

# MAIN LINE

TRANSFORMING THE CRIMINAL MENTALITY  
INTO A REVOLUTIONARY MENTALITY

ISSUE #1

BUNCHY CARTER

TRANSFORM THE CRIMINAL [LUMPEN]  
MENTALITY INTO A REVOLUTIONARY  
MENTALITY.

GEORGE L. JACKSON

APPRENTICE 'BUNCHY' CARTER (1942 - 1969)



RASHID  
7-07-16

rashidmod.com



## Introduction

*Main Line* is a project of the New Afrikan BPP-PC, that aims to give practical meaning to the concept of "transforming the criminal mentality into a revolutionary mentality." This means our principal although not exclusive focus is on that social strata known as the lumpen proletariat (LP), aka the 'criminal' element or the underclass. In 'developed' societies, like Amerika, the LP is largely concentrated in and around impoverished urban centers, prisons, and 'White' rural poverty pockets like Appalachia and trailer parks.

By revolutionizing the criminal mentality, we mean remoulding this mindset with the class values and morality of the proletariat, which is the class of organized wage workers from which many of the LP originate and are integrated with, especially in the oppressed communities.

Advances in technology and automation have undermined the security and availability of employment for the masses of working and poor people. In many cases this has made growing numbers of people permanent unemployables who must survive by any means possible. This produces increasing numbers of people who live outside the bounds of 'legality' and prey upon other victims to survive or as a lifestyle.

This condition has led to many in the oppressed communities developing or having imposed upon them social and cultural norms and values that encourage and glamorize competitive, predatory, individualistic, and exploitative behaviors and values. *This* is the "criminal mentality." A mentality that actually reflects the values of the ruling class in capitalist society, but with less sophistication, and without the adornments and pretensions that class projects pretending to act in the interests of the masses of working and poor people, when actually they acquire their wealth and power through devising and maintaining a system that exploits the wealth-producing labor power of the lower sectors which produces their poverty, insecurity and misery.

We in the NABPP-PC recognize, like many revolutionary movements that have gone before, that if we don't take seriously the task of revolutionizing the criminal mentality, the enemy establishment and its pig enforcers will manipulate and use the LP and its tendencies toward socially destructive behaviors to justify their own increasingly violent containment and repression against our oppressed communities. They will also infiltrate, instigate and organize the LP to act as disrupters, agents and violent reaction against those of us struggling to fundamentally change and improve the conditions of our communities and capitalist society.

We see them using these very tactics right now in response to the masses' exposures and protests against systemic police murders of people in communities of people of color and the poor. Their response has been to instigate waves of violence, crime, and anti-social behaviour to render our communities less secure for the people. This by admittedly targeting and arresting the leadership of the various urban street tribes (so-called gangs), and inciting the then leaderless younger elements into violent splits, competitions and conflicts which is egged on and glamorized through a deformed subculture manufactured by the entertainment industry. We've seen a textbook case of this in Chicago in the wake of protests that followed the exposure of the police murder of 17 year old Laquan McDonald by Chicago cops in latter 2015. The cops in turn engineered a spike in gun violence and killings in the city unlike any seen in decades.

The establishment has used these same tactics in our communities and in the prisons over and again, then mocked the communities when they are forced in the absence of their own independent security forces to turn to the cops to quell the violence that they created, after protesting the cops' own criminally violent behaviors and coverups. The cops then arrogantly portray themselves as the only answer to crime and insecurity in the communities - conditions they have *never* solved anyway. They in turn use the violence and crime they've generated to vilify the communities, advance a self-serving 'law and order' agenda of promoting increased police funding, and even larger and more militarized police forces and power; and of course continued mass imprisonment targeted especially at communities of color.

To counter this and the lumpen culture that glamorizes the criminal mentality among us and fuels the oppressive designs of the system, we need again to transform this mentality, by developing genuine revolutionary culture and leadership within our own ranks, and organize our city blocks and cellblocks into base areas and schools of revolutionary ideological, political, cultural, and economic struggle.

A failure of correct leadership has been a major factor in the setbacks and obstacles we've faced in struggling to overcome this oppressive order. This has especially been the case since the decline of the original Black Panther Party and allied formations. Since that time there have been

a number of groups and individuals who have presumed to give leadership, but have only advanced at best subjective, revisionist, and/or idealistic lines, and some have only encouraged competitive individualism; militant, ego-oriented and provocative posturing; and other less-than-revolutionary tendencies that do not put the interests of the masses first and politics in command. Over the years our Party has struggled with a number of these tendencies and elements, and will continue to.

In fact, in *Main Line*, we will also present a forum where these and other lines can be printed side-by-side with our own, so our readers can themselves study and compare and determine which line prove most correct and consistent with the interests and needs of the oppressed masses. Our aim in this regard is to build greater unity through struggle with serious folks, expose false leadership and lines, and present and advance our own and others' political and ideological lines.

In closing I'd like to give a revolutionary salute to Comrade Ed Mead, who's been hospitalized recently in critical condition battling advanced cancer and reactions to medications. Ed as an experienced prison writer and publicist, encouraged me in this project and gave me some logistical pointers. We'd both agreed for some years on the dire need for an explicitly political periodical aimed at advancing the revolutionary consciousness of prisoners and developing cadre of genuinely revolutionary leaders from among us to ally with the broader proletarian struggle against today's globally destructive capitalist imperialist system.

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

Kevin "Rashid" Johnson

---

### On the Present State of New Afrikan/Black Crisis in Amerika: an Interview with Comrade Rashid by Anthony Rayson (2010)

**Anthony Rayson:** As you know Amerika does not want people to know what you know and are busy articulating. We're told the "civil rights struggle" of the 1960s took care of racism and that Blacks are cool with capitalism (Snoop Doggism). Tell us what the deal really is and the place the vast gulag system plays in society today—particularly with Black people.

**Rashid:** We both recognize that the last major wave of New Afrikan/Black struggle against this imperialist (monopoly capitalist) system, racism and national oppression here in Amerika, occurred in the 1960s and 1970s. This struggle took place on two fronts, reflecting the aspirations of two *opposite* class poles in Black Amerika. The first was the pro-monopoly capitalist pole (these elements sought an accommodation with and integration into the U.S. capitalist system). The second was the revolutionary national liberation pole (these elements sought independence and separation from the American capitalist system or fundamental socialist reconstruction of Amerika's political-economy as a condition to Black integration).

The first tendency was most strongly represented in the Civil Rights Movement. The second tendency by the Black Power/Liberation Movement. Because the second tendency represented a direct challenge to the U.S. imperialist system, it was feared the most by the Establishment.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. began as an accommodationist and pro-integrationist. His major gripe with Amerika was that white racism was a major obstacle to Black integration. That the U.S. government in openly fostering racism was not living up to the rhetoric of all people being equal as expressed in its founding creed—the Declaration of Independence.

As a middle class (petty bourgeois) Black, MLK initially held the same class values as the U.S. capitalist ruling class (big bourgeoisie), so he had no beef with capitalism itself, only with the conditions of white racism which prevented Black integration into capitalist Amerika. But MLK became more class conscious toward the end of his life, and ultimately came to realize that the wealth-worshiping capitalist system was the very cause of social inequalities and exploitation, including white racism. At this point he became an advocate of socialism. But initially, he was an advocate of capitalism. MLK's major presence as a civil rights leader spanned from the late 1950s until his assassination in 1968.

Now at the opposite Black Liberation pole were revolutionary thinkers like Malcolm X. Malcolm's early political understanding was stifled by what I call "reverse racism"—the subjective idea that Blacks are by nature superior to whites and whites are the embodiment of "evil." This view was initially behind his support for Blacks to separate from Amerika. But he wasn't exactly anti-capitalist. In fact, as a leading member of the Nation of Islam, he belonged to an organization that itself promoted Black capitalism. Despite this, his voice was a beacon to New Afrikans who opposed

integration into Amerika and accommodation with its white ruling class.

The power structure repeatedly maneuvered to block *both* trends of our movement, prompting New Afrikans to fight back physically against both racial oppression and enforced poverty, and a broad grassroots movement of poor Blacks spontaneously organized to March on Washington, D.C. in 1963, with the intention of shutting the capital down—stopping all movement in D.C. Including shutting down government operations, traffic, airports, commerce, etc.

This is when President John F. Kennedy decided to open up the Democratic Party to Blacks as a "supporter" of us getting basic civil rights and "equality" within the capitalist system, Kennedy and his big money backers financed King, (who was not broadly known then, but was a prominent pacifist civil rights leader in the South), and used him to rein-in and control Black militancy, and the spontaneously-planned 1963 march, which initially MLK had nothing to do with. He became the face and the voice Kennedy and Co. used in the mainstream media, the churches and elsewhere to speak to the riled-up Black masses and contain their festering rage that was threatening to militantly besiege the U.S. capital.

The U.S. government was compelled to use King and the Democratic Party—which was previously rabidly opposed to racial integration and Black civil rights—to avert what would have been a major political and economic crisis that would have shattered its world image. At that time, I believe that MLK, confused by his pro-capitalist class interests, naïve faith in the federal government, and his avowed pacifism, was sincerely opposed to Black racial oppression and felt he was doing the right thing.

So King was used as a political pawn to convert what was going to be an angry Black militant siege of D.C. into a government-controlled, passive, one-day march where Blacks—manipulated into a pacifist spirit with "things will get better someday" speeches—marched, sang, and cried out their frustrations, pain and misery, with a few white sympathizers on the fringes. It was a general repeat of what we'd done for centuries during and since slavery in the Black churches.

Now Malcolm X witnessed this entire farce, saw it for the trick it was, and bitterly criticized King and his allies. Malcolm pointed out that Amerika had repeatedly stifled, subverted, tricked and infiltrated every Black struggle for genuine freedom from oppressive conditions, government brutality and neglect, endemic poverty and white racism; and that the 1963 march was just another example of this. He predicted that the Black masses recognized this too, were fed up, and as a result Amerika was in for a "long hot summer" of Black revolt. And just as he predicted, beginning in 1964, (just months after the 1963 march), and continuing through 1968, Black ghettos across the U.S. exploded in continual revolt.

Meantime, after being excommunicated from the NOI by Elijah Muhammad, Malcolm began traveling across Afrika, studying their liberation struggles, working to build Pan-Afrikan ties between the oppressed New Afrikan masses in Amerika and the newly liberated Afrikan nations. From the 1950s through the 1960s, Afrikans were fighting for and winning political independence from European colonialism, and establishing new formally independent Afrikan-led nations. With the European colonizers being expelled from Afrika, and Afrikans taking over the governments, Amerika sought to establish ties with the new heads of the Afrikan countries, so it could secure access to and control over Afrika's abundant natural wealth. However, racism in Amerika presented an image problem that could prevent the U.S. ruling class from winning the "hearts and minds" of Afrika's new Black leaders, and their diplomats who were visiting or living in Amerika. This was actually the motive behind federal government efforts to outlaw segregation in the southern states, beginning with the landmark ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education* in the mid-1950s.

Even during the most rabid periods of racial oppression, Amerika always projected a patently false international image of the U.S. being a racial and cultural "melting pot" where all people lived and were treated equally. Malcolm's efforts threatened U.S. imperialist ambitions in Afrika, as he was actually exposing the true racist face of Amerika to Afrikans and showing them that their own sistas and brothas were just as brutally oppressed in Amerika, as they had been under the European colonial systems they had just struggled to break free of in Afrika.

Unlike MLK, Malcolm X at this stage was a strong advocate of our right to struggle for political independence and separation from Euro-American rule—as Afrikans were doing in Afrika—and to defend ourselves against racist violence, "by any means necessary," which included by use of arms. Malcolm's views became more and more revolutionary and less rooted in reverse racism, as a result of his international travels. His pilgrimage to Mecca exposed him to the reality that whites were not inherently "evil," but

that the brutal racism that he witnessed in Amerika was the result of conditions created by those who ran and “owned” society.

His closer study of U.S. imperialism led him to reject capitalism. The major government fear of Malcolm was that he was winning the support of the nations of color in Afrika and Asia, who were coming to identify Amerika as an imperialist power that was colonizing the Blacks within its own borders, and Malcolm was seen by Afrikan and Asian leaders as the legitimate leader and representative of the oppressed New Afrikans. This threatened to win international support for our right to struggle for national independence from Amerika, just as Afrikans and Asians were doing against European colonialism. Malcolm was also maneuvering to formally present the grievances of New Afrikans against Amerika, including charges of genocide, before the United Nations through a petition he’d drafted. But before all the pieces could come together, the CIA had him assassinated in 1965.

Inspired by Malcolm’s revolutionary nationalist and Pan-Afrikan internationalist visions, Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale founded the Black Panther Party (BPP) the next year to lead this struggle. The BPP openly adopted an anti-capitalist and pro-socialist platform, and implemented socialist [Serve The People/Survival] programs in the ghettos to organize and serve the needs of the people free of dependence on the imperialist system. This quickly earned the Panthers—and the Young Communist Movement they helped inspire—the label of being *the* major threat to the U.S. capitalist system.

Meantime, King became more and more exposed to the fundamental contradictions in capitalism and became disillusioned with it, and blind faith in the U.S. government, and the idea of Black integration into the U.S. Empire as it existed. He thus broke ranks with the middle class, pro-capitalist, civil rights agenda and came out in support of the poor and working-class, and bitterly opposed the war in Vietnam as an adventure in imperial conquest against Asian people struggling for liberation from imperialism.

King became a closet socialist, knowing he’d be killed if he openly championed socialism. But as a devout pacifist he had no concrete ideas on how to pursue a struggle to empower the oppressed poor and working-class people to transition Amerika into a socialist society.

Realizing that he’d been used by the U.S. imperialists in 1963 to stifle the Black movement for fundamental change, MLK planned a new march on Washington to occur in 1968 as a Poor People’s Encampment. This campaign would lay siege to the capital as planned in 1963 until subverted, but this time on behalf of all of Amerika’s poor and oppressed peoples. King’s “betrayal” of capitalism and radical change of politics could not be tolerated by the imperialists, who’d made him a widely recognized leader whom they knew multitudes of Black people across the nation respected and would follow. Therefore, the U.S. government had him assassinated just months before the Poor People’s Encampment was set to occur.

Another factor in his assassination was that, beginning in late 1967, MLK became increasingly vocal that he was losing faith in passive resistance and growing tired of being repeatedly brutalized and arrested by the government. The FBI admitted its aim to “neutralize” (government-speak for murder) King for fear he would ultimately abandon his views on passive resistance and openly embrace a genuinely revolutionary line that included the right of the oppressed masses to defend themselves against official violence and pursue fundamental change through methods that included armed struggle.

When, in latter 1967, he began expressing the need to “fashion new tactics which do not count on government good will, but instead serve to *compel* unwilling authorities to yield to the mandates of justice,” I believe Dr. King was beginning to struggle—even if only unconsciously—with the inherent contradictions of pacifism as a political strategy. I think he was coming to realize as well that he was not really a pacifist at all. Since, for example, he had embraced the government’s use of violence as “legitimate,” while rejecting that of the people acting in self-defense as “illegitimate.” Indeed, while he counselled the people to practice pacifism in the face of racist and oppressive violence, he’d long looked to the federal government to provide *armed protection* to him, his colleagues, and their followers during southern marches and protests.

He came to realize that it was Amerika’s “very own government” that was actually “the greatest purveyor of violence in the world,” which left him with the realization that no such power could be looked to by the people to genuinely provide protection and that he was likely to meet a violent end himself at the hands of the government—and he did. Hence his fear to openly promote and lead a mass movement for socialism in Amerika.

A thorough investigation into the role played by the various U.S. government agencies in King’s murder in 1968, and the cover-ups that followed, can be found in William Pepper’s *An Act of State: The Execution of Martin Luther King* (2003).

After MLK’s death, the liberal wing of the U.S. capitalist ruling class’s political vanguard (namely the Democratic Party), used the 1963 pro-capitalist, integrationist version of MLK and Black-capitalist civil rights leaders like Jesse Jackson, Sr., (in his final years King was opposed to Jackson’s Black capitalism), to project the Democratic Party as Black Amerika’s friend and champion, and the channel through which we should pursue social justice. “Black capitalism” was promoted by the imperialists as the key to Black progress. In fact, a plan was promoted, since 1967 by FBI assistant director William E. Sullivan, to destroy MLK and other influential, independent, Black political leaders and activists, and then handpick a “new national Negro leader” to replace them. Sullivan wrote of his plan to destroy such Black leaders:

“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.”

He promoted that Samuel R. Pierce, Jr., a Black, capitalist, corporate lawyer, be groomed to replace the destroyed Black leadership. However, a new leadership emerged from amongst the people to fill the void, before the imperialist scheme could take root.

This new leadership, namely the BPP, came under all-out attack by the U.S. government at all levels. Its key members were openly assassinated by police and/or jailed on obvious frame-ups, the government attempted to manipulate and even financed violence-prone street gangs and street-level Black capitalist groups into “gang-warfare” against the Panthers. Government agents and “friendlies” inside the media were used to publish articles and air reports slandering and demonizing the Panthers to the American public. Agent provocateurs were infiltrated into the BPP to incite and carry out acts of violence that would make government counter-violence appear justified. BPP supporters were harassed, slandered, attacked and arrested, Panther community service programs were disrupted, and so on, all carried out as a counter-intelligence program (COINTELPRO) of the FBI.

Because of a flawed internal organizational structure, and because it came to be wrongly “commanded” by Huey instead of correctly led collectively by genuine democratic-centralism, the BPP rank and file were unprepared to handle and to counter government instigations that caused the Panthers to split into two factions; one wing adopted a rightist-accommodationist, liberal-reformist line [like running Bobby Seale for mayor of Oakland as the Democratic Party candidate], while the other wing adopted an adventurist, ultra-leftist, militarist line. Under continued government attack, while pursuing these flawed and incorrect political lines, the Panthers were unable to combat the government’s campaign, and the Panthers ultimately self-destructed, with no suitable leadership in the Black community to replace them.

Although several attempts have been made to regroup and rebuild a revolutionary party to lead and organize the Black masses in our struggles, each has failed or disintegrated because none have correctly summed up the lessons of our previous failures and applied this knowledge. So in this void, the Empire has been able to push Black capitalism on the people free of opposition, challenge or alternative, as the *only viable solution* to our oppressed condition—but capitalism is the very *cause* of our oppression and all of our problems. Indeed, it was the lust for profits and the dollar that was behind the kidnapping and enslavement of our Afrikan ancestors to begin with: Capitalism is the enemy!

The cities, where New Afrikans and other oppressed nationalities are concentrated in large numbers, were and are seen as an area of continual threat by the Empire. Deep-seated mass insecurity and desperation still lie just under the surface. Therefore, if ever organized and united in struggle for fundamental change, the U.S. ghettos and barrios could easily transform into revolutionary fronts and base areas here inside the “Belly of the Beast.”

But this cannot happen spontaneously. It demands a conscious and committed revolutionary leadership. The Establishment realizes this, and this is why it has remained committed to undermining and destroying every persyn or organization that threatens to take up the torch of the original BPP and lead our people in this direction. To stifle urban revolutionary potential, the system has implemented policies to foster and perpetuate instability in the urban centers, flooding them with narcotics (first heroin and then also crack cocaine, PCP and other addictive and deadly drugs) and military-grade weapons (like AK-47s and Uzis) which generated severe social degeneration, fratricidal

gang wars and genocidal implosion.

Stripped of revolutionary leadership and organization, the urban youth have only had their neighborhood gangs (which have been manipulated and used by the oppressor). In place of political purpose and cultural pride, and the self-respect the revolutionary leadership gave the urban youth—which united them in struggle against oppression and for liberation—the Empire and its entertainment media have promoted a self-destructive subculture of “gangsterism,” (Black and Brown imitations of earlier movie images of expensively-dressed, luxury car-driving, Italian Mafioso and other white hoodlums devoid of social consciousness), vulgar materialism, crass consumerism, moral depravity, rampant individualism, self-gratification at the expense of the community, nihilism and an illegal, ghetto version of Black capitalism in general.

Under these government-created conditions, the youth turned their poverty-driven frustration and potentially revolutionary rage against themselves, with inner-community violence, street crime and drug-peddling. The Establishment then used these conditions they had created and facilitated to justify increasing their own violent repression of the urban communities under their declared “War on Drugs,” “War on Crime,” and “War on Gangs.” The result has been enhancing of the militarization of the police occupation of these communities and incarceration of the cream of our potentially-revolutionary youth inside the massive, and ever-expanding prison-industrial complex.

In a 2006 report entitled *Cracks in the System: Twenty years of the Unjust Federal Crack Cocaine Law*, even the ACLU admitted that the “Drug War” is targeted at Blacks and has in effect turned U.S. prisons into mass disposal sites for Black people. We can see this scheme was greatly enhanced with the added “War on Gangs.” And make no mistake about it, Black youth are the principal targets. The CIA has acknowledged that the largely, youthful, urbanized ethnic populations present a danger of “regime-threatening unrest.” A 1984 CIA report stated:

“The youth of a growing population may very well play a major role in pressing for change. They are among those who are usually disproportionately disadvantaged: They have less at stake in the existing structure of authority, more idealism, more impatience, and in a society with a steady or rising rate of growth their proportion to the total population increases. The density of the number of youth relative to the total population may thus be a clue to strength of pressure for change.”

Malcolm X also observed that it was the youth who made up the greater portion of the rank and file forces leading the struggles against colonial oppression in Afrika and Asia. And it was the New Afrikan youth who rose up in revolt against neo-colonial oppression in the urban centers here in Amerika from 1964 to 1968. It is this dense, growing population of urban ethnic youth that the strategy of mass incarceration is designed to deplete. The U.S. prison-industrial complex is a fascist tool of social containment, a weapon evolved to a level of sophistication that makes the concentration camps of Nazi Germany appear crude and amateurish by comparison.

The Establishment fears nothing else as much as it fears these disadvantaged and oppressed youth developing a revolutionary consciousness. California governor Arnold Schwarzenegger made this quite clear when he refused to commute Stanley “Tookie” Williams’ death sentence in 2006, not because “Tookie” was a founding member of one of Amerika’s largest urban youth gangs, but because he dedicated his book—*Life in Prison*—to New Afrikan revolutionary leaders of the 1960s and ‘70s, specifically George Jackson—the founder of the original BPP prison chapter—who was assassinated at San Quentin by prison guards in 1971.

The prisons were a major front in our liberation struggle in the ‘60s and ‘70s. It was in an effort to crush this aspect of our movement and the outside support for our movement after George Jackson’s murder and the Attica Uprising that followed, that the system began the proliferation of “control units” and “supermax” prisons, beginning with the Marion control unit established in 1972. The strategy was to weed-out and isolate potential leaders while the remainder were pitted against each other with instigated racial and gang violence.

They *want* us to be divided by racial hatred and to kill each other off with “gang-bangin’,” to shoot-up and peddle dope in our neighborhoods to weaken and harm ourselves and our communities—just as they used alcohol to destabilize the Native American tribes and imported opium to undermine the Chinese in the 1800s. They *want* us engaged in and degraded by a pimp-ho subculture, objectifying our sistas as commodities and selling their bodies on the block like we were sold into slavery, and catching and spreading deadly sexually-transmitted diseases, like the HIV/AIDS and hepatitis, furthering the strategy of genocidal disposal



of our youth. That's how much they *fear* us becoming revolutionaries and uniting and struggling for liberation and to pull down this predatory capitalist system that is the *cause* of our poverty, insecurity and misery.

Another component of urban population control is "spatial deconcentration," a policy implemented since the '60s revolts of breaking up large concentrations of poor Blacks, which includes "urban gentrification" of neighborhoods, closing down housing projects, and pushing poor people into the suburbs, smaller cities and towns. It also includes integrating other ethnic poor into formerly all-Black neighborhoods.

Our conditions of poverty, lack of job availability, security and accessible basic services that are essential to survival for urban people, are worse today than they were back in the '60s. So we exist as a perpetually threatening (to the Empire) dependent population with little value to the wealthy elite. Therefore, we face a very real and ever more intense official policy of genocide calculated to spread us thin and pick us off by increasing our death rate, decreasing our birth rate and lowering our life expectancy.

There is a deeply-rooted capitalist logic behind this policy. If we look back to capitalism's early development out of European feudalism, we find capitalist economic theorists like Thomas Malthus and David Ricardo openly advocating the need to mass exterminate populations who couldn't be put to profitable use by the rising capitalists. In his 1798 treatise *An Essay on the Principle of Population*, Malthus suggested that if surplus population groups couldn't "go somewhere else," they should be killed off through artificially-created famines, wars and plagues.

Under the feudal system that preceded capitalism, government policies recognized the need for supporting and providing the poor with basic necessities in order to maintain stability and avoid rebellions. Yet the monarchs still found it necessary to seal themselves away from the masses whom they plundered from inside walled and fortified palaces. Under capitalism, however, Malthus and others held that providing for the poor would cause an unacceptable loss of profits for the rich, therefore the poor should be removed to "somewhere else" or exterminated. These "Malthusian" concepts were and remain a basic tenet of capitalist logic in a system that puts profits over people.

It could be no other way in a system that turns on taking and hoarding the wealth produced by the labor of workers, with the result of rendering them dependent and poor, making mass revolt inevitable. So those in power must contain or deplete this potentially rebellious population to prevent their coming together to pull down the system that exploits them and put things under their own control. This is the hidden logic behind the schemes of displacement and depopulation that threaten Black people and poor and oppressed people everywhere and are most apparent in the 3rd World. From imperialist-instigated tribal, ethnic and gang wars through which we are induced to kill each other; to economically-induced famines, such as the one devastating the Sub-Saharan region; to the unchecked spread of the HIV/AIDS virus that is destroying millions of Black lives on every continent; to flooding our communities with narcotics; to mass incarceration of our young men and wimyn in prisons where they cannot reproduce, we are under genocidal attack!

The latter condition basically replicates the same system of using armed lower-class whites to guard and dominate masses of enslaved Blacks that we were subjected to under chattel slavery before the Civil War. The "New Slavery" of the prison-industrial complex shows that "history repeats itself," but as it was then motivated by a shortage of necessary labor to work the land, it is today motivated by a surplus of labor that cannot be profitably exploited by the capitalists. Because we have no value today—as we did on the old plantations—we find ourselves facing genocidal policies much like those historically aimed at the Native Americans.

Also, our conditions become more desperate by the day: with growing mass urban concentrations, and a continuing "Great Migration" of industrial and manufacturing jobs away from the cities, the working class is shrinking fast and Black workers everywhere are being marginalized, even as the urban proletariat keeps growing. They can't find full-time jobs at decent wages, and here in the U.S. there is a cap on welfare. The ghettos have become dead ends leading only to early graves or prisons.

So the power structure has had to feed us false hopes in the form of a "Black" President—a hand-picked Black capitalist-serving President—to mislead us in the face of a genuine leadership vacuum. They now have us chasing dreams of Black capitalism, while we are caught in a crisis of deadly competition with each other and other poor folks for five minutes of fame and a temporary shopping spree, through channels that have destroyed our culture, destroyed our history and collective memory, destroyed our communities, and are ultimately destroying us.

And it is no grand conspiracy. It is the simple logic of the globalized capitalist system which operates only to enrich a tiny, super-rich elite class at the expense of everybody else. Just like the doperman on the block who doesn't care whose lives he destroys or who he uses to turn a profit and gratify his wants. *This* is the logic we've learned from the capitalists.

The first to get the axe are those the capitalists value least—those considered most expendable—and those least able to defend themselves. In other words: *us*. That is our situation today.

**Anthony Rayson:** I am astounded by the complexity and subtlety of your artwork. Seeing one of your originals, one cannot but be amazed—especially as you are accorded such rudimentary materials. Can you explain to us how you developed as such an accomplished artist (and what your driving motivation is)?

**Rashid:** In your introduction to this interview you mentioned that my drawing tools consist of pen and pencil. Actually, the only tools I use are five inch long ballpoint pen and standard typing paper.

While I appreciate the compliments I often receive on my art, (which acknowledges that it reaches people on more than a superficial level), I think we all have particular skills and talents—or can develop them—and if driven by a certain level of determination, we can evolve them to exceptional levels.

My art is driven by my determination to contribute what I can towards educating and inspiring the common people to collectively build the struggle to crush imperialist oppression, which is the cause of all other forms of social oppression. A major front in this struggle, as I've already pointed out, is the cultural front. This front—which relates directly to raising the consciousness and resolve of the masses—must directly challenge and counter the dominant bourgeois culture, which reflects and promotes the corrupt values of capitalism and conceals and stifles mass culture. Art (imagery and sound) is a major form of cultural expression. With my art, I aspire to produce images whose quality is both aesthetically pleasing (to capture and hold the eye and emotions) while educating (even if only initially on a subconscious level).

The vast majority of people are affective decision makers rather than cognitive decision makers. Meaning, they base decisions more on emotion than calculated reason. This is especially the case in a society like this where the reasoning faculties of the masses are kept in suspended animation. This is a reality that seems to be lost to most academic "Marxists" and Anarchists alike, and it is why they fail to reach and inspire the masses. (They spend most of their time talking to themselves and going over the common people's heads).

The ruling class realizes this and in fact promotes forms of "education" that basically train the people to function on the spontaneous emotional level rather than cognitively. The masses of Americans function without thinking much at all. This is why the capitalists are so successful at manipulating public opinion through media that is targeted almost exclusively at the basest and most primitive emotional levels. They don't call their communications media an *entertainment* industry for nothing. So a big part of our struggle is, as George Jackson recognized, to teach people *how* to think instead of *what* to think. This is a struggle carried out in the ideological and educational fields, and is targeted at *awakening* the conscious mind.

Whereas artistic imagery both captures and informs the emotions, many may be unwilling or unable as yet to grasp the ideas in print or spoken word form. Artistic imagery reaches another, deeper, level of the psyche—often involuntarily and unconsciously. Therefore I try to educate using both words and imagery and reach both the rational and emotional levels of the mind. This allows a dialectical balance in consciousness raising, reaching large numbers of people despite the limitations of my physical surroundings and availability of materials. In fact my art has been copied, circulated and seen by people on a vastly larger scale than my writings. Art makes knowledge accessible across class, race, gender, educational and state boundaries.

I'm also a particularly determined persyn. When I commit to something, I invest my all into it, often to the point of exhaustion or injury. We all have that capacity, it's just where our interests lie and where we are motivated to invest our energies. I'm no different from anyone else. I'm really not exceptional. Most people's limitations are self-imposed: The result of self-doubt or lack of interest. The same factors I believe are behind New Afrikans and other oppressed peoples having remained oppressed for so long. We've been conditioned to doubt ourselves and our ability to overthrow our oppressors, or we're distracted to the point of lack of interest in pursuing liberation.

I don't doubt myself, although I often question myself and self-criticize (and by extension I don't doubt the masses),

because I know that we'll have the same capacity to do what anyone else can. It just requires correctly analyzing problems and devising correct solutions. This awareness is what often allows me to devise ways to counter or overcome adversity and maneuver around external restraints.

We've been so conditioned to self-doubt and therefore have become so consumed with idolizing others that we forget we can each become or do the same things. For example, since 2006, and as part of a campaign of repression, I've been indicted on some sixteen criminal charges—3 times for attempted capital murder of a prison guard. In each case I represented myself and got the charges either withdrawn or dismissed. That's pretty much unheard of, but I didn't approach these cases with self-doubt. I know I have just as much sense as any lawyer, and with the right tools and time can do just as well defending myself. Plus, I planned ahead. Before all this came down, I'd already spent years collecting pertinent legal materials and learning law. This is how I approach most problems.

I study, critically analyze material conditions and evaluate what others have done, and what I've done. I investigate mistakes and successes, looking at things from both sides, pro and con, and I search for play in the joints. I use what tools I have at hand and I improvise. I've done this for so long that it's become natural. In this regard, I was a Marxist—a practiced dialectical-materialist—long before I ever heard of Marx, Engels, Lenin or Mao. Studying them just gave me more clarity and a philosophical and ideological explanation of my practice. And my practice, like *genuine* Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, is anything but dogmatic and mechanical.

As you recognize, I get results. It all boils down to applying practical judgment, determination, flexibility and also audacity (the will to act) to change material conditions. It's the scientific approach to solving problems and is why Mao called Dialectical Materialism a "living science." This is why "intellectuals" and "academics" who've become conditioned to trying to solve problems inside their heads instead of in the real world don't comprehend Marxist theory and can only perceive it mechanically as a dogma.

And I'm determined. This struggle means a great deal to me, so I will find ways to contribute my best to it. Period. Until I stop breathing, that's what I'll do.

I suppose I've always had an inclination towards art, but never much pursued it. As a child, I used to draw, although infrequently. While I was never consistent with it, I could just do it at will, unlike a lot of "natural" artists I've known who have to be in a certain mood. Between 1990, when I began my present term of imprisonment, and 2001, I probably drew no more than about 15 pictures total. It wasn't until I began studying the struggle that I really set into drawing regularly, creating images that expressed and depicted themes of struggle and oppression and those who organized against oppression, which continues to develop, as does—I feel—the quality of my art.

**Anthony Rayson:** You've poured a lot of your energies lately into building up your Panther Prison Chapter. Can you tell us what the main tenets are, who the principal activists are, what you hope to achieve, and how it relates to other Panther formations and other anti-imperialists?

**Rashid:** Yeah, the New Afrikan Black Panther Party-Prison Chapter (NABPP-PC) has been my main energy focus since Comrade Shaka Sankofa Zulu and I co-founded it in 2005.

The major tenet is "Pantherism" as elaborated by the original Black Panther Party (BPP) during its most revolutionary stages. Specifically, Pantherism is revolutionary New Afrikan/Black nationalism, pan-Afrikanism and proletarian internationalism illuminated by the "Science of Revolution" (Historical and Dialectical Materialism). We identify with the BPP because in our analysis it was, when at its best, the most revolutionary and successful organization on Amerika's Left, and made the greatest all-round gains for New Afrikans in our struggle against national oppression and white supremacy.

Before the BPP was split into two factions by government attacks that left each pursuing opposite erroneous lines, (one of ultra-leftist militant reaction and the other of rightist-reformism), the BPP was breaking new ground in building the struggle for revolution in Amerika. Through applying HDM, we aspire to rebuild the BPP, learning from and applying the lessons of its advances and mistakes and learning from the lessons of the struggles of today. Especially we are focused on studying and correcting its errors, because we are determined that this time we shall win.

Our work is at this time focused on transforming the "Razor wire Plantations" into "Schools of Liberation," to educate, uplift and organize those within the prisons and convert these humyn warehouses into revolutionary universities which will produce Panther cadres and activists of all nationalities and races. 85% of all those incarcerated in the U.S. will eventually return to society. Our goal is to see many of them empowered to return to their oppressed and

poor communities and play a role in transforming them into revolutionary base areas. The next step is to replicate this process on an international level.

At this point in time we have Party collectives in many U.S. prisons. But unlike other formations people can't just join our Party, but are instead recruited based upon *proven* commitment to the struggle, and they must adopt and adhere to our Rules of Discipline and Ten Point Program. This is required because we fully understand that talk is cheap, and many folks who claim aspirations and dedication to push the struggle forward don't have a full understanding of or the resolve to sustain the difficulties of the work, the hardships and self-sacrifice that is required. Some who approach us will be working for the enemy.

So we are setting it up so that commitment and sincerity must be proven through service in a mass organization like the New Afrikan Service Organization (NASO) before a candidate is recruited into the Party. NASO operates under the leadership of our Party and has as its basis of unity support for the Ten Point Program, but it is building its own leadership structure under a National Steering Committee. Folks can join or start new NASO chapters very easily. NASO operates on democratic principles (as opposed to democratic centralism), and we seek to include a wide spectrum of ideological and political orientations within this organization.

Contrary to bourgeois propaganda and bourgeois "leadership style," a genuine vanguard party, such as we aspire to become, doesn't lead the people by compulsion or "commandism." Its leadership must be voluntarily accepted by the masses based on its proven commitment to serving their genuine welfare and interests, and demonstrated ability to organize and lead the people in solving their own problems. As Mao pointed out:

"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."

In its practical application, this style of leadership is based exclusively on the principle "from the masses to the masses," which means we take the ideas of the masses (raw, unorganized and scattered ideas) and concentrate them (through study and transform them into organized systematic ideas) and return them to the masses in the form of slogans and programs. And we rely upon collective leadership.

As an illustration, take for example a mass of people confined to a barren land. The overall group doesn't know how to work the land so it will become productive and produce food or sustain livestock and are therefore on the verge of starvation. There can be no doubt that the masses *want* to produce sufficient food to eat and survive. Problem is *they don't know how*. Now there are a couple of their members who have managed to study the ecological factors of their given environment and learned techniques to transform the barren land into a virtual paradise of production. So they go about showing the people by example how to do it and organize their collective power to produce this result.

Now they don't force their leadership on the people, the people embrace them voluntarily because of their proven example and ability to help them help themselves, and because they are themselves *of the people*. Instead of standing *above* the people giving orders and punishing their errors, the comrades work alongside the people and share their knowledge freely, encouraging collective leadership, so that ultimately the leaders and the people become one in understanding and practice. In essence, this is how a mass-based vanguard leadership works—though my example may be a bit oversimplified. And this is what the Chinese Communist Party under Mao's leadership strove for during China's revolutionary years, contrary to bourgeois lies and propaganda—that are often uncritically parroted by many "Leftists."

Under this leadership style, the masses' disorganized and unsystematic ideas are organized and systematized, returned to them as programs, explained and popularized until they embrace and implement them. Then they are tested and refined through summing up practice. This process is repeated over and over in an ongoing spiral of practice—summation—practice. The ideas thereby become more and more correct and useful—connected to life and productive.

This is the scientific method which reflects the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist Theory of Knowledge. Through *proof* of its correctness in theory by practice in serving the people, the Party continuously *earns* the support and confidence of

the masses. It makes no claim to leadership except by the consent of the masses it serves.

It takes an organization of people who share a certain level of consciousness, commitment and discipline to provide this sort of leadership, and an organizational structure that facilitates the maximum degree of inner-party discussion with the maximum degree of unity in action. It requires constant struggle to check corrupting influences and tendencies. In this context, the New Afrikan masses and the Party must be able to expect a high degree of commitment and dedication to the cause of revolution and social justice—even unto death.

We Panthers must put the highest interests of huminity above self-interest and endure hardships and self-sacrifices when they are called for. The oppressed masses have a right to expect us to be consistent and not vacillate or sell them out—no matter what—to build strength and not weakness, to be honest and humble and never dishonor ourselves or the Party. Our duties as revolutionaries are many, among which I think are:

To embrace Historical Materialism (HM) and Dialectical Materialism (DM) and not sentimentalism, romanticism or any kind of idealism.

To proletarianize ourselves and be loyal to the class of the future (the proletariat) and not the petty bourgeoisie and their petty (and less than revolutionary) concerns over bourgeois rights and privileges.

To be all-the-way revolutionary thinkers and leaders in the fight against all oppression, all forms and manifestations of racism, sexism, ageism and any other divisive prejudices harmful to uniting all who can be united to overthrow capitalist-imperialism and build socialism.

To reject sectarianism while at the same time standing firm for proletarian ideology and struggling for a correct ideological and political line to lead our movement forward.

To combine unity with struggle and be principled and aboveboard.

To oppose liberalism (see Mao's Sept. 7, 1937, essay *Combat Liberalism*) and rectify incorrect styles of thinking, work and conduct.

To be open to criticism by comrades and the masses and to practice self-criticism.

To struggle for objectivity, seek truth from facts and learn from the masses and the struggle.

To be fair-minded, to listen to the people's concerns and suggestions and apply HDM to deepen their understanding and raise their level of consciousness and ability to solve problems.

To be loyal to the Party and regard its life as your own, to defend it, build its strength and influence and strive to perfect it as the vanguard of the people's struggle.

To respect, uphold, build and defend the democratic centralism of the Party, the subordination of lower bodies to higher bodies, the minority to the majority and the whole Party to the Central Committee or a sitting Party Congress.

To be united in spirit and action and to speak with one voice and act as one body.

To be self-disciplined, to live by the Party's Rules of Discipline, uphold proletarian morality and represent the bright future in the struggles of today, striving always to be the people's pride and a credit to the Party.

To have courage and dare to struggle and dare to win all power to the people, to die for the people if necessary and endure any oppression as a true red-hearted revolutionary.

To practice and promote revolution and not reformism, Pantherism and not cultural nationalism, and revolutionary optimism and not cynical defeatism.

To uphold and defend and work to extend revolutionary intercommunalism and unite all the people in all the oppressed communities on the planet through the United Panther Movement.

I think these sixteen points should be kept in mind at all times and serve as a basis for further discussion throughout the Party and our movement.

Now, there are a *lot* of misconceptions and distortions about democratic centralism, some of which I addressed in *On the Roles and Characteristics of the Panther Vanguard Party and Mass Organizations*. These misconceptions are largely the result of bourgeois-propagated disinformation about the role and character of communist parties, but also they reflect historical misapplications of the concept by groups on the Left where *commandism* was substituted for the *mass line* while claiming to be practicing democratic centralism either out of ignorance or revisionism. Also many critics have seized one-sidedly on errors made by various organizations on the Left and presented those errors (while

ignoring their correct aspects) as the essence of these organizational forms and practices. [I explain and discuss DC in greater depth in "On the Vanguard Party, Once Again" and "The New Afrikan Black Panther Party's Organizational Principles, Policy and Practice: The 3-P's"]

As Dialectical Materialists, we recognize and understand that nothing proceeds in a straight line, that every positive has a negative side (and vice versa), and that humyn error is inherent in life. We simply aspire to honestly evaluate things from both sides, to identify and correct errors instead of throwing out the baby with the bath water. If we fail to act for fear of making mistakes then we give victory to our oppressors by default.

The NABPP-PC includes the White Panther Organization (WPO) and the Brown Panther Organizing Committee (BPOC), which are arms of our Party being set up to represent our Party among and give ideological and political leadership to oppressed white and all other people in the prisons and oppressed communities. Our Party unites with all anti-imperialist forces, including other Panther formations—such as the Black Riders Liberation Party, the National Alliance of Black Panthers, the New Panther Vanguard Movement, the Anarchist Panthers, etc.—even if we have disagreements with their line and practice.

There have been some inquiries and assumptions made regarding ties or similarities we might have with the New Black Panther Party (NBPP) which came out of the Nation of Islam (NOI) in the 1980s. We began as an autonomous chapter of NBPP aspiring to change the orientation of the outside NBPP into that of a genuine vanguard party in the New Afrikan communities, however, we soon realized it was better to separate ourselves from NBPP's narrow nationalism and reverse racism. We also changed our name to the New Afrikan BPP-Prison Chapter to further distinguish ourselves and reflect our orientation towards revolutionary New Afrikan nationalism.

Information and some of our publications can also be obtained through the Anarchist Black Cross (ABC) network.

Lastly, we feel the U.S. prisons are an important front in the struggle against imperialism. Prisoners are among the most oppressed sectors of the U.S. population, and because many have a good deal of time and opportunity to read and study, we stand to be potentially one of the most advanced sections of the people. This is why prisons are sometimes called the "poor man's universities." Comrade George Jackson once stated that only two types of people ever leave these concentration camps—the rebels and the broken. But there's one other type he overlooked, namely the revolutionaries. The oppression inherent in these expanding humyn warehouses by nature breeds rebels, but infused with proletarian revolutionary theory, prisoners can make the qualitative leap from rebels to revolutionaries.

Comrade Lenin said, "Without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement." And it is these revolutionary prisoners who, upon their release, can hit the streets like paratroopers, joining and building the outside movement to educate, organize and lead the less advanced masses in determined struggle to deal this dying capitalist-imperialist system the *coup de grace*.

We don't plan to build our Panther movement just in the U.S. but wherever poor and oppressed Black people (and all oppressed people) are concentrated throughout the world. We plan to build WPO wherever there are concentrations of poor whites and BPOC where all other poor and oppressed brown people are concentrated. Half the world's people now live in urban settings, jammed together in urban slums or shantytowns, and we aspire to transform these into revolutionary Panther base areas throughout the global capitalist empire.

We aim to create and build people's power from the grassroots up, and to organize Serve the People (STP) survival programs, People's security forces and liberation schools. And we aim to link these urban revolutionary base areas into an inter-communal network through the Party and our own media and United Panther Movement. Between our work in the prisons and the oppressed communities, we aim to raise up a revolutionary generation schooled in the Science of Revolution, trained and tested in class struggle through the Party and the mass organizations, so that we will not be dependent upon petty-bourgeois intellectuals to lead our revolutionary movement. There will of course be a role for these types who are willing to commit "class suicide" and dedicate themselves to becoming all-the-way revolutionaries and remold themselves to adopt the class stand of the revolutionary proletariat.

**Anthony Rayson:** As you know, I am a serious Anarchist, as you are a dedicated Communist. At this point, we are on the same side of the barricades. The fundamental difference of course, is the Communists want to take state power, as the "leader" of the oppressed, and the Anarchists have as their goal the elimination of oppressive state power altogether. As



international capitalism, led by the voraciously murderous U.S., gets more and more desperate to retain its empire, the world's people will suffer through more hellacious wars, occupations, enslavements, lack of life's basics such as food, water, health, safety, etc. People will become more and more politically polarized. Some will be suckered-in as fascist dupes (or outright agents and killers of the criminal state). Others will look for truth, protection, and involvement in revolutionary opposition—Communist, anarchist, New Afrikan, or otherwise.

Anarchists believe that state power is the epitome of evil—the ultimate corrupter. Now let's assume that through a worldwide effort we are able once-and-for-all to destroy the centuries' old nightmare of capitalism. Let's also assume we were also able to stop them from dragging all life on earth down with them.

So, there's a chance at "Socialism." Anarchists believe in the equitable distribution along anti-authoritarian principles. Communists want to assume state power and orchestrate it all from a "Central Committee." Every other time Communists have attained power, they've repressed Anarchists, other revolutionaries, etc. What would be different this time?

**Rashid:** I think this question offers the opportunity for an important discussion in the ongoing debate between Anarchism and Communism. Also, it exposes a common tendency I've observed of critics of Communism, namely that their critiques are often pretty inaccurate and just repeat charges based on superficial stereotypes. In fact, when one pushes Anarchists to the wall, and compels them to give concrete answers to concrete problems, instead of abstract criticisms, they begin to sound a lot like genuine Communists. Otherwise, they don't go deeply and thoroughly into solving the real problems that arise in struggling to defeat an oppressive class system such as capitalism. But many of their criticisms are valid and worthy of consideration.

You begin with placing emphasis on the fact that Anarchists want an equitable distribution of social wealth and to abolish the state, but, by implication, you suggest Communists do not. Even the "mainstream" recognizes these implications to be untrue. Take for example this definition of "Communism" given by the *Merriam Webster Collegiate Encyclopedia* (2000):

"Communism: Political theory advocating community ownership of all property, the benefits of which are to be shared by all according to the needs of each. The theory was principally the work of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels. Their *Communist Manifesto* (1848) further specified a 'dictatorship of the proletariat,' a transitional stage Marx called socialism; communism was the final stage of which not only class division but even the organized state—seen by Marx as inevitably an instrument of oppression—would be transcended. That distinction was lost and 'communism' began to apply to a specific party rather than a final goal ..."

This summary of the nature and goals of Communism sounds pretty similar to what you state are the goals of Anarchism: equitable distribution of property and abolition of the state. Indeed, both Communists and Anarchists agree that the state is an "instrument of oppression." But it seems, just as the mainstream reference book points out, you've embraced the erroneous view that Communism is a "specific party" rather than a "final goal." Can it be that the imperialists have a more accurate and fair understanding of what Communism is than the modern Anarchists?

However, prominent Anarchists of the past have conceded that the goals of Anarchism and Communism are much the same. Indeed, Alexander Berkman in his *ABC of Anarchism* (1929) saw the goals of Communism and Anarchism as synonymous. In fact, he used the term "Anarchism" to describe Communism:

"The greatest teachers of socialism—Karl Marx and Frederick Engels—had taught that anarchism would come from socialism. They said that we must first have socialism [the dictatorship of the proletariat], but that after socialism there will be anarchism, and that it would be a freer and more beautiful condition of society to live in than socialism."

So the "fundamental difference" between Anarchism and Communism is *not* in their views on equal distribution of wealth and abolishing the state. The fundamental difference is on *how* to go about achieving these ends and their class basis. Anarchism promotes an *idealistic* approach rooted in a petty-bourgeois class perspective, while Marxist Communism promotes a materialist and dialectical approach rooted in a working-class perspective.

Now Communists and most Anarchists agree that armed struggle will be required to compel and wrest control of property relations from the bourgeoisie (or capitalist ruling class) and to overthrow and smash the state it rules through—because the essence of state power is a specialized armed force of men (and now also wimyn). The capitalists aren't going to relinquish their power and wealth

without a fight—never have, never will!

So essentially, it is a question of what to do after the bourgeois class is overthrown, and when do we lay down our arms? Because that is what *state power* is all about. So by resorting to arms in the first place, the Anarchists are taking part in the *exercise of dictatorial power* and the use of *authoritarian* means to repress the bourgeois class. Here's how Frederick Engels made the point:

"The anti-authoritarians demand that the political state be abolished at one stroke, even before the social relations that gave birth to it have been destroyed. They demand that the first act of the social revolution shall be the abolition of authority.

"Have these gentlemen ever seen a revolution? A revolution is certainly the most authoritarian thing there is; it is an act whereby one part of the population imposes its will upon the other part by means of rifles, bayonets and cannon, all of which are highly authoritarian means. And the victorious party must maintain its rule by means of the terror which its arms inspire in the reactionaries. Would the Paris Commune have lasted more than a day if it had not used the authority of the armed people against the bourgeoisie? Cannot we, on the contrary, blame it for having made too little use of that authority? Therefore one of two things; either the anti-authoritarians don't know what they are talking about, in which case they are creating nothing but confusion, or they do know, and in that case they are betraying the cause of the proletariat. In either case, they serve only reaction."

So we see an inherent contradiction in Anarchism that renders it fundamentally either pro- or counter-revolutionary, namely, whether it supports or opposes the armed struggle of the proletariat and consolidation of people's power. In either event, overthrowing the state power of the bourgeoisie won't in one stroke abolish the bourgeois class and its aspirations to regain state power. The Communists' goal is to smash the state power of the capitalists *right away*; to do away with their army, their police, their courts and their prisons. *But*, we cannot get rid of the bourgeois class so easily, nor the petty bourgeoisie, nor the bourgeoisified workers and lumpen proletarians.

If we were to put down our guns at this point—if we did not maintain our own army, police, courts and prisons—these elements would turn right around and rig up a new bourgeois state. They would rig up a bourgeois state and use it to repress us—everyone connected with the revolution and the masses. This is exactly what happened in the Mexican Revolution when Emiliano Zapata listened to his Amerikan Anarchist advisors and gave up state power after victory and went home. The new reconstituted bourgeois state quickly hunted him down and murdered him like a dog—and Mexico has been under a bourgeois dictatorship and U.S. imperialist domination ever since.

This is also what happened in the very short-lived Spanish Revolution, the revolution the Anarchists claim to have been successful at. The bourgeoisie overthrew it overnight and immediately reasserted their rule. This occurred because the Anarchists opposed establishing a workers' state and the Communists who were trying to create one. The Fascists reaped the victory and ruled Spain with an iron fist for decades after.

In *Homage to Catalonia*, George Orwell's memoir of the Spanish Revolution, he gave an account of how instantly and completely bourgeois rule reasserted itself in Barcelona only months after it had been overthrown by the working class. In the beginning of his memoir, Orwell gives a glorious account of Barcelona when the popular revolution was still underway in latter 1936. He then contrasts how only months later the revolutionary successes had vanished without a trace. Here is his description of conditions in April 1937:

"Everyone who has made two visits, at intervals of months, to Barcelona during the war has remarked upon the extraordinary changes that took place in it. And curiously enough, whether they went there first in August and again in January, or, like myself, first in December and again in April, the thing they said was always the same: that the revolutionary atmosphere had vanished. No doubt to anyone who had been there in August, when the blood was scarcely dry in the streets and the militia was quartered in the small hotels, Barcelona in December would have seemed bourgeois, to me, fresh from England, it was like to a worker's city than anything I had conceived possible. Now the tide had rolled back. Once again it was an ordinary city, a little pinched and chipped by war, but with no outward sign of working-class predominance ... The officers of the new Popular Army, a type that had scarcely existed when I left Barcelona, swarmed in surprising numbers ... [wearing] an elegant khaki uniform with a tight waist, like a British officer's uniform, only a little more so. I do not suppose that more than one in twenty of them had yet been to the front, but all of them had an automatic pistol strapped to their belts; we, at the front, could not get pistols for love or money ...

"A deep change had come over the town. There were two facts that were the keynote of all else. One was that the people—the civil population—had lost much of their interest in the war; the other was that the normal division of society into rich and poor, upper class and lower class, was reasserting itself."

Communists simply recognize the state for what it is—namely an instrument by which one class asserts its power over another. Unless the proletariat overthrows the bourgeois capitalist state and replaces it with a proletarian socialist state, the bourgeoisie will maintain its dominance. Only under working-class state rule can massive Cultural Revolutions take place to purge bourgeois thinking and practices, which, once this process succeeds, will bring about the egalitarian stateless social order. So our object is to create a proletarian state with our own special bodies of armed wimyn and men, our own courts and our own prisons for those who commit crimes against the people. Under this system the armed workers will defend the revolution and use their power to transform all of society to eliminate classes and lay the basis for advancing to the kind of society both the Anarchists and Communists want.

It is at this point, *and not a moment sooner*, that we will lay down our guns and move forward to advance the stateless society, because only then will it be *possible* to do so. Any other approach is just pipe-dreaming idealism. We believe in the principle of from each according to their ability and to each according to their needs—that is, doing away with the whole concept of commodity exchange. In short: abolishing money. But there has to be a whole lot of cultural revolution and transforming of society to make that possible. There has to be basic changes in how production and distribution of goods are organized. People have to be willing to participate in socialized production without being forced to by economic necessity, and we have to produce enough of everything for everybody to be able to get what they need to survive and be happy.

Another factor is that you've got to do it in such a way as to preserve and protect the natural environment so future generations will be able to get what they need and be able to keep society running. This calls for revolution in the cultural, social and political realms and also in science, production and ecology. This all has to be planned, organized and done on a global scale as well as regionally and locally. A stateless society must by definition be a global society without borders. And we can't have one section of humynity hogging all the world's resources, like we do now, which is just what would happen if we didn't start with a worldwide dictatorship of the proletariat.

As to who will get repressed along the way, well, that's up to the proletariat, isn't it? We advocate a step by step, planned transformation of society rather than anarchy. We believe the masses can be won to understand the logic of this and support it. In this way, repression can be kept to a minimum and democratic methods of persuasion will be the primary focus and means of the struggle. But counter-revolutionaries will be repressed at every stage, and the proletariat will decide how and when and who—no matter what the counter-revolutionaries call themselves—through the organs of people's power and the people's courts.

One thing we've learned from past revolutions is that the greatest threat of capitalist restoration will come from within the upper ranks of the Party and state from those who betray the class stand of the proletariat and assume that of the bourgeoisie. As socialism is a stage of transition from capitalism to communism, it is relatively easy for those at the top to rig up a state capitalist system under the cover of building socialism and take the country back down the capitalist road. This is what happened in the Soviet Union after Stalin, when Khrushchev came to power, and in People's China after Mao died in 1976.

The lesson here is for the proletariat to keep a firm grip on its Party and to exercise all round dictatorship over the bourgeoisie—and especially on those in leadership positions in the Party and the workers' state. Cultural Revolution is the weapon to prevent capitalist restoration and to keep moving society down the path of socialist revolution.

The working class must arm itself with a thorough understanding of the *Science of Revolution* and increasingly take power into its own hands directly to revolutionize every aspect of society. When we say "All Power to the People!," we mean that literally in an ever deepening and all-round way. So long as classes exist, it is the proletariat who will be exploited and oppressed, and it is the proletariat who must play the leading role in waging class struggle to overcome it. The class struggle leads inevitably to the elimination of classes and communist society. But at every step it will be a struggle—against idealism and those who would sidetrack and derail the class struggle to preserve and enhance their own privileged positions and keep on exploiting the masses of people.

There is no way to avoid this protracted struggle, and

certainly not by disarming the proletariat as soon as the old bourgeois order is overthrown. It certainly can't be done by substituting anarchy for a rational strategy. Only the petty bourgeoisie—anxious to replace the old bourgeoisie—would intentionally propose such a short-sighted “solution.” The true solution is for the petty bourgeoisie—including those *who become upwardly mobile through the revolution*—to be won to a position of *committing class suicide* and aligning themselves with the oppressed and exploited masses struggling to end all oppression and exploitation by revolutionizing every aspect of society—in a planned, organized and disciplined way through the application of the *mass line* and the illumination of the *Science of Revolution*.

Do we see the contradiction between ourselves and the Anarchists as inherently antagonistic? No, we do not. We believe that it can be resolved non-antagonistically so long as it remains a contradiction within the people. We do not want to repeat the Stalinist errors of treating contradictions within the people the same as contradictions with the enemy.

For many people, as it was with me, Anarchism is a starting place, because it is fundamentally an *emotional* response to the evils of capitalist-imperialism. This was the case with Mao Tse-tung, who self-identified as an Anarchist before becoming a Communist. Throughout his political career he was accused of still being an anarchist by both dogmatists and revisionists alike. Three times he was kicked off the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), but he maintained that it was a Marxist-Leninist principle to go against the tide and stand firm for revolution. At the Lushan Conference, he threatened to quit his post as Chairman and go back to the mountains and start a new CCP and People's Liberation Army if it was necessary.

As Chairman of the CCP Mao was not the Head of State and was constantly at odds with the state bureaucracy. During the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, he suspended the democratic centralism of the Party so that lower bodies were no longer subordinated to higher bodies and he issued the call to the youth, workers and peasants to “bombard the Headquarters!”

Does this mean he was not really a Communist? No, it does not! It means that as a Communist his first and foremost loyalty was to proletarian socialist revolution and the class struggle. “A revolution is not a dinner party,” he said, “it is the violent overthrow of one class by another.” “By any means necessary!” was the way Malcolm X put it.

Many of the criticisms of the Communist movement made by Anarchists or others are right on. But they are also usually non-dialectical and one-sided. Often they obscure the criticisms of the proletariat who look at the same problems differently. Mao was a firm believer that Communists should openly reveal, criticize and struggle against their “dark side.”

We can't do without a proletarian state any more than we can do without smashing the bourgeoisie state. Does this mean we love violence or love authority? No! It means we are serious enough about ending wage slavery, and all of the evils of capitalist-imperialism, that we are willing to be scientific about revolution and go beyond an emotional response.

As a New Afrikan and a condemned slave of the state, I can't afford not to be serious and scientific about the liberation of my people—and all oppressed people everywhere—through socialist revolution. Our fates are intertwined. Only by carrying the class struggle all the way to Communism will there be a bright future for our posterity. For us, there is only slavery or liberation, so we can have no hesitation when it comes to applying Brother Malcolm's dictum to our struggle. Step by step, stage by stage, we shall advance the revolution through all the twists and turns, setbacks and victories until full liberation is won.

As I said, we can't do without a proletarian state, but there is a tendency for it to turn into its opposite—and we are wise to it. Power does corrupt, and the inevitable continuation of old class relations—particularly in the lower stages of socialism—and the deeply-rooted ideology of the past will nurture the tendency for capitalist restoration. Commodity relations—even under socialist state control—do regenerate capitalism and bourgeois ideas. Non-proletarian class forces—who are necessary to keep the economy and social services going—are going to demand concessions, such as higher wages, personal power and retention of bourgeois rights.

Technicians and professionals in all spheres will defend their privileged position in society and resist the encroachment of the common people in their *business*. And only when the proletariat can do without them can we move from the lower to the higher stage of socialism. The struggle between “Reds” and “Experts” was a major aspect of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China. We all know that after Mao's death, the “Reds” were defeated and that the “Experts” now live “high on the hog” in China and the so-called “Communist Party” has become a fascist party of

“Experts” and capitalists.

Mao predicted that this outcome was “very possible,” but he also predicted that their rule would be short-lived and that they “would know no peace,” and we see that today there is a resurgence of Maoism in China and internationally, and we see that China's masses are waging sharp class struggle against their exploitation and oppression.

We also see a resurgence of Anarchism today, and particularly among the youth of the imperialist countries. I *should* say among the *white petty-bourgeois* youth and students, because there is a class and race basis to this resurgence. Anarchy extols the supremacy of the individual and individual freedom, which is also a way to separate oneself from identifying with one's *skin* and *class privileges*. One can say, “I am not responsible for racist and class oppression or for global imperialism. I reject all that. I am an Anarchist.” But that neither threatens the ruling class nor helps the oppressed class. It's merely a lifestyle choice, a fashion. You can dress up for it, dye your hair black and get a “bad” haircut, eat vegan food, ride a bicycle, pierce your nose, nipples or tongue, dumpster dive and make the scene.

Then there are the Anarchist careerists, which brings to mind admissions made and the example set by Greg Wells, an Anarchist journalist out of Richmond, Virginia, with whom I was corresponding a few years back. At a time when I was facing a high-point of repression from prison officials, I proposed a few ideas to him about consolidating discrete activists into a practical support network for prisoner activists and other oppressed individuals. He replied that my proposals definitely needed doing, and that “as much as” he'd “love to” help he was “simply too comfortable to do any such thing.” He added, “I'll tell you something that other Anarchists won't admit, but it's true. You know that most Anarchists are comfortable white middle-class and aren't going to do much more than a little protesting and critical writing.”

Greg is a prolific writer who has made a career out of railing at capitalism, racial and gender oppression, U.S. imperialist wars, etc., yet he concedes his unwillingness to jeopardize his status and comfort level by allying himself in practice with the oppressed. As he confessed, this is typical of most of the milieu of petty bourgeois Anarchists. Indeed, I would say it is typical of most radical intellectuals on the American Left. As I stated in a previous unpublished article:

“99% of the radicals are divorced from the masses. They attend rallies and protests but lock their doors when driving through oppressed neighborhoods. They don't know how to do mass work, how to agitate and organize. They think it's their opinions that matter, that they fulfill their political duty by expressing them. Whereas, they need to create a presence on the street, amongst the oppressed workers and nationalities, and time is of the essence.”

Of course, there are some Anarchists like ABC, whom we consider to be comrades, who actually do play a role in assisting the struggle in the prisons and are groping with the question of making revolution. We are, as you say, “on the same side of the barricades.” The question is can we build a *higher* level of unity and what would that take? Well, we've created the White Panther Organization (WPO) as an arm of the New Afrikan Black Panther Party-Prison Chapter (NABPP-PC), so white comrades can fully unite with us and represent our Party among the oppressed white people. They do have to accept the democratic-centralism of the Party and its rules of discipline, the same as the Black Panthers. They have to study and apply the Science of Revolution and commit to being all-the-way revolutionaries.

NABPP-PC is not a Communist Party per se. We are revolutionary nationalists and internationalists. Our ideological and political line, “Pantherism,” is illuminated by Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, and we are committed to fighting for proletarian socialist revolution. We see the key alliance in the United Front Against Capitalist-Imperialism to be between the oppressed nations and nationalities and the multi-ethnic, multi-national working class.

For New Afrikans, the solution to our national oppression is socialist revolution. As long as Black people are oppressed *because* we are Black, there needs to be a Black Panther Party to lead the Black Liberation Struggle. We need to stand together as a Nation under the leadership of our proletarian vanguard. To fight most effectively against white racism, we need white comrades to stand with us—as fellow Panthers or as supporters. We also need to stand in solidarity with all other oppressed peoples and have them stand with us. This is the basis of the United Panther Movement. We believe that the Nation of New Afrikans in Amerika must play a vanguard role in this revolution because of our historical oppression and because we are in a position to do so.

We live in the “Belly of the Beast.” We are concentrated in the urban centers of the sole imperialist superpower, and we are infiltrated throughout the oppressor's military and

political-economic infrastructure. We are everywhere, even if only pushing a broom or a mop.

We are also part of the Third World, and we are kindred to all other sons and daughters of Afrikan descent. Everywhere we are oppressed because of our black skin under white world domination. As Mao said:

“The evil system of colonialism and imperialism arose and throve with the enslavement of Negroes and the trade in Negroes, and it will surely come to its end with the complete emancipation of the Black people.”

He said, “The Afro-American struggle is not only a struggle waged by the exploited and oppressed Black people for freedom and emancipation” but that it is a “clarion call” to all the oppressed peoples. This history and this positioning gives us the opportunity to play a vanguard role in the world revolution, not exclusive of others but in dialectical relationship to all people of color and all who suffer oppression. This does not negate the leading role that must be played by the international proletariat as the class of the future, for it is the ideology and worldview of this class that guides our struggle for liberation.

The New Afrikan Nation is primarily a proletarian nation—on the whole, we own nothing and are forced to sell our labor power to survive or otherwise to survive by any means necessary. Even most of our lumpen proletariat has an on again off again relationship with wage slavery. Our Party must work ceaselessly to ground our cadre and comrades in a thorough-going proletarian class stand and struggle resolutely against lumpen and petty-bourgeois influences and tendencies.

For several decades now the ruling class has been pursuing a strategy of criminalization of the poor and our mass incarceration—particularly of our Black youth—and we must counter this with proletarianizing and revolutionizing our young wimyn and men by teaching “Pantherism” and raising up a generation of revolutionary warriors.

But let me return to your question and your point about Anarchists wanting nothing to do with state power and their accepting nothing short of its instant abolition. Well, *the* foremost modern Anarchist intellectual, Noam Chomsky—affectionately known in Anarchist circles as “Uncle Noam”—is both a proponent of using state power (and *bourgeois state power* at that) to address social ills, and he conceded that Anarchism is not an instantly attainable social order. Were it not for his speaking in support of *bourgeois* state power, instead of promoting *proletarian* state power, one would think Chomsky was a Communist espousing the need for the rational use of state power to transform society. “Uncle Noam” put it like this:

“Well it's true that the Anarchist vision in just about all its varieties has looked forward to dismantling state power—and I personally share that vision. But right now it runs directly counter to my goals: My immediate goals have been, and now very much are, to defend and even strengthen certain elements of state authority that are now under severe attack. And I don't think there's any contradiction there—none at all, really.

“For example, take the so-called ‘welfare state.’ What's called the ‘welfare state’ is essentially a recognition that every child has a right to have food, and to have health care and so on—and as I've been saying, those programs were set up in the nation-state system after a century of very hard struggle, by the labor movement, and the socialist movement, and so on. Well, according to the new spirit of the age, in the case of a fourteen-year-old girl who got raped and had a child, her child has to learn ‘personal responsibility’ by not accepting state welfare handouts, meaning by not having enough to eat. Alright, I don't agree with that at any level. In fact I think it is grotesque at any level. I think those children should be saved. And in today's world, *that's going to involve working through the state system*, it's not the only case.

“So despite the anarchist ‘vision,’ I think aspects of the state system, like the one that makes sure children eat, have to be defended—in fact, defended very vigorously. And given the accelerated effort that's being made these days to roll back the victories for justice and human rights which have been won through long and often extremely bitter struggles in the West, in my opinion the immediate goal of even committed anarchists should be to defend some state institutions, while helping to pry them open to more meaningful public participation, and ultimately to dismantle them in a much more free society.

“There are practical problems of tomorrow on which people's lives very much depend, and while defending these kinds of programs is by no means the ultimate end we should be pursuing, in my view we still have to face the problems that are right on the horizon, and which seriously affect human lives. I don't think those things can simply be forgotten because they might not fit with some radical slogan that reflects a *deeper vision of a future society*. The deeper vision should be maintained, they're important—but



*dismantling the state system is a goal that is a lot further away, and you want to deal first with what's at hand and nearby, I think ...*

"So I think it's completely realistic and rational to work within structures to which you are opposed, because by doing so can help to move to a situation where then you can challenge these structures."

Chomsky's proposing that radicals work within bourgeois state institutions to address social needs actually conforms to a strategy of absorbing and controlling dissidents and activists within government structures, which was proposed by the U.S. National Security Council in the late 1970s. This reflects how the confused class stand of the petty bourgeoisie leads to erroneous approaches to opposing imperialist oppression. But, *that* Chomsky recognized the need to use state power along the road to ultimately abolishing the state shows that Communist and Anarchist theory is not so irreconcilable. Anarchists must simply recognize the role of the proletariat as preeminent in the struggle against capitalist-imperialism and the advance to a classless society.

I want to add that we reject the nihilism that is so often associated with both Anarchism and gangsterism. We base ourselves on *Panther Love*. As both Che Guevara and Mao pointed out, love is the motivation of a true revolutionary. Our love for the people, for liberty and justice, and for the unborn generations for whom we stand ready to sacrifice our lives, is manifested in everything we do and say.

On the question of who should legitimately coordinate the application of state power and lead society in general, again "Uncle Noam" promotes the need and role for a leading structure very similar to our concept of a genuine vanguard party operating with committee structures and democratic centralism. He opposed the ultra-democratic approach to running even a basic community as impossible. Indeed there has never existed a society without some form of leadership. Here again is Chomsky:

"No, I don't think [a large mass of people could actively participate in all the decisions that need to be made in a complex modern society]. I think you've got to delegate some of those responsibilities. But the question is, where does authority ultimately lie? I mean, since the very beginnings of the modern democratic revolutions in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, it's always been recognized that people have to be represented—the question is, are we represented by, as they put it, 'countrymen like ourselves,' or are we represented by 'our betters'?"

"For example, suppose this was our community, and we wanted to enter into some kind of agreement with the community down the road—if we were fairly big, we'd have to delegate the right to negotiate things to representatives. But then the question is, who has the power to ultimately authorize those decisions? Well, if it's a democracy, that power ought to lie not just *formally* in the population, but *actually* in the population—meaning the representatives can be recalled, they're answerable back to their community, they can be replaced. In fact, there should be as much as possible in the way of constant replacement, so that political participation just becomes a part of everybody's life.

"But I agree, I don't think it's possible to have large masses of people get together to decide every topic—it would be unfeasible and pointless. You'd want to pick committees to look into things and report back, and so on and so forth. But the real question is, where does authority lie."

Now compare Chomsky's emphasis on the legitimacy of representative committee structures lying in the election and recall by votes of leading members and such organizations being accountable to the masses by full exposure of their activities, with this 1905 Bolshevik summary of democratic centralism:

"Recognizing as indisputable the principle of democratic centralism, the Conference considers the broad implementation of the elective principle necessary, and while granting elected centers full powers in matters of ideological and political leadership, they are at the same time subject to recall, their actions are given broad publicity, and they are strictly accountable for these activities."

Also, consistent with Chomsky's point that political power should be vested in the common people and not with "our betters," the struggle which Mao initiated during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution between the "Reds" and the "Experts" was to displace political power from those who by virtue of their technical expertise considered themselves the "betters" of the common laboring people, and to have that power spread broadly amongst the working people.

This is one of the reasons why the petty bourgeoisie cannot lead all-the-way revolution—or even the struggle to defend the humn and democratic civil rights of the oppressed—as their class conditioning has them seeing themselves as the intellectual "betters" of the masses towards whom they

have a "superior" attitude. George Jackson demonstrated that you don't have to be middle class or attend a university to become a *revolutionary intellectual*—a "Red" who is also armed with intellectual expertise. Some would say that I demonstrate this myself.

Those of us who have nothing to lose but our chains, who have no reason to hesitate or vacillate and every reason to be serious, dedicated, all-the-way revolutionaries have a responsibility to be in the vanguard and to struggle relentlessly against every form of oppression to build the mass-based revolutionary vanguard party to unite and lead the masses of oppressed people to rise up and end oppression at its source through proletarian socialist revolution and proletarian cultural revolution.

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

## AT THE END OF THE DAY: COMMUNISM IS ABOUT SURVIVAL

By Tom "Big Warrior" Watts

11/24/2016

At the end of the day, communism is about survival. It is about everybody getting to eat - and eat well. It is about everybody getting decent housing, health care and education. Communism is about community, people living together, working together, struggling together to create a brighter future for their children and generations yet unborn; a world without wars, without boundaries, without bosses or prisons – a stateless, classless, egalitarian society that serves the people – in which "...the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all."<sup>1</sup>

Communism is the negation of class society, or rather the *negation of the negation* that is class society, as humanity existed in classless communities for tens of thousands of years before class divisions took place. Class society was a radical rupture with the original egalitarian basis of human communities. Under primitive communalism, each gathered, fished, hunted and so on to contribute to the survival of the group and shared in the fruits of the collective labor and in the hardships of the tribe's struggle to survive. Class society was predicated upon the conversion of communal property to private ownership. This included ownership of people, and slavery was the first stage of class society.

The exploitation of man by man and woman by man are historically linked with the creation of private property. Under primitive communalism, there was a communal right to access of basic resources, and because people lived essentially hand to mouth, little or no surplus was created. Only with the increased productivity associated with agriculture and domestication of animals was it possible for class society to develop along with an authoritarian governmental structure based upon force. Civilization is all about hierarchal stratification and privilege based upon class exploitation and oppression.

Where there are classes there will be class struggle and ultimately class war because of the irreconcilability of class interests and the struggle for survival. Where there was slavery, there were slave revolts, and where there was feudalism there were (and still are) peasant revolts, and feudalism was itself overthrown by capitalist forms of exploitation and bourgeois revolution. Bourgeois capitalist society produces its own gravediggers in the form of the modern proletariat or wage slaves, who are compelled by survival needs to sell their labor power to the capitalists and be exploited by the bourgeoisie to make profit and increase the wealth and power of the bourgeoisie.

All class-based societies are empowered by a state, and all states are class dictatorships. This epoch of history allows for either a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie or a dictatorship of the proletariat regardless of the form of government. Democracy and dictatorship are not mutually exclusive, in fact, for many practical reasons the form of dictatorship that best serves the bourgeoisie is liberal democracy. Lenin summed up fascism as "Capitalism in decay," and reflective of the imperialist stage of capitalism, when capitalism is "rotten ripe" for proletarian revolution and the monopoly capitalist ruling class cannot continue to rule in the old way any longer.

As R. Palme Dutt elaborated in 1935:

*"Within this period fascism represents the desperate attempt of the doomed capitalist class to maintain its power and overcome the contradictions by extreme violent means, and thus*

*to maintain the existing social forms at the expense of the development of the forces of production, in particular: (1) to throttle the class struggle by suppression of all working class organizations; (2) to overcome the economic contradictions by active state intervention, so-called "planning," subsidies, restrictions of production and trade, etc.; (3) to overcome the inner contradictions of the bourgeoisie by the unification of a single governmental party replacing the older political parties and divisions; (4) to overcome the international contradictions by intensified organization for war and world conquest."<sup>2</sup>*

In Lenin's words: "**Marx said that the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat lies between capitalism and communism.** The more the proletariat presses the bourgeoisie, the more furiously they will resist."<sup>3</sup> Harpal Brar, Chairman of the Communist Party of Great Britain (Marxist-Leninist), elaborates:

To make a proper assessment, it is essential to see fascism in relation to the whole character of modern social development, of which fascism is an expression, and to get down to the basic movement and driving forces of economy and technique, which have reached a point at which the existing capitalist forms are increasingly incompatible with the further development of production and utilisation of technique.

There is war between them – one must end the other. Either the advance of the productive forces must put an end to capitalism. Or the continued existence of capitalism must bring the advance of production and technique to a grinding halt and plunge billions of people on this planet even further into poverty, misery and war.

*These are the only two paths – capitalism or socialism. There is no third alternative. All hopes of a third alternative, which will guarantee the realisation of peaceful and harmonious development without class struggle, through the forms of capitalist 'democracy', 'planned capitalism', etc. are nothing but pipe dreams. These dreams of peaceful development are merely the echo of past conceptions, belonging to the era of liberal free-competition capitalism, an era which disappeared a whole hundred years ago, never to return.<sup>4</sup>*

It is precisely the illusion of "peaceful and harmonious development" that creates the conditions for fascism to take over, or to put it another way, it is the fear of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the weakness of the working class' misleaders; the petty-bourgeois "Left"-liberals and right opportunists, that make fascism a real threat. At the end of the day; it is the dead-end of reformism and class collaboration of the false "Left" that empowers the fascist "Right" to kick aside the facade of bourgeois democracy.

It is the duty of the revolutionary Left to represent the bright future of communism in the struggles of today. Only by building real strength among the real proletariat can the Left build a strong vanguard party and lead a broad united front among various strata of the masses. We must particularly and vigorously oppose revisionism in all its manifestations. As Chairman Mao counseled:

*Both dogmatism and revisionism run counter to Marxism. Marxism must certainly advance; it must develop along with the development of practice and cannot stand still. It would become lifeless if it remained stagnant and stereotyped. However, the basic principles of Marxism must never be violated, or otherwise mistakes will be made. It is dogmatism to approach Marxism from a metaphysical point of view and to regard it as something rigid. It is revisionism to negate the basic principles of Marxism and to negate its universal truth. Revisionism is one form of bourgeois ideology. The revisionists deny the differences between socialism and capitalism, between the dictatorship of the proletariat and the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. What they advocate is in fact not the socialist line but the capitalist line. In present circumstances, revisionism is more pernicious*

2 Rajani Palme Dutt, "The Question of Fascism and Social Decay," *The Communist International*, Vol. XII, No. 14, July 20, 1935, Marxists Internet Archive (2006).

3 V.I. Lenin, "Speech At A Rally And Concert For The All-Russia Extraordinary Commission Staff," November 7, 1918, Collected Works, Vol. 28, pp. 169-70, Marxists Internet Archive (2006).

4 Harpal Brar, "Bourgeois Democracy and Fascism," The Marxist Leninist: a revolutionary communist website, April 13, 2010

1 Marx and Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, Chapter 2, (1848), Marxist Internet Archive



than dogmatism. One of our current important tasks on the ideological front is to unfold criticism of revisionism.<sup>5</sup>

And further:

*Revisionism, or Right opportunism, is a bourgeois trend of thought that is even more dangerous than dogmatism. The revisionists, the Right opportunists, pay lip service to Marxism; they too attack "dogmatism." However, what they are really attacking is the quintessence of Marxism. They oppose or distort materialism and dialectics, oppose or try to weaken the people's democratic dictatorship and the leading role of the Communist Party, and oppose or try to weaken socialist transformation and socialist construction.<sup>6</sup>*

Vladimir Lenin wrote in his *Philosophical Notebooks*: "The splitting of a single whole and the cognition of its contradictory parts ... is the essence ... of dialectics."<sup>7</sup> In contradiction to this, the philosopher Yang Xianzhen, originated the idea of *Two Unites into One*, which he said was the primary law of dialectics. In other words, that capitalism could be united with socialism. This became a major point of contention between the Maoists and revisionists during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China. Significantly, after 1976, when the capitalist-roaders seized power, Yang was rehabilitated as well as the concept of two uniting into one.<sup>8</sup> Revisionists have repeatedly attempted to render Marxism "more profound" by concocting new syntheses between Marxism and bourgeois or petty-bourgeois ideologies. Most particularly at this time with "Left"-neoliberal ideology. Neoliberalism has become the dominant form of bourgeois ideology in this, the final period of capitalist-imperialism. "Identity politics" are a manifestation of neoliberal ideology. Neoliberalism is a reflection of the downward spiral of capitalism and the concentration of wealth and power to the top 1%. Initially, neoliberalism worked pretty well for the middle and upper strata of the petty-bourgeoisie, but increasingly over the past 10-15 years, their upper mobility has stagnated, and the Tea Party and the Trump Movement are reflections of their reaction. However much their rebellion is characterized by a tendency towards a more classical fascism, they are very much within the neoliberal camp.

Liberal neoliberals want to characterize this trend as simply "white racism," but that is simply because they choke at the idea of actually blaming the trajectory of capitalism which would require an actual revolutionary response. It is so much more comfortable to play the "blame game" and reaffirm to themselves that they are morally superior to the common folk. As Walter Benn Michaels writes:

*The differentiation between left and right neoliberalism doesn't really undermine the way in which it is deeply unified in its commitment to competitive markets and to the state's role in maintaining competitive markets. For me the distinction is that "left neoliberals" are people who don't understand themselves as neoliberals. They think that their commitments to anti-racism, to anti-sexism, to anti-homophobia constitute a critique of neoliberalism. But if you look at the history of the idea of neoliberalism you can see fairly quickly that neoliberalism arises as a kind of commitment precisely to those things.<sup>9</sup>*

Neoliberal identity politics capitalism has become a hegemonic ideology in replacement of overt race and racism in the past century. As Andrew Stewart has recently pointed out: "Identity has never had a progressive aim, it has always been an instance of capitalism co-opting the grammar of liberation to promote imperialism. We should not return the favor by associating a vile system like neoliberalism with our liberation efforts."<sup>10</sup> However, the "Left" has become totally entwined with neoliberal identity politics both in its own minds and in those of the proletarian masses that reject it. At the end of the day, winning the masses to a revolutionary proletarian consciousness cannot be accomplished without drawing a clear line of demarcation between it and "Left"-wing neoliberalism.

As the Black Panthers pointed out almost half a century

5 Mao Tse-tung, "Speech at the Chinese Communist Party's National Conference on Propaganda Work" (March 12, 1957), 1st pocket ed., and pp. 26-27.

6 Mao Tse-tung, "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions among the People," (February 27, 1957), 1st pocket ed., pp. 56-57.

7 V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Volume 38, (Philosophical Notebooks, 1895-1916)

8 "One Divides into Two, Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

9 Walter Benn Michaels, "Let Them Eat Diversity: On the politics of identity," Jacobin

10 Andrew Stewart, "Donald Trump, Enoch Powell and Neoliberal Identity Politics," *Counterpunch*, September 2, 2016

ago: "You don't fight racism with racism, the best way to fight racism is with solidarity."<sup>11</sup> The inescapable fact about identity is its unity of opposites: "White identity, .... needs black identity in order to define itself, and therefore cannot exist without it."<sup>12</sup> With white Americans facing the prospect of becoming a numerical minority, "Right"-wing neoliberalism has fertile ground to plant itself in and "Left"-wing neoliberalism does nothing to promote working class solidarity. As Jodi Dean expressed:

*Identity politics weaponizes the feeling that one has to hold on to what is in them more than themselves. It highlights one specific feature out of a given set of demographic features, turning this feature from a base to be defended into a launcher for new attacks. Weaponized identity politics lets me insist that this time I will not be sacrificed, I will survive. Even more, it helps assuage some of the guilt of the privileged — they are on the correct side of history, for once. The added bonus of the weaponized identity politics is how the privileged can use [it] against each other even as they leave communicative capitalism's basic structure intact. We see this when we look at the arsenal of identities — sex, race, gender, sexuality, ability, ethnicity, religion, citizenship — and recognize what is missing: class.<sup>13</sup>*

Proletarian class consciousness does not need to be "rendered more profound" because the proletariat is the only "all-the-way revolutionary" class in history. As expressed in the *Communist Manifesto*:

Of all the classes that stand face to face with the bourgeoisie today, the proletariat alone is a really revolutionary class. The other classes decay and finally disappear in the face of Modern Industry; the proletariat is its special and essential product.

The lower middle class, the small manufacturer, the shopkeeper, the artisan, the peasant, all these fight against the bourgeoisie, to save from extinction their existence as fractions of the middle class. They are therefore not revolutionary, but conservative. Nay more, they are reactionary, for they try to roll back the wheel of history. If by chance, they are revolutionary, they are only so in view of their impending transfer into the proletariat; they thus defend not their present, but their future interests, they desert their own standpoint to place themselves at that of the proletariat....

All the preceding classes that got the upper hand sought to fortify their already acquired status by subjecting society at large to their conditions of appropriation. The proletarians cannot become masters of the productive forces of society, except by abolishing their own previous mode of appropriation, and thereby also every other previous mode of appropriation. They have nothing of their own to secure and to fortify; their mission is to destroy all previous securities for, and insurances of, individual property.

All previous historical movements were movements of minorities, or in the interest of minorities. The proletarian movement is the self-conscious, independent movement of the immense majority, in the interest of the immense majority. The proletariat, the lowest stratum of our present society, cannot stir, cannot raise itself up, without the whole superincumbent strata of official society being sprung into the air.

At the end of the day, it is only by leading the fight against all oppression that the proletariat becomes fully class conscious and fit to exercise its class dictatorship to revolutionize every aspect of society. Only the proletariat can bring together such a broad united front as to defeat the bourgeoisie and resist every attempt to effect a restoration of capitalism. This is precisely why phony "Leftists" fear and hate the very idea of the proletariat exercising all round dictatorship over the bourgeoisie.

*Historical experience shows us that whether the proletariat can triumph over the bourgeoisie and whether China will turn revisionist hinges on whether we can persevere in exercising all-round dictatorship over the bourgeoisie in all spheres and at all stages of development of the revolution. What is all-round dictatorship over the bourgeoisie? The most succinct generalization*

11 Bobby Seale, *Seize the Time: The Story of the Black Panther Party and Huey P. Newton*, (1970)

12 Laila Lalami, "The Identity Politics of Whiteness," *The New York Times Magazine*, November 21, 2016

13 Jodi Dean, "Not Us, Me," *Verso Books*, November 26, 2016

is found in a passage from a letter Marx wrote in 1852 to J. Weydemeyer, which we are all studying. Marx said, *"...no credit is due to me for discovering the existence of classes in modern society, nor yet the struggle between them. Long before me bourgeois historians had described the historical development of this struggle of the classes, and bourgeois economists the economic anatomy of the classes, What I did that was new was to prove: 1) that the existence of classes is only bound up with particular historical phases in the development of production; 2) that the class struggle necessarily leads to the dictatorship of the proletariat; 3) that this dictatorship itself only constitutes the transition to the abolition of all classes and to a classless society."* In this splendid observation, Lenin said, Marx succeeded in expressing with striking clarity the chief and radical difference between his theory on the state and that of the bourgeoisie, and the essence of his teaching on the state. Here it should be noted that Marx divided the sentence on the dictatorship of the proletariat into three points, which are interrelated and cannot be cut apart. It is impermissible to accept only one of the three points while rejecting the other two. For the sentence gives complete expression to the entire process of the inception, development and withering away of the dictatorship of the proletariat and covers the whole task of the dictatorship of the proletariat and its actual content. In *The Class Struggles in France, 1848-1850*, Marx deals in more specific terms with this dictatorship of the proletariat as the necessary transit point to the abolition of class distinctions generally, to the abolition of all the relations of production on which they rest, to the abolition of all the social relations that correspond to these relations of production, and to the revolutionizing of all the ideas that result from these social relations. In all the four cases, Marx means all. Not a part, a greater part, or even the greatest part, but all! This is nothing surprising, for only by emancipating all mankind can the proletariat achieve its own final emancipation.<sup>14</sup>

The proletariat tends to be more socially conservative and slow to accept leftist ideas, particularly when it associates these ideas with the intellectual elite of the professional class. In many ways, it has stronger antipathy to this strata than to the capitalists, and this is something the "Left"-neoliberals fail to grasp and which the Trump movement capitalized on effectively. The "politically correct" neoliberal has no qualms about slandering workers (particularly white males) and calling them "rednecks," "crackers" and "deplorable," and blaming them for racism. This is quite in contradiction to Mao's position:

*Racial discrimination in the United States is a product of the colonialist and imperialist system. The contradiction between the Black masses in the United States and the U.S. ruling circles is a class contradiction. Only by overthrowing the reactionary rule of the U.S. monopoly capitalist class and destroying the colonialist and imperialist system can the Black people in the United States win complete emancipation. The Black masses and the masses of white working people in the United States have common interests and common objectives to struggle for. Therefore, the Afro-American struggle is winning sympathy and support from increasing numbers of white working people and progressives in the United States. The struggle of the Black people in the United States is bound to merge with the American workers' movement, and this will eventually end the criminal rule of the U.S. monopoly capitalist class.<sup>15</sup>*

And:

*In the final analysis, national struggle is a matter of class struggle. Among the whites in the United States, it is only the reactionary ruling circles who oppress the Negro people. They can in no way represent the workers, farmers, revolutionary intellectuals and other enlightened persons who comprise the overwhelming majority of the white people.<sup>16</sup>*

To listen to white or Black "Left"-neoliberals, or Black nationalists, you would never get the idea that white

14 Chang Chun-chiao (Zhang Chungqiao), "On Exercising All-Round Dictatorship Over the Bourgeoisie," *Foreign Languages Press*, 1975 from an article in *Hongqi*

15 Mao Tse-tung, "A New Storm Against Imperialism," (April 16, 1968)

16 Mao Tse-tung, "Statement Supporting the American Negroes In Their Just Struggle Against Racial Discrimination by U.S. Imperialism," (August 8, 1963)

working class men fought against slavery, voted to end it and to enfranchise Black men, that even in the South there were poor whites that opposed slavery, the Confederacy and Jim Crow segregation, and that the KKK terrorized poor white communities and anyone suspected of being a "race traitor." You would never get the idea that worker's unions like the Knights of Labor, the IWW, the UMW and the CIO accepted Black workers and that there is a rich history of proletarian solidarity, even if few know about it. You don't hear about it because the white petty-bourgeois are too busy patting themselves on the back for being "color blind" and "progressive" and Black nationalists have historically opposed working class solidarity. Whenever there has been an economic recession, the capitalists have historically shifted the anger of sections of the white workers to scapegoat the Blacks. Significantly, in the "Great Recession" (December 2007 to June 2009), there was very little backlash and instead, masses of white workers voted for America's first Black President. From then to today, the Republicans and white nationalists have been working overtime to incite racist reaction, particularly among rural white workers.

The feeling among poor whites that they were betrayed and abandoned by the Obama administration is not baseless. They have been, by the Democrats, the "Left"-neoliberals and "social justice warriors." In contrast to this is the ignored legacy of the original Black Panther Party:

*One of the bitterest parts of looking back into the history of American radicalism is imagining what Illinois Black Panther party chairman Fred Hampton might have been had he not been killed by a police tactical unit in 1969 at age 20. At the time of his death, Hampton was organizing a multi-racial political coalition that included members of the Young Lords, a Puerto Rican nationalist organization, the Native American Housing Committee and the Young Patriots Organization, which worked with white migrants from Appalachia — members of the sorts of communities J.D. Vance explored in his memoir "Hillbilly Elegy," which has been embraced as a sort of diagnostic manual for Trump voters.*

*In "The Black Panthers," Nelson included footage of one of those coalition meetings, which lingers on a middle-aged white man declaring "I'll stick with the Black Panthers if they'll stick with me, and I know they will." It's a scene that carries with it the terrible sting of a foreclosed opportunity. Other radical ideas from the era have evolved, and perhaps improved with age. Cellphones with cameras have replaced the rifles the Black Panthers used to carry and display when they patrolled the streets, looking out for incidents of police misconduct. Phones may not have the advantage of acting as a reminder that African Americans have Second Amendment rights, too. But they are distinctly useful for producing visceral video records or allowing Americans to stream misconduct and violence as they occur. The Panthers may have been first to let the police know that they personally were watching, but everyone with a cellphone who makes sure the police know that the whole world will soon be watching, too, is a descendant of the party in this small way.<sup>17</sup>*

In the wake of the recent election, even mainstream liberals are realizing that weaponized identity politics have drowned out their core message and rendered it impotent, as expressed by this college professor in *The New York Times Sunday Review*:

*One of the many lessons of the recent presidential election campaign and its repugnant outcome is that the age of identity liberalism must be brought to an end. Hillary Clinton was at her best and most uplifting when she spoke about American interests in world affairs and how they relate to our understanding of democracy. But when it came to life at home, she tended on the campaign trail to lose that large vision and slip into the rhetoric of diversity, calling out explicitly to African-American, Latino, L.G.B.T. and women voters at every stop. This was a strategic mistake. If you are going to mention groups in America, you had better mention all of them. If you don't, those left out will notice and feel excluded. Which, as the data show, was exactly what happened with the white working class and those with strong religious convictions....*

*But the fixation on diversity in our schools and in the press has produced a generation of liberals and progressives narcissistically unaware of conditions outside their self-defined groups, and indifferent to the task of reaching out to Americans in every walk of life. At a very young age our children are being encouraged to talk about their individual identities, even before they have them. By the time they reach college many assume that diversity*

*discourse exhausts political discourse, and have shockingly little to say about such perennial questions as class, war, the economy and the common good. In large part this is because of high school history curriculums, which anachronistically project the identity politics of today back onto the past, creating a distorted picture of the major forces and individuals that shaped our country. (The achievements of women's rights movements, for instance, were real and important, but you cannot understand them if you do not first understand the founding fathers' achievement in establishing a system of government based on the guarantee of rights.)....*

*We need a post-identity liberalism, and it should draw from the past successes of pre-identity liberalism. Such a liberalism would concentrate on widening its base by appealing to Americans as Americans and emphasizing the issues that affect a vast majority of them. It would speak to the nation as a nation of citizens who are in this together and must help one another. As for narrower issues that are highly charged symbolically and can drive potential allies away, especially those touching on sexuality and religion, such a liberalism would work quietly, sensitively and with a proper sense of scale. (To paraphrase Bernie Sanders, America is sick and tired of hearing about liberals' damn bathrooms.)<sup>18</sup>*

Of course, from a communist perspective, Hillary Clinton is not "great" on foreign policy and neither is Bernie Sanders, they are bloody imperialists and supporters of Zionist Israel and genocidal war. Sanders was more sympathetic to the concerns of white workers than Hillary, and probably could have defeated Trump had she not rigged the primaries, but socialism would not have been the result — far from it! A President Sanders, like Obama and FDR, would have been all about "saving capitalism." At the end of the day, "everything reactionary is the same!" As Dutt explained: *Lenin noted the tendencies of decay as the main, decisive, defining characteristic of monopoly capitalism, and added the proviso that this decay should not be misunderstood as "excluding" the "possibility of rapid growth" of particular "branches of production," "strata of the bourgeoisie" or "individual countries."<sup>19</sup>*

We cannot overemphasize that **monopoly capitalism is capitalism in decay**, and the excesses of bourgeois decadence, so personified by the vulgarian President Elect and his gold-digger trophy wife, in their gilded penthouse atop the mirrored-glass Trump Tower, perfectly reflect this decay and rot. Capitalism is rotten ripe for revolution, but the phony "Left" is rotten with revisionism, and a new vanguard party must be built from the ground up composed of the finest sons and daughters of the proletariat and oppressed masses. At the end of the day, "we must be our own liberators!"

Panther Love!

All Power to the People!

<sup>17</sup> Alyssa Rosenberg, "What we can learn from the Black Panthers about how to survive Trump," *The Washington Post*, November 16, 2016

<sup>18</sup> Mark Lilla, "The End of Identity Liberalism," *The New York Times Sunday Review: Opinion*, November 18, 2016  
<sup>19</sup> Rajani Palme Dutt, "The Question of Fascism and Social Decay,"...