if these marginalized masses were not reached and organized by revolutionaries, they would be used as a force of violent reaction against the traditional revolutionary movement by the establishment.

Huey also saw that the masses of predominantly urban Black people in Amerika also largely fell into this category of desperate, chronically unemployed, lumpen people. He, in turn, confronted the challenge of creating a party and strategy that could serve the needs of, give leadership to, and organize these marginalized people into a revolutionary mass force. This was the OBPP.

Huey's predictions about the unprecedented growth of permanently unemployable people and the lumpen, and the need to create revolutionary leadership to serve them, have come to pass on a global scale. An Intercommunal Panther vanguard party is needed today more than ever. This is the need, purpose, and role of the RIBPP.

MASS LINE AND METHOD OF LEADERSHIP

The RIBPP must adhere to the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist style of leadership, which recognizes that everything relies on and is determined by the consciousness and voluntary action of the people. Without this, our efforts are in vain and will accomplish nothing. Our work, therefore, entails as a first step, raising people's consciousness.

But we do not compel the people to accept our ideas. Instead, we begin with, and move from their own existing levels of understanding and mind state. A dialectical process that Mao summed up as, "from the masses to the masses," a back and forth process between the revolutionary vanguard and the people which he described as:

"...summing up (i.e., coordinating and systematizing after careful study) the views of the masses (i.e., views scattered and unsystematic), then taking the resulting ideas back to the masses, explaining and popularizing them until the masses embrace them as their own, stand up for them, and translate them into action by way of testing their correctness. Then it is necessary once more to sum up the views of the masses once again, take the resulting ideas back to the masses so that the masses give them their wholehearted support...and so on, over and over again, so that each time these ideas emerge with greater correctness and become more vital and more meaningful."

So, we learn from the masses what their needs and concerns are, elevate and concentrate their understanding of their needs, the causes of those unmet needs and how to

go about solving them and then work alongside them in implementing solutions. We do not command or dictate to the people. Instead, as Mao explained:

"Every comrade...should help the masses to organize themselves step by step and on a voluntary basis to unfold gradually struggles that are necessary and permissible under the external and internal conditions obtaining at a particular time and place. Whatever we do, authoritarianism is always erroneous because as a result of our impetuosity, it makes us go beyond the degree of the masses awakening and violates the principle of voluntary action on the part of the masses."

THE MASS LINE VERSUS INDIVIDUALISM

What is the problem of individualism? Individualism, or pursuing one's own personal agendas, instead of the interests of the masses, is a poisonous weed within a mass-based revolutionary party. It betrays the very purpose of the party and the struggle against the oppressive social order it seeks to lead which must be a mass struggle to succeed.

Human societies are composed of many people existing in a system of complex interrelationships, at the core of which is the struggle for production, or in other words, the struggle to survive against the environment and to meet basic needs. The struggle for production in every society brings many individuals together in collective labor to extract and work up natural resources into consumable products. In primitive societies where communal relations dominated and wealth was collectively owned, individualism was frowned upon and usually resulted in the practitioner being expelled from the society, which was worse than dying.

In class-divided societies, the ruling classes govern and profit through controlling and hoarding the wealth produced by the laborers. At all levels, they seek to alienate and divide (individualize) the laborers against each other and thereby keep them unconscious of their role and collective power as the backbone of society and source of all power and wealth that is produced; that it is in fact, the workers that collectively 'make the world go 'round.'

The masses' consciousness must be raised so that they realize their power in numbers when united and to overcome the divisive indoctrination of individualism. Furthermore, it is not mere individuals but the vast majority of humanity that faces urgent problems, such as environmental devastation, racism, sexism, and the pervasive threat of nuclear annihilation, economic insecurity, inequality, increased poverty, police state repression, endless wars, and so on. These are not problems that can be solved or even confronted in a serious manner by one or a few individuals pursuing their own agendas. Those who think otherwise are actually a major obstacle to recognizing the problems and achieving the needed solutions.

It is in fact, through individualist indoctrination that the masses are demoralized and induced to see these problems as insurmountable and feel hopeless to change them. Seeing things individually they in turn seek individualist respite, distraction, and self consolation in escapism, hedonism, blame-shifting, self-medication through substance abuse, metaphysics, etc. Awakening the people's collective consciousness is essential to helping them come to terms scientifically with the gravity of social problems and their collective power to change them, and that those in power are the very cause of this system of horrors which they are unwilling and unable to eliminate.

This system and its underlying culture which reflects the values of the greedy ruling class have programmed individualism ("me first") into its every institution of influence. This is why individualism is a cancerous sore that must be uprooted in society at large and our Party in particular. Our Party must uphold collective unity and not individual unity. Like society and the workplace, there is no such thing as a party of one. This is why individualists resort to tribalism, commandism, and small group methods of leadership that cannot effectively lead a mass movement and end up factionalizing in small groups, surrounding themselves with "loyalists," seeking to create cults of personality and celebrity around themselves, engage in jealous competitions against other Comrades, and avoid and resist public and collective accountability and

criticism. Ultimately, they become alienated, isolated, and individualized from any genuine mass movement.

Furthermore, the very survival of our revolutionary leadership and struggle compels organizing as a mass style Party. At each stage of history the genuine struggles of Blacks against oppressive conditions in Amerika have been led by only one or a few advanced individuals. These struggles have been neutralized each time by the enemy state's isolating and destroying this leader and leaving the movement headless. Only a mass based party applying the mass line could counter and survive this enemy strategy, by creating a leadership of many Comrades who, applying democratic centralism (DC), think and move as one and presents a leadership body that continuously grows and regenerates any lost members. It also unites the leaders with the masses they lead, making the leadership impossible to isolate and destroy by picking off one person or a few individuals.

CRITICISM AND SELF-CRITICISM

Why must we practice criticism and self-criticism? The only way to remain accountable to the masses and discover and correct errors, a revolutionary party and its members must practice and accept criticism and self-criticism. Those who fear or do not sincerely practice this, obviously do not align their interests with those of the people or collective organizational leadership. Mao spoke repeatedly of the importance and our need to open ourselves up to the criticism of the people and party Comrades, and to practice sincere self-criticism as an essential component of genuine democracy, and to oppose this practice is a fundamental evil. As he expressed:

"There are some comrades who are afraid of the masses initiating discussions and putting forward ideas which differ from those of the leaders and leading organizations. As soon as problems are discussed they suppress the activism of the masses and do not allow them to speak out. This attitude is very evil. There are some comrades who cannot bear to listen to ideas contrary to their own and cannot bear to be criticized. This is very wrong."

As our past cadre have pointed out:

"The democratic method is to allow people to speak their minds, but this is a two-way street. Others have the right to disagree and criticize you as well. The collective interest will be best served when people are above board and honest and say what they think, at the risk that it will be picked apart, rejected by others and even ridiculed as rubbish by the majority. No one is obligated to tell you that your brain farts smell lovely. On the other hand, your opinion might find favor and change everyone's views for the better. That is the risk of free expression. New ideas always start with someone who thinks for themselves and may not at first be popular or accepted."

Mao spoke to those who think they are above criticism and that can intimidate people from speaking out. He explained that people will still talk:

"Those of you who...do not allow people to speak, who think you are tigers, and that no one will dare touch your arse, whoever has this attitude, ten out of ten of you will fail. People will talk anyway. You think that no one will really dare touch the arse of tigers like you? They damn well will!"

He emphasized that we must actively engage in criticism and self-criticism, even when the critiques are wrong.

"If we are to promote democracy, we must encourage others to criticize us and listen to their criticisms. To be able to withstand criticism we must first take measures to carry out self-criticism. We must examine whatever needs examining for an hour or at most two hours. If everything is to be brought out in the open, it will take as long as that. If others consider we have not done enough, then let them say so. If what they say is right, we will accept their opinion. When we allow others to speak out, should we be active or passive in our attitude? Of course, it is better to be active. What can we do if we are forced onto the defensive? In the past we were undemocratic and so we find ourselves on the defensive. No matter. Let everybody criticize us. As for me, I will not go out during the day; I will not go to the theater at night. Please come and criticize me day and night (laughter from audience). Then I will sit down and think about it carefully, not sleep for two or three nights, think about it until I understand

it and then write a sincere self explanation. Isn't that the way to deal with it? In short, let other people speak out. The heavens will not fall, and you will not be thrown out. If you do not let others speak out, then the day will surely come when you are thrown out."

If we are scientific in our work, then we have to be open to truth, which only comes through the critical battle of ideas, then putting our theories into practice and having them confirmed or contradicted. When they prove wrong we must accept having our mistakes revealed to us. Otherwise, we're placing our individual egos that fear being contradicted and wrong before the interests of the masses. That which is scientific doesn't fear truth.

As Joseph Stalin noted, "It is generally recognized that no science can develop and flourish without a battle of opinions, without freedom of criticism."

Because RIBPP seeks objectivity and searches out errors in our work, we practice internal criticism and self-criticism as a rule. We do not practice it however to vent personal spite between Comrades or to demonize or undermine them, nor do we assail minor errors, as some have done, sometimes to divert valid criticisms from themselves. Comrades must understand that:

"The main task of [inner-party] criticism is to point out political and organizational mistakes, there is no need to be overcritical of the comrades or they will be at a loss what to do. Moreover, once such criticisms develops, there is the great danger that within the party attention will be concentrated exclusively on minor faults, and everyone will become timid and overcautious and forget the party's political tasks." – Mao

Then there's the problem of those who become prideful and not only avoid criticism but seek only praise for their roles in successful work. Often they seek to work independently so as to draw praise to themselves. Mao described these individualist tendencies best:

"Those who assert this kind of 'independence' are usually wedded to the doctrine of 'me first' and are generally wrong on the question of the relationship between the individual and the party. Although in words they profess respect for the party, in practice they put themselves first and the party second. What are these people after? They are after fame and position and want to be in the limelight. Whenever they are put in charge of a branch of the work, they assert their 'independence.' With this aim they draw some people in, push others out and resort to boasting, flattering, and touting among the comrades, thus imparting the vulgar style of the bourgeois political parties into the Communist party."

We have seen this tendency within the RIBPP – Comrades who persist in working 'independently' while looking down on others' work, prideful and boastful of their own contributions, seeking praise, recognition and to create a personal legacy for themselves. They become demoralized when they are not lauded. These people are not motivated by any sense of duty to or unity with the oppressed and the Party. Theirs is an individualist agenda prompted by "me first."

COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP

How do we protect our ranks against individualism? A revolutionary party precludes individualism by sincerely practicing and remaining committed to the mass line and method of leadership and applying DC.

We've addressed at length and in numerous places, the appropriate method of DC as a collective decision-making method, and how deviating from it by prior groups led to commandism and a widespread general misunderstanding of DC (see, for example, "On the Vanguard Party Once Again," "On the Roles and Characteristics of the Panther Vanguard and Mass Organizations," and "The 3-Ps" all available in my book PANTHER VISION and online at rashidmod.com).

Despite the extensive attention we've given to addressing DC and the pitfalls of deviating from its practice, some members of our Party have nonetheless openly defied DC practice, even openly rebelled against the DC decisions made by leading bodies of the Party, including the CC. In

fact, some members have not only demonstrated outright that they will not obey CC decisions and appointed tasks and positions (note the recent resignation of Garlic from the Party in part because he was not elected by the CC to positions he wanted). Some have refused to attend committee meetings or to communicate with CC members, especially those on the inside, to avoid having their actions and 'independence' scrutinized, criticized, countered or challenged by committees applying DC. They have also connived to concentrate power over key functions of the Party in their own hands, which they've proven incapable of coordinating. These practices have not only impaired the effectiveness of the Party, but have put Comrades and those depending on our help in harms way, sabotaged Party-led programs, and left people abandoned who've looked to us for guidance and serious help including our own cadre.

Such behaviors and attitudes have no place in the Party. They are outright betrayals of the people and are the most extreme manifestations of placing individual interests and agendas before the masses and the Party. As V.I. Lenin noted in "One Step Forward, Two Steps Back":

"Refusal to accept the direction of central bodies is tantamount to refusing to remain in the party, it is tantamount to disrupting the party; it is a method of destroying not convincing. And their efforts to destroy instead of convincing show their lack of consistent principles, lack of faith in their own ideas."

As pointed out, in some cases Comrades have persistently disrupted and prevented committees, including the CC, from operating. There has been attempts to influence and factionalize with leading cadre against other members based upon cultivating intimate relationships. These elements exhibit a particular bent for conniving, guile and sneakiness.

These tendencies reflect not just enemy class values but a lack of basic integrity, which is why their practitioners seek to avoid exposure and criticism and often aspire to cultivate special relationships with influential Comrades. Mao continued, "It is their dishonesty that causes them to come to grief. I believe we should do things honestly, for, without an honest attitude, it is impossible to accomplish anything in this world."

These are pitfalls of the bourgeois outlook of individualism that seeks special recognition and praise often to the end of avoiding criticism.

CONCLUSION

In the RIBPP we must lead by example through involvement in all mass organizations applying the voluntary leadership style, educating others daily and hourly, and proving ourselves to be more devoted, selfless and more principled than ordinary people. We must set the highest example of principled character and love for the people which they will admire and emulate. These are the standards to which Party members must adhere, through which the masses will voluntarily accept our leadership, and any efforts to exert leadership by compulsion, coercion, craft or deceit or any other opportunistic and individualistic means runs counter to the mass line and mass leadership method.

This is hard-won leadership, gained by earned respect, not commandism. It is the "iron discipline" that allows for proletarian unity, which is directly democratic, popular discipline that combines self-control, respectfulness, efficiency, creativity and self-initiative, and does not allow for arrogance, self-serving, slothful, big-headed, self aggrandizing or wasteful tendencies.

This is difficult work and not easily achieved. This is why Party members must have cultivated and demonstrated a selfless temperament and character, and we must rectify practices of members who don't adhere to these principles.

Dare to Struggle Dare to Win!
All Power to the People!

SOME THOUGHTS ON ADVOCACY VERSUS SERVING THE PEOPLE IN REVOLUTIONARY LEADERSHIP (2022)

By Kevin "Rashid" Johnson

March 7, 2023

SERVING THE PEOPLE AND MY POLITICAL GROWTH

In discussing the differences between advocacy and serving the people, I want to begin with an account of my own political development to illustrate how I came to grasp this distinction, and what it looks like to put the interests of others (whom one does not have personal relationships with) before oneself even in the context of rebellion versus revolutionary practice.

Currently I've been in prison for over 32 years. I spent the first 15 years physically battling guards and their goon squads, typically in response to their mistreating others. Serious injuries on both sides were common, in addition to their routine punitive response of leaving me chained up and naked in cold cells for days, often strapped to bare steel or concrete bed frames. Most of the other prisoners whom I clashed with the pigs for abusing I didn't know.

In some cases I was derided by those I'd fought for and others, who'd argue that my involvement wasn't requested. On many occasions I was also asked why I persisted in fighting for those who didn't fight for themselves or didn't appreciate me getting involved.

I'd explain my involvement wasn't about me but US, that so long as the guards believed they could abuse any of us without consequences, they would abuse everyone, creating and normalizing a culture of abuse.

I understood that not everyone could do the hard things, or was willing or able to weather the consequences of resisting the pigs. Because I didn't seek or need praise or recognition, I wasn't deterred by repression nor demoralized by lack of praise.

But as I developed politically, my physical clashes with the pigs lessened. I came to see the bigger picture and need of ideological unity and collective effort on a larger scale to bring about real change. But in all cases it was the interests of the people that were the priority and trumped one's individual interests. It was this political development and understanding that led me to co-found the New Afrikan Black Panther Party (NABPP) now the Revolutionary Intercommunal Black Panther Party (RIBPP) and contribute to developing its ideological and political line and strategy.

GETTING OUR POLITICS RIGHT

Although we adhere to the ideological and political line of Maoism, the RIBPP is not a traditional Communist Party (CP) and our strategy of Pantherism or Revolutionary Intercommunalism is not the traditional method of Communist organizations.

Unlike traditional CPs our role is not to organize the proletariat at the point of production nor lead revolutionary national independence struggles.

Our mass base and orientation is specifically towards the huge numbers of people across the globe who have been pushed out of productive relations by modern advances in technology and automation and live on the margins of society, or who are otherwise unable to maintain secure employment. These are largely lumpen proletarians, displaced farmers and peasants, and the permanently unemployed; people who survive by hustling or otherwise by any means necessary.

Most of these billions of people live in poor urbanized settings and concentrations such as ghettos, barrios, shanty towns, favelas, and certainly prisons, and have been influenced by lumpen culture and its lifestyle

Our role is to agitate, educate and organize these growing

masses of people to collectively meet their needs, to unite with them applying the Maoist mass line, and unite them with the traditional communist struggle and its vanguard class the proletariat, so they are proletarianized and become assets to the revolutionary movement to overthrow the global capitalist imperialist system rather than being used as agents of reaction against revolutionary movements.

We understand, as did Frantz Fanon, V.I. Lenin, Mao tse Tung and especially the original Black Panther Party (BPP), that the lumpen and lumpenized people are especially targets of the ruling class and its armed enforcers to be turned and used as agents of violence and reaction against revolutionary forces. It was with this understanding that the BPP developed a revolutionary theory and organizational strategy that explains the causes of these groups' conditions and is tailored to revolutionizing them. This is in part what the RIBPP is building on.

The key to organizing these sectors is that the party of Pantherism must be composed of people who not only grasp but are also thoroughly rooted in our ideological and political line and strategy. This is particularly important because these Comrades must not only be capable of leading the lumpen and lumpenized masses in remolding themselves, but they must be able to remain steadfast in their own revolutionary principles and practice in the face of the resistance and reactionary tendencies of this mass base, and living and struggling within this base. They must be able to and actually lead by example.

Comrades who have not internalized this commitment and discipline cannot possibly give principled leadership to a base whose very class conditioning is reactionary and often predatory. This is why members of our Party must not only know and understand – and have the love and respect of – the people, but they must have in every way disposed of and be fortified against lumpen or petty bourgeois influences and, to the extent that they originated from these classes, have committed class suicide—that is they must have thoroughly developed the class outlook and practice of the revolutionary proletariat.

In these respects a number of RIBPP cadre fail. These tendencies have come into the RIBPP because of cadre resisting committing class suicide, also from erroneous practices inherited from the NABPP and other groups that our members were formerly part of. We cannot deal lightly with these errors as they go to the very heart of our ability to fulfill our organization's principles, purpose and role.

THE CONTRAST OF ADVOCACY

While my characterization of advocacy is a general one, the following critical discussion focuses on people whom I've encountered and worked with as part of revolutionary parties. I am not critiquing individuals involved in independent work or working within general mass type groups, because these are not people who, like party cadres, have made an explicit commitment to the line and practice of a revolutionary vanguard. This discussion also does not in any way contradict the role and need of vanguard organizations, but speaks to and confirms the dangers of unremolded petty bourgeois (PB) elements within revolutionary organizations.

During my process of political growth, I encountered many outside 'movement' people, most were PB. Many represented themselves as committed to the betterment of the conditions of the oppressed. They called themselves revolutionaries or individuals devoted to serving the people. Many of them were not.

While most had good intentions they were at best advocates; people who had a very limited commitment to the interests of the oppressed and the struggle or otherwise placed their personal interests before those of the oppressed and the struggle. They often limited themselves to doing what was convenient for themselves. While they certainly made sacrifices, they weren't willing to suffer for the people or to give up their privileges and comforts in a significant way.

They sought to impose their own wants, ideas and values on the people and struggled only to achieve those things, instead of struggling to learn and support what the people

themselves needed and found important, and to do, not what was convenient for them or made them feel needed or good about themselves, but rather what circumstances demanded. Some were motivated by their own personal therapeutic needs to feel validated or a part of something, which again made their own interests their driving and main priority.

Then there were those who wanted acknowledgment and praise, and even expressed demoralization when they didn't receive it. Some maneuvered for special controls. Often while paying lip service to serving the people they spent a lot of time praising their own contributions, reflecting PB liberalism. Most could not take genuine criticism or took it only selectively or superficially.

Not ironically these people could and did criticize others' behaviors as liberal while overlooking or downplaying their own. As Mao said, they applied the principles of Marxism to others but liberalism to themselves, and sought, as George Jackson criticized, special consideration and treatment from others within revolutionary organizations.

They criticized others' perceived mistakes and its negative effects on the organization and its development and work, but ignored their own errors and the fact that the Party's failures were as much a reflection of their own erroneous practices and non-proletarian class perspectives as anyone else's.

Often they wanted to create what Lenin struggled against, namely a political group where members related to one another with subjective attachments and loyalties like families, instead of as Comrades objectively committed to a brutally scientific and unified set of ideological and political principles and adherence to rules of discipline. (1) They took offense to having to stand firm on such principles and to others who did not subjectively accept or support these positions based upon such special loyalties. I have fallen into such errors with these people but have corrected these practices with self criticism and detaching myself from those who refuse to practice honest criticism and self criticism and correct these errors themselves. I've 'offended' these people many times because I've resisted these inclinations, sometimes publicly.

In extreme cases there is a particular competitiveness, pretentiousness, narcissism and conceit present in such individuals, which are features of ego centric self-absorption generated by the competitive individualism of bourgeois society, especially present in the PB and lumpen, and which can only be countered by rooting oneself among the oppressed masses and engaging in cooperative relations with and serving the people, or in other words committing class suicide. I spoke a bit about this process in a recent article, "On the Pitfalls of Petty Bourgeois Revolutionary Leadership and the Necessity of Class Suicide." (2)

THE PERILS OF A 'PARTY' OF ADVOCATES

The results of building a revolutionary organization composed of such advocates or people who fail to immerse themselves with the masses, who basically hide themselves in a hothouse for fear of facing certain hardships and challenges, is that the organization will shrink and become demoralized, bureaucratic and irrelevant. The opposite error is to allow the organization to become immersed in the spontaneous day-to-day struggles of the people (tailing mass reaction) with the temptation of growing quickly but without the correct ideological foundation.

Both of these erroneous paths embody the PB advocacy mindset; a class tendency that doesn't really want revolutionary change, but only better conditions for itself under the existing system. The former error (failure to immerse our leadership and engage energetically with the masses) has become prominent in the outside RIBPP and must be uprooted if we are to grow and become/relevant to the people. The latter error (energetically engaging in spontaneous 'activism' without ideological focus) was deeply rooted in the NABPP.

Maintaining the correct foundation compels practicing collective criticism and self criticism without regard for people's individual loyalties and allegiances, subjective reactions, or

egos in search of validation, recognition or praise.

In making these points it's important to keep in mind that we don't judge the importance of an organization by the bourgeois criteria of size and influence but rather by the depth and development (correctness) and application of its ideological and political line. Everything else will come with the correct line and its application.

TWO LINE STRUGGLE

In any case a Party's class character is determined by the line that leads the organization. Keeping the correct ideological and political line in command demands continuous internal struggle against opportunist and revisionist lines, or in other words between proletarian and bourgeois perspectives for control (2-line struggle).

In this struggle the Party must be continuously bent to the will of the proletariat by revolutionary cadre, a struggle that will continue even after the proletarian class has won political power under socialism. Indeed this struggle will continue until classes are eliminated. Actually because of the concentration of leading class forces within it, under socialism the revolutionary Party will provide the main avenue for climbing back into the old class relations, hence the need to struggle without quarter to keep the proletarian line in command.

By the very nature of their methods, those who seek to influence – or should I say manipulate – Party members through cultivating and/or appealing to individual subjective loyalties are acting to advance a bourgeois and reactionary line.

In the revolutions so far it has been the bourgeoisie in the party that has undermined and reversed the revolution by changing the ideological and political line of the party making it a bourgeois and reactionary party. For the most part these elements began as PB radicals (advocates) who joined the party because it was the only effective force challenging the old order and imperialism. They were vacillating allies who supported some of what the genuine revolutionaries were about, basically the continuation of the bourgeois democratic revolution, but not all of what the genuine communists were about. Essentially they didn't want to fully unite with the masses and lose or give up their class privileges. This is the dilemma of the PB.

Some were openly rightist and others left in form and rightist in essence – but in essence all reflected the dilemma of the PB. The only way out of this dilemma is class suicide, which is hard to do and makes people very upset. Revolutionaries understand that life is hard but revolution is harder. If we choose it – we must do it! One can't keep agonizing over which side they are on, trying to have their cake and eat it too.

On top of the fact that we will not compromise ideologically and politically, too many good Comrades have given their lives and suffered torture for us to compromise with people who aren't committed to being all the way revolutionaries within a revolutionary Party. It isn't easy for Comrades within these razor wire plantations. It isn't easy for Comrades within the third world. If it was easy it wouldn't be called "the struggle."

Within the RIBPP there is ongoing 2-line struggle, the proletarian line has not yet won out. To assure the correct class orientation the Party must overcome PB influences within its leadership, root its entire leadership within the masses and their struggles on the ground, and give correct and active ideological and political guidance to its rank and file membership and its mass organizations. As Mao explained of revolutionary organizations:

"the whole party [must] be vigilant and...see that no comrade at any post is divorced from the masses. It should teach every comrade to love the people and listen attentively to the voice of the masses; to identify himself with the masses wherever he goes, instead of standing above them, to immerse himself among them; and according to their present level, to awaken them or raise their political consciousness and help them gradually to organize themselves voluntarily and to set going all essential struggles permitted by the internal and external circumstances of the given time

and place.” (3)

If we fail to do this we will become, like other PB groups that are revolutionary in name alone, increasingly small (and small-circle oriented), irrelevant, demoralized and isolated.

Dare to Struggle Dare to Win!
All Power to the People!

ENDNOTES:

1. In party work and decisions Lenin rejected allowing personal motives to influence comrades, and emphasized the need for strict adherence to rules that preserved a business-like functioning. See for example, V.I. Lenin, COLLECTED WORKS, Vol. 34, pp. 161-66 (Progress Publishers)

2. rashidmod.com/?p=3205

FROM B-DOGS TO RED PANTHERS: THE EVOLUTION FROM REACTIONARY TRIBALISM TO REVOLUTIONARY INTERCOMMUNALISM (2024)

By *Halisi Olugbala Uhuru*

June 3, 2024

When our ancestors were brought to the Americas from West Afrika as slaves, they were not one people. They were members of many different tribal nations. They were Wolof, Mandinka, Mende, Akan, Ewe, Fon, Yoruba, Igbo, Bakongo, Mbundu, etc. Each of our tribes spoke their own language, and had their own history, customs, traditions, and communities. In fact, before the European enslavement and colonization of our people and land, we did not call ourselves “Black” or “Afrikans,” and we did not consider those outside of our tribe to be our people. Much like how the many different Native American tribal nations didn’t consider themselves one people, or call each other “Indians” until Europeans labelled them as such.

It is because of this tribalism, and our inability to recognize the collective enemy outside of us, and our collective basis and need for unity within us, that we, like the Native American tribes, allowed ourselves to be manipulated by the Europeans into warring against ourselves, turning village against village, tribe against tribe, kingdom against kingdom, and chief against common people. The Europeans flooded our land with guns and liquor, armed all sides in our conflicts, and created a lucrative market for the many prisoners that were taken during our tribal wars, prisoners that were bought by the Europeans and trafficked to the European colonies throughout the Americas as slaves to work on their lucrative sugar, rice, tobacco, and cotton plantations.

Whereas tribalism, before the advent of European conquest, brought unity, community, safety, security, order, and structure to our societies; in the face of a determined enemy bent on subjugating and enslaving us all, our tribalism became a weakness that aided and facilitated our own enslavement and destruction.

Slavery here in Amerika and throughout the diaspora stripped us of our tribal identities, as well as our Afrikan names, languages, history, cultures, religions and social structures, thereby transforming us into a single oppressed people, collectively labelled “negroes,” “niggers,” “coloreds,” and “blacks” by our enslavers. All forms of Afrikan tribalism at this point had been destroyed, but the divide and rule tactics of our enslavers continued to be used against us in the manner of Willie Lynch, taking minute differences amongst us, such as age, shade, size, gender, geography, intelligence, and artificial class distinctions (house slaves vs field slaves), and enlarging them until these minute differences become antagonistic differences that bred envy, distrust, and hatred between us, preventing any effective united move against our collective oppressors.

Once chattel slavery ended in 1865, our people suffered through another 100 years of Jim Crow segregation,

discrimination, and terror. The thriving communities we had managed to build from nothing were bombed (Black Wall Street in Tulsa, Oklahoma; Rosewood, Florida, etc.), our men were lynched, our women were raped, our people were forcefully disenfranchised, and we remained mired in poverty, fear and racial oppression. It was under these circumstances that our people rose up in rebellion against this society and state of affairs, demanding freedom, justice and equality, from the 1950s to the 1970s. This 20 year period gave birth to the Civil Rights Movement, a non-violent campaign for Black civil rights, integration, and an end to all racist laws and practices across Amerika. This period also gave birth to the Black Power Movement, a militant campaign for Black self-esteem, self-determination, self-defense, independence, and revolution.

It was in the context of the Black Power Movement that the Black Panther Party was formed in Oakland, California. Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seals formed the Black Panthers in 1966 to unite, educate and organize Black people for self-determination, self-reliance, and self-defense; to lead our people in a proletarian revolutionary struggle against capitalism and imperialism, for the liberation of not just the Black community, but of the world.

The Black Panthers became the largest and most effective Black liberation organization to come out of the Black Power Movement, earning it the FBI’s designation as the greatest threat to the internal security of the United States. Repression soon followed. The FBI and local police forces around the country declared war on the Black Panthers, which led to the assassination and false imprisonment of key leaders and cadre, and the destruction of its many community service programs. Finally, the Panthers had devised a tactic to unify our people, subvert our differences and effectively move us against our collective oppressors, and the government smashed them. It was in the ashes of the Black Panther Party that the Crips and the Bloods were born.

In Los Angeles, California, before the advent of the Panthers, tribalism, in the form of gangs like the Slausons, Gladiators, Businessmen and Watts Farmers, had reincarnated itself amongst our youth in the 1950s and early 60s. Slausons gangs leader, Bunchy Carter subverted this reactionary tribalism when he joined the Black Panther Party in prison, and came home and revolutionized the Slausons, turning them into Black Panthers, which led to the establishment of the Southern California chapter of the Black Panther Party. Los Angeles, under Bunchy’s leadership, became one of the most active areas of the BPP in the country, unifying the Black youth and elevating them past reactionary tribalism to revolutionary nationalism.

In 1969, a conflict, led, instigated, and facilitated by the government, between the Panthers and another Black Power organization, called the Us Organization, led to the murders of Bunchy Carter and John Huggins, thus neutralizing two major leaders of the BPP in LA. Shortly after this, Geronimo Ji Jaga (née Pratt), the only LA Panther qualified to take over the leadership of the Party in LA, was framed for a murder he didn’t commit. After 27 years of incarceration he was released after the FBI was forced to admit that they had proof all along that he couldn’t have committed the murders he was imprisoned for. So in 1969, all three leaders of the LA Panthers had been neutralized, and the Party itself had been effectively neutralized as well. Without the revolutionary leadership and guidance of the Panthers in our communities, the youth in LA reverted back to reactionary tribalism, forming the gangs we now know as the Crips and Bloods.

The Crips started in 1969 in East LA. Originally, they formed with a similar mission as that of the Black Panthers, to serve and defend their communities, but without any of the class consciousness, organizational structures, and revolutionary principles of the Panthers, thereby allowing their early righteous intentions to degenerate into a struggle for power and domination; in essence, becoming a reactionary tribal army, mobilizing against the community.

Through sheer aggression, the Crips rapidly expanded from neighborhood to neighborhood, recruiting the youth into its army, and making enemies along the way. Neighborhoods who didn’t want to join the Crips and opposed their attacks on civilians in their communities, became rivals to the Crips. However, individually, these rival neighborhoods could not

defend themselves against the much larger Crips gangs, so they’d unified into an anti-Crip alliance called the Bloods. The Crips raised the blue flag as the symbol of their tribal army, and the Bloods raised the red flag as a symbol of theirs. Each tribe developed its own customs, traditions, history, and ways of speaking that emphasized its own tribal allegiance.

In Blood history, we are taught that we formed to protect our communities, and fight against oppression, a theme that has followed the expansion on the Bloods from California to New York, where the Bloods started in 1993 in Rikers Island jail to combat the oppression of the Spanish gangs like the Latin Kings and Neatas who dominated the jail and oppressed the Black detainees. It is in this historical stance against oppression that the true cause and character developed of what it means to be a Blood, and defines the meaning of Blood itself: *Brotherly Love Overrides Oppression and Destruction*. Unfortunately, like the Crips, without true revolutionary principles, guidance and structure, nothing has stopped us from becoming just as oppressive to others as we claim others have been to us. Instead of protecting our communities, we have traditionally preyed on them, and have become locked into cycles of Black-on-Black crime and violence, pitted in gang warfare reminiscent of the tribal warfare of our West Afrikan Ancestors, which caused us to be brought here in the first place.

Bloods kill Crips and Crips kill Bloods. Bloods kill other Bloods from different sets, and Crips kill other Crips from different sets. Our communities are suffering, while the true enemy that is oppressing us all is free to go about business as usual. None of us own our communities that we are dying and killing for. All of our communities are poor, and none of us have any say-so in the institutions that govern and shape our communities. So what are we really banging for? Who is benefitting from all this destruction? The government destroyed the Black Panthers in just a few years, so why have they allowed our tribes to exist for this long? What benefit are we bringing to our communities and what is the purpose of our continued existence?

If history has taught us anything, we must see that reactionary tribalism has only weakened us as a people and made us agents in our own subjugation and exploitation. How are we being true to the meaning of BLOOD when we embrace the role of oppressor and destroyer in our communities. The true Blood is disciplined and militant, and real right in all of his affairs. The true Blood embraces the spirit of the Panther, for the Panther understood the true source of our oppression and moved against it. If our Blood and our bang is to mean anything, we must rise above reactionary tribalism and commit ourselves to becoming a true revolutionary force in our communities.

The Revolutionary Intercommunal Black Panther Party (RIBPP) has called upon us to join them in a Clenched Fist Alliance (CFA) for the liberation and empowerment of our people and communities as a whole. Let us take up this call, and embrace the 10 Point Program and Platform of the RIBPP. Let us fulfill our revolutionary duty and heritage. *Brotherly Love Overrides Oppression and Destruction*. This is the evolution of the Red Panther!

All Power to the People!

Are We Prison Abolitionists? (A Response To Bob Avakian’s “Abolition: Real And Illusory”)

By *Kevin “Rashid” Johnson*

December 19, 2021

I was invited by affiliates of the Revolutionary Communist Party-USA (RCP) to write a “refutation” of a short polemic by the RCP’s Chair Bob Avakian titled, “Abolition—Real and Illusory.” In inviting me to reply they expressed, “a critique with substance would be greatly appreciated and a welcome change from the pot shots some choose to direct at BA without even bothering to read what he has actually written.”

The Revolutionary Intercommunal Black Panther Party (RIBPP) accepts this invitation and appreciates its recognition that we commit to critiquing other lines and positions based upon principles and not sensation, particularly where

this writer has critiqued positions taken by BA in the past.

ABOLISHING SLAVERY VERSUS ABOLISHING PRISONS

BA begins his article making a distinction between abolition in relation to literal slavery that still exists today and "abolition" as a movement aimed at ending institutionalized racism in Amerika, which ties in with mass incarceration and class society that engenders these oppressive conditions.

He argues that the latter form of abolition cannot be achieved except through a revolutionary struggle aimed at overthrowing this capitalist-imperialist system and replacing it with a socialist system with the ultimate goal of achieving world communism (a world without nation states, classes, and so on). I agree completely with this position. As I have expressed before, echoing comrades Kwame Nkrumah and Fred Hampton Sr., racism and capitalism go hand in hand.

PRISONS WHEREIN STATE POWER

Furthermore, one cannot abolish prisons without abolishing the state itself. As V.I. Lenin aptly explained in "The State and Revolution", the state is an instrument of class rule, which enforces that rule through special bodies of armed people, namely the military, police and prisons. To abolish the military, police, or prisons means abolishing the state, which is impossible short of achieving world communism.

Wresting power from the exploitative and murderous capitalist class will demand armed struggle, and it will demand maintaining specialized bodies of the people to defend against and ward off the capitalist's relentless drive to regain power.

Revolutionaries understand that even under socialism, where the capitalist class has been overthrown, there must be an armed socialist state to carry forward and defend the achievements and interests of the working class. Maoists, in particular, understand that under socialism class struggle continues and even sharpens.

The difference is that under socialism the body of armed people who enforce working class rule (namely, the new military, police, and prisons) will consist of the workers themselves alongside others who were previously oppressed and exploited under the rule of capitalist state power, with the distinction that prisons, and the military, and police for that matter, will look and operate very differently under workers' control that it has and does under capitalist-imperialist rule.

IS ABOLISHING PRISONS A REALISTIC PROPOSITION?

I think that most prisoners agree that there are some people who present a real danger to society whom society needs to keep under some control. Who among the people in society doesn't agree with this? During revolutionary struggle, there are some people on the street whom the revolutionaries should arrest and confine for the good of society. These are not new questions. In 2007 I wrote:

"Enslavement does not teach one how to be free. Abuse does not promote good citizenship or emotional stability. A criminal justice system will still be needed under socialism—to deal with anti-social criminal behavior. But our model must be a 'school of liberation.' The principles of a genuine correctional system must be articulated and struggled for as part of the overall revolutionary struggle. The question is how should these prisons be run and what rights should the prisoners have that are inalienable and will promote rehabilitation and good citizenship?" (1)

So, in a very real sense, revolutionaries understand that abolishing prisons is not at all a realistic proposition at this stage of human society short of world communism.

TRANSFORMING THE PRISONS INTO SCHOOLS OF LIBERATION

Revolution is a birthing process, the old society is pregnant with the new. The struggle must be used to create more favorable conditions for struggle, which develops from a lower to a higher level.

As revolutionaries we want to transform the prisons into "schools of liberation" to train cadre and fighters for the revolution. But on a deeper level our aim is to revolutionize social relations under capitalism to better enable us to revolutionize social relations under socialism and in the advance to communism.

Since we began in 2005 as the New Afrikan Black Panther Party (NABPP) and reconstituted in 2020 as the RIBPP, we have upheld the line of abolishing prison Slavery in Amerika by amending the 13th amendment to strike the clause that allows for the enslavement of those convicted of crimes. We advanced this slogan across U.S. prisons which gained momentum and led to numerous prison work strikes and a broad movement to amend the 13th, which swept U.S. prisons and won broad public support, particularly from 2014-2018.

With the increased number of anti-statist leftists on the outside in this prison-based struggle, the movement to abolish prison Slavery (Amend the 13th Amendment) and transform the prisons into schools of liberation has been increasingly converted into a movement to abolish prisons (without the necessary protracted struggle to abolish capitalist-imperialism and the need for state power).

While we agree with the object of abolishing prison conditions as they exist and operate under the existing capitalist-imperialist system, we oppose the notion that prisons can or should be abolished without the ultimate achievement of global communism.

Dare To Struggle, Dare To Win!
All Power To The People!

Endnote

(1) Kevin "Rashid" Johnson, "Promoting Proletarian Consciousness As Prisoner Rehabilitation" (2004). <http://rashidmod.com/?p=374>

The Democrats Are Not Your Party: Confronting Black Political Confusions in an Election Year (2020)

By Kevin "Rashid" Johnson

March 10, 2020

THE DEMOCRATS FOR BLACKS? A CRUEL TRICK

It's an election year and the Democrats are busy attempting to woo the Black vote. One wonders how we've forgotten that not so long ago the Democrats were the party of lynching, Jim Crow segregation, and—right alongside the Republicans—the political arm of the Ku Klux Klan. And before that it was the party of slavery, founded in 1828 by Andrew Jackson—one of the largest slaveholders of his day and a notorious, genocidal Indian killer.

And not just that, it was the Democrats who, having won an 80 seat majority in the Senate in 1874, led the overthrow of Black Reconstruction in the South (kicking Blacks out of political office, destroying Black businesses, churches, and schools, reducing us back to slave-like conditions, etc.), and afterwards organized untold numbers of white riots against Black communities that saw hundreds of Blacks raped and murdered by white mobs.

Jewish people the world over vow to never forget the crimes of the German Nazi party against their people.

So how has this original Nazi party (namely, the Democrats) that was the root of so much anti-Black terror, suffering and death come to be identified as a representative party of Blacks in Amerika today, so that every election season we see Black voters almost unanimously endorsing its candidates?

There had to have been a cruel trick involved. And there

was!

This state of affairs literally happened overnight during the early 1960s. It was done actually to subvert and redirect the grassroots struggles of Blacks against segregation, police abuse and murders, poverty, racism and all the other evils we suffered then, because those struggles were threatening to really end our abuse. In fact, we continue to suffer the very same abuses today, exactly because we were tricked into joining the 'Democratic coalition', believing it would solve our problems, when as said the Democrats had the exact opposite intentions in mind.

REAL POLITRICKS—JACKSONIAN DEMOCRACY

To understand what happened and how, we should begin with the party's founder, Andrew Jackson, and the deceptive form of politics he popularized that came to be known as "Jacksonian Democracy." This form of politics came to replace the old system of unconcealed monopoly on power by wealthy white male property owners to serve their own interests. It became necessary to disguise their self-serving monopoly on power because of growing struggles by the lower classes for recognition of their needs and a proportional share of political of power.

Of course people of color and women had no rights then and were suppressed by all males, rich and poor, so no concern was given to placating them.

Jackson's political method was to pretend to care about, to speak for, and to promise change to the lower class white males, but to actually do nothing to benefit them except implement minor token reforms, all to preserve the established order—while violently repressing efforts of the lower sectors to go beyond the reforms Democrats were willing to offer. He also played to the middle classes.

As a result he won a wide range of professionals and businessmen and even organized labor to support the Democrats, even as he sent troops to break workers' strikes.

As historian Howard Zinn noted, "Jackson was the first President to master the liberal rhetoric to speak for the common man." [1] A method that was two-faced by nature. "The Jacksonian method," Zinn explained, "was to achieve stability and control by winning to the Democratic party 'the middling interest, and especially ... the substantial yeomanry of the country' by 'prudent, judicious, well-considered reform.' That is, reform that would not yield too much. These were the words of Robert Rantoul, a reformist, corporation lawyer, and Jacksonian Democrat. It was a forecast of the successful appeal of the Democratic party—and at times the Republican party—in the twentieth century." [2]

So the essence of Jacksonian Democracy was to pretend to give a voice to disempowered people, to lull them into submission to the oppressive status quo, while remaining prepared to violently suppress those who seek more than token reforms that change nothing.

Which brings us to when and why the notoriously anti-Black Democrats suddenly become the pretend party of Blacks.

DEMOCRATS SUBVERT BLACK LIBERATION

During the 1950s-60s the Black struggle against Jim Crow segregation, lynching, etc. went into high gear. Blacks began fighting back and uniting on a national scale to upset the status quo.

These efforts culminated in a planned mass siege on the capital, where hundreds of thousands of Blacks from all over the country planned to converge on Washington, DC in 1963 to shut the city down, and not leave until their concerns were resolved.

THIS was the event that prompted the Democrats and their sitting President, John F. Kennedy, Jr., to suddenly pretend to care about and give a voice to Blacks. Their actual concern, however, was simply to gain control of the Black struggle, and stop the planned siege which would have been a

PR and political nightmare for Kennedy and Co., who were busy portraying the US to the world as a racial and cultural melting pot of democratic freedom for all.

The US was engaged in an image war with the USSR in efforts to sway the newly liberated nations of color away from Communism and into alliances with Amerika, so the US could gain preferential access to and exploit their natural resources and labor power in place of the recently expelled Europeans.

Images of US Blacks fighting against oppressive conditions much like those these nations had just fought to break free of themselves would certainly alienate them from Amerika, and prove exactly what the USSR was reporting to the world about Amerika—reports US officials were dismissing as false Communist propaganda.

Suddenly, the Democratic Party became the party of Black civil rights, and brought the most prominent voices of the Civil Rights movement, (the so-called Big Six, which included Martin Luther King, Jr.), into the 'Democratic Coalition.'

The Big Six were in disputes over money needed to fund their work, so Kennedy had his financial backers offer them huge sums and give them access to the mainstream media, if they would bring the Black movement and planned siege under control. It was pure Jacksonian Democracy.

The Big Six went for it, literally selling out the movement. The planned grassroots siege was subverted and transformed into the August 1963 event that came to be known as the March on Washington, where King gave his famous "I Have a Dream Speech." Malcolm X witnessed the entire affair and criticized it in his Nov 1963, "Message to the Grassroots" speech. He described it as follows:

"The Negroes were out there in the streets. They were talking about how they were going to march on Washington.... That they were going to march on Washington, march on the Senate, march on the White House, march on the Congress, and tie it up, bring it to a halt, not let the government proceed. They even said they were going out to the airport and lay down on the runway and not let the airplanes land. I'm telling you what they said. That was the revolution. That was the black revolution.

"It was the grass roots out there in the street. It scared the white man to death, scared the white power structure in Washington, DC to death; I was there. When they found out that this black steamroller was going to come down on the capital, they called in... these national Negro leaders that you respect and told them, 'Call it off,' Kennedy said. 'Look you all are letting this thing go too far.' And Old Tom said, 'Boss, I can't stop it because I didn't start it.' I'm telling you what they said. They said, 'I'm not even in it, much less at the head of it.'

"They said, 'These Negroes are doing things on their own. They're running ahead of us.' And that old shrewd fox, he said, 'If you all aren't in it, I'll put you in it. I'll put you at the head of it. I'll endorse it. I'll welcome it. I'll help it. I'll join it.'

"This is what they did with the March on Washington. They joined it... became part of it, took it over. And as they took it over, it lost its militancy. It ceased to be angry, it ceased to be hot, it ceased to be uncompromising. Why it even ceased to be a march. It became a picnic, a circus. Nothing but a circus, with clowns and all....

"No, it was a sellout. It was a takeover.... They controlled it so tight, they told those Negroes what time to hit town, where to stop, what signs to carry, what songs to sing, what speech they could make, and then told them to get out of town by sundown...."

Malcolm pointed out that the people knew they'd been duped and it would lead to a "long hot summer" of Black revolt. And true to his predictions Blacks rose up in city after city in revolts beginning during that following summer of 1964, and continuing every year until 1968.

His description is the literal truth of how the Democrats subverted the Black struggle for change. In his book *A Thousand Days*, Kennedy's White House advisor Arthur Schlesinger gave the same account as Malcolm, but as an inside witness to the 1963 scheme with which "Kennedy moved to incorporate the Negro revolution into the democratic coalition."

But that's not the end of the story.

KENNEDY STACKS THE DECK TO ENSURE THAT BLACK CIVIL RIGHTS FAIL

Not only did Kennedy use the Civil Rights movement to subvert the genuine Black struggle against racism and economic oppression, he also made sure that newly enacted civil rights laws would not work to benefit Blacks. The Democrats thus doubly tricked Blacks.

Remember, Kennedy's whole purpose for pretending to back Black civil rights was to stop our independent efforts to end our intolerable conditions. As Malcolm X said, he, like the Democrats in general, was a "shrewd fox."

So, while Kennedy put on a public face of promoting Black civil rights (a bogus image that persists 'til today), he packed the federal courts of the South with the most notoriously racist judges who he knew would not enforce the new federal civil rights laws, refused to enforce these laws himself, had Justice Department lawyers and FBI agents stand by as racist Southern police brutalized Black voters in federal buildings, and so on.[3]

This was two-faced Jacksonian Democracy used now against Blacks, to stop us from resisting segregation, lynchings, police murders and abuse, terror and violence at the hands of white racists, and endemic poverty and discrimination of every variety. And it's still used against us today by the Democratic Party.

I make only passing mention of the Republican Party because it has never made any credible attempts to pretend to represent Black interests during or since the civil rights era. In fact, when Kennedy and the Democrats suddenly switched horses in 1963 to pretend to support the Civil Rights Movement, their huge white Southern base was vocal about feeling betrayed. The Republicans promptly moved to win them over, which was accomplished under the "Southern Strategy" devised by Richard Nixon. Their white constituency is the 'silent majority' that today still forms Republican's largest and most loyal base, and has been so blindly supportive of Donald Trump and his open appeals to traditional racist sentiments.

MLK WAKES UP TO THE DEMOCRATS' GAME

In the aftermath of the government-controlled March on Washington, the "long hot summer" that followed, and Malcolm X's scathing criticism, King came to realize that he'd been manipulated and used by the Democrats to betray and mislead his own people's struggle.

He came out against the Civil Rights movement and rejected its pro-capitalist leadership, including such notables as Jesse Jackson. He was revealed to have embraced socialism and opposed Black integration into capitalist Amerika. His agenda changed to one of fundamentally changing the entire capitalist edifice and status quo, and supporting workers and all oppressed peoples. He further criticized Amerika as not a peacemaker but as a warmonger and "the greatest purveyor of violence in the world."

Finally, to amend for his having misled the 1963 march on Washington, he organized to lead a "Poor people's encampment" to lay siege to DC in the summer of 1968.

King's stance exposed the establishment's pretensions of promoting equality, indeed its role as a source and defender of economic and racial inequality. In turn the establishment, under both parties' administrations, saw him as a threat to their existing order, and subjected him to increasing government surveillance, harassment, and ultimately assassinated him.

The roles of the numerous government agencies under both parties that were involved in King's murder, its cover-up, and the unpublicized lawsuit the King family filed AND WON against the federal government in 1999 for his assassination, are detailed in attorney William Pepper's book, *An Act of State: The Execution of Martin Luther King* (2003).

THE DEMOCRATS ARE STILL PLAYING JACKSONIAN DEMOCRACY WITH US

What most don't know is not only did the Democrats use the Civil Rights movement and its leaders to subvert Blacks struggling against oppression, but both parties devised and have acted to create false government-controlled Black mis-leaders to misguide and keep us in this state.

This scheme was first laid out in 1967 by FBI assistant director William E. Sullivan. The plan was to destroy King and other influential independent Black leaders, including Malcolm X, and replace them with mis-leaders created and approved by the establishment.

Sullivan wrote of the intended implementation and outcome of this plan: "When this is done, and it can AND WILL BE DONE, obviously much confusion will reign, particularly among the Negro people.... The Negroes will be left without a national leader of sufficiently compelling personality to steer them in the proper direction."

As I've detailed elsewhere, Barack Obama was just such a Black mis-leader groomed and used by the establishment, (and foisted on us by the Democrats), who tried to disarm our struggles with promises of false "hope" in the status quo, while selling us a false bill that racism no longer existed in Amerika so our fight was over. (4)

Remember, he publicly denounced his own minister, Jeremiah Wright, for speaking out against government neglect and abuse of Blacks.

Under these banners he did absolutely nothing to address Black oppression nor that of any other groups. And when he was forced to acknowledge the continued prevalence of racism by worldwide reactions to social media exposures of the murder of unarmed Black youth Mike Brown by a white cop in Ferguson, MO, his body being left lying for hours on public display in the street by cops (as an obvious lynch-style terror tactic against the Black community), and the militaristic police response to community protest, all Obama did was excuse the cop and make a token appearance in a Black church to lead the congregation in singing "Amazing Grace."

Just as the Democrats used him and Bill Clinton in 2005 to stage token visits to hospitalized victims of Hurricane Katrina with major media coverage, to quell Black and international outrage with the government's mistreatment and neglect of Blacks during that crisis. While nothing was done to address the official racism that produced this crisis, what has ended was one of the largest mass gentrification and Black displacement moves on record.

But Blacks were so emotionally intoxicated with seeing a dark face in the White House (a genuine House negro), they overlooked the fact that Obama cared nothing about their plight nor doing anything to remedy it.

CONCLUSION

So, our rush to the polls every election season is nothing but a futile exercise in chasing false leadership, that's put before us to keep us in the same rut we've been in for generations. It's no irony, as many seem to think, that we still suffer brutal abuse, official neglect, police terror, systemic economic disadvantage, and racist oppression in the 21st century. It's been by design of a duplicitous system meant to keep us misinformed, confused and contained by organized deception and violence.

It's time we wake up and develop a genuine revolutionary leadership of our own making and with our bosom interests at heart. Cuz the Democrats definitely ain't it!

Black people have no political power under Amerika's two-party system. Like Comrade George Jackson said, choosing between these parties is like picking which of two ways we prefer to suffer and die.

What we need is a revolutionary party drawn from our own ranks, based in our communities, and answerable to us.

It's time we organize for fundamental change and stop being a political football kicked from pillar to post between the Democrats and Republicans, who ignore us until election season rolls around and then only makes opportunist token

appeals to us to help put one or the other of their candidates in office, while between elections our needs and suffering continue to go ignored.

Build and Support the Revolutionary Intercommunal Black Panther Party and Panther Solidarity Organization!

Dare to Struggle Dare to Win!
All Power to the People!

NOTES

[1] Howard Zinn, *A PEOPLE'S HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES-1492 TO PRESENT* (NY: Harper Perennial, 2003), p. 215

[2] *Ibid*, pp. 457-58

[3] See, Howard Zinn, *S.N.C.C.: THE NEW ABOLITIONISTS* (Boston: Beacon, 1964), pp. 203-06

See, Kevin "Rashid" Johnson, "Uncle Sam in Blackface: Barack Obama and the Designs of US Imperialism" (2009) <http://rashidmod.com/?p=995>; see also, *PANTHER VISION: ESSENTIAL PARTY WRITINGS AND ART OF KEVIN "RASHID" JOHNSON* (Montreal: Kersplebedeb, 2014), pp. 335-50.

Review of Disney's "Black Panther" movie

Sunday, February 25, 2018, May Day Books Blog

"Black Panther," film directed by Ryan Coogler, 2018

This poor film can't carry the burden placed upon it. It is to give all 10 year old black boys someone to look up to. It is to show strong black women capable of incredible combat or technical feats. It is to change the history and image of Africa and perhaps the world. It is to finally have many black people in a film. One excited and clueless reviewer even thought it would spark a 'revolution.'

Come on, this is a Disney film. Disney is the second largest media conglomerate in the world. Disney owns ABC, ESPN, A&E Networks, Pixar, Marvel Entertainment, Lucasfilm, the Muppets Studio and 21st Century Fox films. Their 'diversity' strategy is to sell tickets to under-served groups that might go to a science fiction / superhero film but haven't. It succeeded wildly, being the highest grossing film in 2018 so far. This was also the tactic behind 'Wonder Woman,' another film which will not liberate anyone.

LOWNDES COUNTY, AL FREEDOM ORGANIZATION

In 1965 the Lowndes County Freedom Organization was started under the leadership of Stokely Carmichael and other early Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee activists. This Alabama county was 80% black but no black people were registered to vote. Their symbol was a 'black panther.' 'Black Panther' the comic-book character was conceived in 1966 by two white guys at Marvel comics, Jack Kirby and Stan Lee, who were picking up on the ferment of the times. Later in 1966 the "Black Panther Party for Self-Defense" was created in Oakland, California, to defend black people from police violence. The Panthers were to the left of 'cultural nationalists' of the time, like Ron Karenga of US, who worshiped Africa and was later exposed as an FBI plant. From this you might be able to tell who the real black panthers are ... and aren't.

One of the continuing problems of science fiction in the U.S. is that it is based on high technology that accompanies medieval social structures. The 'Dune' series is a good example. Black Panther follows the same trope. Here is a king, T'Challa, who has to fight to the possible death for the kingship of Wakanda, in the backdrop of something like Victoria Falls. Yet this is a film clearly set in the present. Leadership is given to the best royally-born fighter, it is not based on any kind of democracy except that of personal violence. The clothing worn by the Africans is beautiful and ornate, but reminds one of a tourist or Hollywood conception of cliché'd

'native dress' that few wear in present-day Africa. Though these clothes may be a boon to black cos-play groups in the U.S., they misrepresent modern Africa. What powers this secret kingdom isolated from the world is 'vibranium' – a powerful mineral delivered by a meteor from outer-space. It provides power, weapons, protection, technology, medicine and much more. Wakanda is ostensibly a beautiful and peaceful place, a sort of Eden in a conflicted world, with huge skyscrapers, magnetic trains and also grass huts, goats, mountains and rhinoceroses. The people are seemingly happy in their isolation, a sort of hidden black utopia as yet unmarked by imperialism or colonialism.

The mining of conflict minerals in Congo - Tantalum Africa right now is full of minerals being exploited by various countries and corporations, and 'vibranium' echoes the valuable conflict mineral 'tantalum,' refined as 'coltan,' which Apple and other companies use in every computer and internet phone. It is mined in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda by primitive methods, and has brought war and misery to many, while making some rich. This, I think, is the real African 'vibranium.'

One black film reviewer said he'd never seen so many black people in a film (there are only 2 white ones in this one). Odd, because there are many films with nearly all black actors, so you have to wonder what he's looking at. You can go back to "Shaft" and "Foxy Brown," "The Color Purple, or more recently any Madea film, the "Friday" stoner comedies, many films by Spike Lee, "Fences" or "Straight Outta Compton" as a few examples. You might be able to come up with more, but it is not hard.

Here is the political 'nut' of the film. Most of the fighting occurs between black people! It is not with the one white villain, Klaue, who is trying to steal some vibranium. What is that fight about? Evidently a member of the royal family, N'Jobu, is sent to Oakland, California. N'Jobu wants to use the vibranium to win freedom for black people in the U.S. Wakanda's policy is to keep to itself and ignore the plight of billions of black people around the world. So N'Jobu is killed by T'Challa's father because he somehow gave the evil white man Klaue some vibranium. (Why he would is unknown...nor is it logical.) At any rate, N'Jobu's little son Erik, who is re-christened 'Killmonger' in the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, seeks revenge for the murder. And also a world-wide revolution against the oppressors of black people. This implies that he means killing all white people or some such thing. This would involve using vibranium as a weapon in New York, London and Hong Kong against the oppressors. So the political heart of the film is a conflict between a-political isolation and later, liberal social work ...or black nationalist revolution against oppression. The 'bad guy,' Killmonger, is for the latter, and so are some Wakandan male fighters.

One ally of T'Challa and the moderates is a white nebbish CIA agent, Ross, who helps them combat Killmonger. So our Panther king is a collaborator with the CIA. Logically the CIA does not want a revolution against oppression and would prefer social work. They too are trying to get their hands on some vibranium. So would every capitalist corporation and military in the world. As we know, the CIA has agents and the military has bases all over Africa now, with JSOC/military attack abilities.

Which character in the film are they closest to? T'Challa wins the struggle, with help from the female Wakandan Praetorian guard, the CIA agent and a formerly alienated tribe of Wakandans, the Jabari. The female guards serve as a prop for one man or another through the whole film. T'Challa spares Killmonger's life, but Killmonger wants to die like so many other black people have.

The film ends with T'Challa giving a speech to a UN-type body, sounding like a saintly Nelson Mandela, promising to lead the world out of misery through 'kind' example and vibranium. So the Wakandans are coming out of isolation and starting a social-work institution in Oakland. As we know from the history of South Africa, after ANC leader Mandela's death, Jacob Zuma took over the ANC. He has just been kicked out of the presidency of South Africa for corruption. His job has been taken over by Cyril Ramaphosa, who is a former ANC labor leader and now billionaire. Ramaphosa collaborated with mining companies in South Africa in the Marikana massacre of striking diamond miners in 2012. So

leading by example didn't really happen in South Africa.

Fact and conservative fantasy. Fact and fiction. What is clear is that super-hero fantasies quarried by entertainment conglomerates do not deal with the real problems of Africa or black America. They in fact give reactionary solutions and embrace reactionary ideas. As in the execrable film "Wonder Woman," which dresses up fighting Germans in WWI with doing something about the oppressed status of women. They might be pleasant diversions, temporarily 'empowering' or irritating fakes, but this poor film did not go anywhere near showing a way out. It in fact is a right-wing movie attacking a more left-wing position, picturing "Killmonger" as an evil nasty person with a few good ideas. They deform radical politics and then promote corporatism. But again, this is Disney. What do you expect?

Related reviews: "Black Sails," which is partly about black maroons who escaped slavery and hid up in the mountains of various islands in the Caribbean. Also re Africa or partly about Africa: "Last Train to the Zona Verde," "Searching for Sugar Man," "Monsters of the Market," "Famished Road," "The Race for What's Left," "Southern Insurgency" and commentaries on Morocco and FGM.

WAKANDA FOR WHAT (2023)

By Kevin "Rashid" Johnson

January 29, 2023

Wakanda for what?

A comic book drama

To keep our eyes wide shut.

A caricature

of Black struggle against

the most heinous conditions,

Replacing our actual history

with animated fiction.

Lowndes County Freedom Organization

inspired Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale,

Then came Stan Lee and Marvel Comics

whose idea was to steal.

1966 when the Black Panther Party

was founded,

Stan Lee came out with the comic black panther

that same year as if he found it.

He ripped off our movement

presented as Black inclusion,

Then joined Disney

with its history

of political prostitution.

Remember Walt Disney's movie

about Donald Duck,

Visits Latin America

portrayed as if the U.S. gave a fuck.

He was working for the feds

to expand Amerika's dominion,

By trying to win favor and

influence Latin American opinion.

But Latin Americans soundly rejected
this fantasy cartoon tripe,
As based not on their own cultures
but racist stereotypes.

The same game is behind
the black panther Marvel comic franchise,
It's the pigs trying to dilute Black culture
with images meant to disguise.

The actual Party
that proved our greatest political
achievement yet,
A group the U.S. government
called the greatest domestic threat.

No other organization
in the history of Amerika,
Met with so much government resistance
and efforts to destroy its character.

Pushing this fantasy image
of a super hero Black king,
In place of the masses as the true heroes
is a capitalist thing.

we must understand in the struggle of classes
culture is a weapon,
They will always try to replace popular culture
with their own so we'll be kept in.

States of mind that reflect
the values of our enemy,
To make those who exploit and oppress us all
appear to be friendly.

The Panther slogan "All power to the people!"
was changed to "Wakanda forever!",
A fictitious land with another man's hand
aiming to cut and sever.

Out identification with the real Panthers
and their revolutionary goals,
And have us push comic
book characters onto our children as our heroes.

A fantasy that is unreal
without substance unbelievable,
To replace what we've actually done
so we don't see true freedom as achievable.

Black panther is just a rendition
of that Latino Donald Duck character,
Projected to Black people
based on a racist Afrikan caricature.

But unlike Latin Americans

racism in Amerika has made Blacks desperate,
For cinematic recognition
so we're less critical of how we're projected.

And on top of that they're generating billions
sucked right out of our pockets,
Enriching themselves at our expense
no other marvel movies topped it.

The people are the real vibranium
the natural resource that makes the world go round,
Wakanda for what? it's to keep us mind fucked
in every Black city province and town

The first movie grossed so much
Disney and Marvel had to make a sequel,
We need to counter that fantasy bullshit
with our own culture that empowers the people!

AMERIKA THE LIE (2023)

By Kevin "Rashid" Johnson

October 8, 2023

Everything in Amerika is inverted
Every ideal it professes perverted
Take for example the name department of defense
Which makes absolutely no sense
Its only role invasions
and infiltrations of weaker nations
And the department of justice
Targets just us
The poor, powerless and people of color
But protects those wealthy others
Who commit the real crimes
And undermine
World peace and stability
Because they have the ability
And exercise it
Killing and robbing multitudes but few realize it
Because the system shields
The power they wield
Through corporate monopolies
But call it a free market society
Promoting deporting huge portions
Of marginalized groups while opposing abortions
And birth control
Assuming the role
Of policing women's bodies
While claiming it's a free society
And the lie of an economy that trickles down
But grinds the poor and workers into the ground
While the rich few are exempt from taxation
And drive up the cost of living with inflation
With cops who swear to serve and protect us
But only kill maim and disrespect us
Everything about Amerika is inverted

Every value it claims to uphold perverted
With euphemisms its rulers disguise
A society sustained by lies
Like the claimed land of the free and home of the brave
But steeped in racism and built by slaves
