

Black Power and the Fascists

Until just a few months ago, it seemed as if the Civil Rights Movement had almost come to a stand-still. It seemed to have failed to achieve any of its goals or alleviate to any degree the special oppression suffered by the masses of Negroes in this country. Politically, it had gotten nowhere. The Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party had failed to jar the racist white Democratic Party from power in Mississippi or to achieve recognition from the national Democratic Party. The Movement had failed to alter the police brutality in the ghettos, or provide a meaningful answer to the police-instigated slaughters in the so-called "riots" in Harlem, Watts,

etc.. And most important, conditions for the bulk of Negroes have actually gotten worse, not better; their income increases in recent years had been substantially less than that of the population as a whole. Unemployment was still four times as great among Negroes, and urban renewal still means moving the poor out, not ending slum housing.

Then came the rapid popularity of the slogan "Black Power," coined by SNCC chairman Stokely Carmichael on the Meredith march in Mississippi, and raised by the Black Panther Party (Lowndes County Freedom Organization) in Lowndes County, (Continued on Page 3)

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PORT CHICAGO AND THE "PEACE" CANDIDATES:

Will The Bodies On The Line Vote Against The War Party?

This time, the advocates of "direct action" protest have just about reached their limit. Sit-downers at Port Chicago trying to stop napalm-laden trucks bound for the munitions depot there have been beaten, dragged around, thrown bodily and threatened with their lives by military authorities acting outside their legal jurisdiction, while cops looked the other way. It has been an especially shocking (to some) revelation of the brutality of class society.

Yet it is much more incredible that this sort of response was not expected by the people who gallantly set forth to bottle up with their bodies a vital war-time munitions dump. We know, after all, what the same military authorities are doing in Vietnam itself. There they have plainly resolved to stop at nothing--even genocide--to prevent defeat at the hands of a revolutionary movement. The U.S. is engaged in a brutally calculated slaughter to break the back of Vietnamese resistance with bombs, gas, chemicals and millions of flying slivers of steel.

The courage and militancy of the protestors is not the point in question. Their choice of action in trying to confront the war machine with their bodies rather than by independent political action--this is the crux of the matter. Viewed as a propaganda effort, the hospital, bail, and legal expenses make this type of protest much too costly, considering the (predictable) absence of any widespread moral outcry from the general public.

The brutality of Vietnam and Port Chicago has always been a part of the capitalist system. Whenever the cause of production for profit is threatened, the ruling class shows its ugly face. The cops and armed forces reveal their true purpose: to quell internal revolts (inside the imperialist system) and restore the "order" of capital. In 1900 it took more troops to conquer the Philippines from the Filipinos than it took to conquer them from Spain. And in 1940, striking workers at a West Coast airplane plant were forced

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TURN THE ANTI-WAR MOVEMENT INTO A

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back to work by veteran troops using fixed bayonets, so that production for war could continue. Today in Vietnam it's the same story; a revolt against the world domination of U.S. capital is going on. Any confrontation with the same domination by native Americans, however, will elicit the same brutal response.

The Watts rebellion and other ghetto outbursts--all of which have been viciously crushed by cops and National Guardsmen for the sake of "order"--should have been ample evidence to prove this. But no; the Port Chicago protestors set out to confront the U.S. war machine, armed guardian of the interests of capital, with their unarmed bodies. They had the incredible naivete to think that somehow they would be allowed to stop the trucks; somehow nobody would dare roll over them the way Vietnamese peasants are being rolled over by the same authority. Of course the military threatened to "shoot to kill!" That's what it's there for, law or no law. The true and final end of all non-violent protestors and sit-downers will come when the struggle gets just a little hotter and they are crushed by tanks and forgotten.

If the Anti-war Movement hasn't learned this lesson yet, at least it has learned that the existing power in this society must be confronted if there is to be an end to poverty, racism and war. The tragedy is that it hasn't learned how to confront this authority. While it breaks a toe kicking a brick wall in Port Chicago, it hands its head to the ruling class by backing phony "peace candidates like Scheer and Keating in the Democratic Party. Before we go any further, lest we be accused of "marxist dogmatism" or "splitting the movement," let's look at the facts. Have we been right in our contention that a vote for a Democratic candidate is a vote for the war no matter how "peaceful" his intentions?

The campaigns of the "RAMPARTS" men, Sheinbaum in the 13th CD (Santa Barbara and Ventura counties), and Keating in the 11th CD (San Mateo) are most instructive. Both won a substantial 45% of the primary vote; both have since endorsed their victorious Democratic opponents, the very men against whom they were supposedly leading the fight to "take over" the Democratic Party for the sake of peace. Thus every anti-war vote that was given to these

men in the hopes that they would reform that party might as well have been personally delivered to LBJ to be ground up in the grist-mill of pro-war "consensus."

The example of Scheer is no less instructive. His campaign was originally sold to the VDC on the grounds that there was no place else to go since independent politics was impossible, and on the promise that this primary campaign was going to be different... it was going to attack the Democratic Party. In a move not too surprising to us, Scheer avoided the contradiction of attacking the party in whose primary he was running by not attacking it. And now that the primary is over, his close supporters (reorganized as the Community for New Politics) have refused to run a write-in campaign against Cohelan or to call for a boycott, while Scheer himself continues to avoid attacking the Democratic Party. Scheer's aim is not to change society and end war but to manipulate the false faith in "liberal ideals" still held by members of the Anti-war Movement in order to snatch their votes and build a bailiwick for himself in the existing political structure of society.

And where is the Movement now? Has it advanced any for its experience with Democratic "peace" candidates? We think that if anything the Movement has been dissipated and weakened by the primary campaigns. The August 6th march and rally were pitifully small compared with the past. The VDC has been kicked off campus and HUAC has been attacking the Movement in a general wave of reactionary fever in the ruling class, exemplified by the Reagan campaign. Finally, a conference has been called by Californians for Liberal Representation in L. A. to discuss all the same old, still unanswered questions, from "Do we support Brown or Reagan for Governor--or some alternative?" to "Should there be a third party?" What we've said before in these pages has been proven true: Independent politics may be difficult, but it is ten times easier than trying to turn Johnson's war party into our party.

It's not enough that the Movement sees the need to confront authority in society unless it has a program for doing it politically. The protestor may see the need to confront authority and aggressively "put his body on the line" (where it will do no good

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and eventually be crushed), but if he re-
fuses to draw the line politically and re-
ject the political arm of the power he's
confronting, he is doubly deluding himself.
After all, the ruling class depends mainly
on political power. Military force is only
good for isolated revolts, like Watts, and
(relatively) small-scale class wars, like
Vietnam. When it comes to maintaining
power over a large, highly industrialized
country like the U.S., only the lies, dem-
agogy and mass hypnosis of the modern
bourgeois political system will suffice.
Through the mass media and the Demo-
cratic Party, the ruling class keeps the
masses divided against themselves and
filled with hundreds of false illusions about
"freedom," "democracy," and the "human-
itarian liberal tradition." By surrender-
ing to these bourgeois illusions within its
own ranks, the Anti-war Movement will be
drained, weakened and effectively behead-
ed, as we have seen happen this year.

The only way to break with the system
is to break politically and take up the dif-
ficult--but not impossible--path of inde-
pendent politics. The Southern Movement
has learned that it can't unseat the Wall-

aces by working in Wallace's party: why
does the Anti-war Movement think it can
end Johnson's war from within Johnson's
party? A real break with the system must
be made by drawing the class line politi-
cally--by turning to the only class that has
no interest in the survival of capitalism
and also has the power to overturn it: the
working class. Working-class politics
must be based on a continuing attempt to
raise the consciousness of black and white
workers of themselves as workers. The
call must be raised for a Freedom-Labor
Party which will raise the following de-
mands of inherent interest to all workers:
rank and file control of labor unions, 30
hours work for 40 hours pay (to wipe out
unemployment, create more leisure time
and counteract inflation), open up segre-
gated unions, a higher minimum wage with
full coverage for all workers and "escala-
tor" increases to counteract price rises,
home rule for all ghettos based on neigh-
borhood patrols and withdrawal of cops,
and an immediate withdrawal of all troops
from all foreign soil. Turn the Anti-war
Movement into an Anti-capitalist Move-
ment!
--C.K.

TURN BLACK POWER INTO WORKERS' POWER!

(Continued from front page)

Alabama. There has been an infinite va-
riety of definitions of Black Power, but we
think the following points contain its real
meaning: (1) organization and struggle in-
dependent of the Democratic Party, the
white liberals and their money, (2) black
control of the black struggle and black
neighborhoods, (3) an end to the special
oppression of blacks, rather than integra-
tion into white society (which implies that
somehow "white is better"), and (4) self-
defence of the struggle against racist at-
tack and police brutality. These are the
elements being adopted by the struggle it-
self, of which the Black Panther Party and
the Community Alert Patrol in Watts are
good examples.

Independent politics, neighborhood pat-
rols, and mainly an awareness on the part
of blacks that they must do it themselves;
this is why Black Power has rapidly be-
come the new slogan of the Negro struggle.
But Black Power itself is insufficient as a
slogan or as a program for struggle. We
must not merely praise a good new devel-

opment in the movement, but carefully
scrutinise it from the point of view of the
struggle, past, present and future.

The fact is that Black Power is incapa-
ble of delivering on its promise of a new
road to black liberation. All of its ele-
ments which we have mentioned above are
essential if this liberation is ever to be
achieved, but by themselves, they cannot
overcome the crippling isolation of the
Negro movement in society. This isola-
tion of the Negro has always been and is
now the chief cause of the special oppres-
sion of blacks. Black Power, as an inter-
view in a recent issue of Flatlands point-
ed out, implies black unity. Thus Stokely
Carmichael, when asked if he was upset
by the Reverend Martin Luther King's
non-violent prattlings and attacks on Black
Power in a recent TV interview, replied,
"Nothing another black man says ever up-
sets me." But the King's and the Roy Wil-
kins' are more than just black; they are
the deadly enemies not only of Black Pow-
er but of the very struggle for liberation

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itself. They are the agents of the white power structure within the black community. King, we must recall, sided with the cops in the police invasion of Watts.

Ironically it is King and his ilk who point out that the Negro is only 15% of the population, that he needs allies, etc.. This much is for certain; the movement does not need the kind of allies King is talking about, namely, white liberals, white moral sympathy, the federal government, etc.. But it does need allies; it needs allies who can fight with it as equals out of similar interests, allies who instead of crippling the movement and making it dependent can reinforce its self-reliance and strengthen its independence. There is only one direction the movement can turn to find these allies; towards the working class, black, white, brown and yellow.

It must be made clear that this is an urgent problem. The vicious racism of the Nazis and the National States Rights Party--fascists--has rallied the racism of thousands of whites in reaction to Black Power. In Baltimore and Chicago there have been violent attacks on the movement of unparalleled size and intensity. The black movement must launch a counter-attack to fascism; it must take the lead in the anti-fascist struggle at once. Self-defense, of course, is the most immediate need; the fascists must not be allowed to spill the blood of black workers without fear of retribution, and King must not be allowed to lead the movement with prayers in the face of bricks and bottles. But just as urgent is the need to begin actively seeking allies in the working class.

We make no denial that the prospects for this are not immediately hopeful. The white working-class has, on the whole, been indifferent and even hostile to the black struggle. As it stands, many white workers, seeking outlets for their own dissatisfactions and frustrations, may follow the fascists in attacking the black struggle. This is not because fascism offers any solution to their problems, but because they see no way to "get even," to strike back at the real cause of their

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problems. Indeed it is the bosses and the corrupt union leaders who encourage racism among white workers for this very reason: so the white workers will take out their aggressions on their fellow black workers instead of on the bosses and corrupt union leaders, where it belongs. We must remember, however, that white workers too are oppressed; they have no more interest in maintaining the "white power structure"--capitalism--than do the blacks. And their oppressors are the same as the blacks': the ruling class that owns and controls this society, and that sets black against white in order to stay in power. White workers have no more interest in fighting the bosses' war in Vietnam than do black workers; and inflation--especially in food prices--caused by the war boom hurts them as much as blacks. Furthermore, the traitorous union bureaucrats who say "don't let those niggers in because they want your job" are also the ones who make deals with the capitalists to prevent strikes, reduce demands, and in general keep the workers under control.

The black workers must seek allies among the rest of the working class. To do this, they must drop the slogan Black Power, not because the elements of struggle that we mentioned above are bad (as King would have us believe), but because as a slogan for struggle it says nothing to workers of other races about the oppression--and the interests--that black and white have in common. What does Black Power say to the striking Delano farm workers, for instance? or to the airline machinists who voted against the contract urged on them by the government and then raised the call for a labor party?

The black workers are in the vanguard of the working class struggle; they must take into their own hands not merely their own struggle, as oppressed blacks, but the struggle of the whole working class as oppressed workers. They must sound the warning to the whole working class of the danger of fascism by calling for an anti-fascist workers' united front. They must raise the kinds of demands that represent the interests of all workers, as, for example, those listed in the concluding paragraph of the other article in this issue. Above all, they must raise the call for a Freedom-Labor Party and an end to all foreign intervention by U.S. troops. Turn Black Power into Workers' Power! --C. K.

SPARTACIST
BOX 6044, MAIN P. O.
CHICAGO, ILL. 60680