

Struggle and the Black Man

by George Jackson

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As you know I'm in a very unique political position. I have a very nearly closed future, and since I have always been one of those inclined to get disturbed over organized injustice or terroristic practices against the innocents - wherever - I can now say just about what I want to say, (I've always done just about that) without fear of self-exposure. One can be executed only once, and in representing my party they can always explain me away with the fact of my 11 years, and the possible loss of contact with objective necessity.

So I rage on aggressive and face action (April 6) and then that substantive written expression that I think needs to be called up. When I am denied or corrected - I always understand- but rage on. All on the principle that the ideal must be flung about, that the oppressed mentality must first escape the myth, the hoax, that repression is the natural reaction to a collective consciousness of the commune - and that ideals cannot be killed with violence. So - I'm duty bound to take the occasion of your letter to respond with what an Irishman once termed "the sweet taste of sedition."

I took your casual remark concerning "the outlaw" back to the cell with me, tooled with it a bit and clarified in my own head 100 tangential questions (I am alive and learning)! Outlaws, of course, I thought. Revolution will not be tolerated, it is against the law in the totalitarian corporative state. The revolutionary must certainly reconcile himself with one day becoming an outlaw.

Then my thoughts turned to the oppressive contract in general - it's the nature of cancer to expand - U.S. expansionism since W.W. II. You've seen a great deal of it first hand; I've only studied it vicariously. But we arrive at the same conclusions: there are millions of outlaws in the Union of South Africa, Jordan, Indo-China and here. There are summary executions not of uniformed soldiers but of the people - women, children in a ditch in Vietnam, and the civic centers of every look-alike county of this country.

And that's the principal contradiction of monopoly capital, the oppressive contract, too many outlaws and then the objective fact that contempt for the oppressed must be maintained, nurtured. Accrual of contempt is its fundamental survival technique. This leads to the excesses and destroys any hope of peace being eventually worked out between corporations, the antagonistic classes, the haves and the have-nots. Coexistence is impossible, contempt breeds resistance, and resistance more contempt and brutality, the whole growing in spirals that must end either in the uneconomic destruction of the oppressed or the termination of oppression.

History is clearly a long continuum of synthesizing elements. However, if there are any immutabilities, they would be sought out and imposed by the American brand of facism. But there are none;

the imbalances of the oppressive contract, ideals so fundamentally contradictory, forces so mutually exclusive, can only result in the dissolution of the agents of that contradiction.

The corollary of the contract is, quite simply, deficiency. It strikes first of all in the region of the brain. The search for a non-diseased mind throws one hard against one of the greatest historical-biological calamities imaginable. Excuses can be made for some workers' blind defense for the system that is victimizing them (the portrait of the silent majority as well-off...considering ...the rest of the barbarian world, was after all created by the National Advertising Council, i.e. the ruling class); their mindless behavior can certainly be explained away by an ignorance of labor history. But however ignoring and gullible, even the nationalistic conditioning received in massive doses from birth cannot completely explain why man would turn against himself. Still there is at least the very well understood economic advantage (short-term) but secondly in analyzing his behavior serious consideration must be given to the psycho-social effects of competitiveness and race.

If the huge mass of blue collar workers seem to be working against themselves in their support of the system by consequently supporting the tiny majority that own and control the system, reaping from it two lion's shares, their reasons for so clearly contradictory behavior, though economically motivated to begin with, are propped by feelings of loyalty to race - deep-seated ingrained feelings that if there must be hierarchy let that hierarchy be white. When the white self-accepting racist complains that the blacks are uncouth, unlettered, that our areas are run-down, not maintained, that we dress with loud distaste (a thing they now also say about their children) he forgets that he governs. He forgets that he built the schools that are inadequate, that he is responsible to use his position over us and our taxed status to maintain the district that he manufactured the loud pants and pointed shoes that destroy and deform the feet. If we are not enough like him to suit his tastes it's because he planned it that way.

We were never intended to be part of his world. It's a silly contradiction for him or us to dwell on the subject of comparisons between the enemy culture and its creation, the sub-culture - how else can the exploiter maintain his position, his distance, than to create differences and maintain deformities. We understand well the economic nature of life and social relationships; we also must understand the economic nature of racism - but understand it thoroughly. It's not simply an aside. Built-in physical features that exclude one from participation, exclude one forever, these features cannot be changed. It is the relationship that must change. This makes racism a fundamental characteristic of monopoly capital.

It is the exclusion from solid social-economic participation and the feeling that it will always be such, that forces our youth away from the crippled family unit (so let's forget it) into the streets. The excessive weight of meaningless relationships or the seeking of any form of "community" is a psycho-social response to the loss of - and longing for community.

The diseased mind...it's slowly spreading throughout the oppressed organism. The "magnificent savage," "the mindless overman," is even dying with the deficiency. The black man, and as you correctly stated because of Angela, I see him really inseparable

from the black female - where is he now? How we've maintained any' of our physical or mental parts is yet to be explained.

Early I understood the alternatives of our situation: assimilation, meaning acceptance of the oppressive contract; ossification or life below, beyond, outside of society; or the healthy rejection of both - revolution. But I admit to some confusion over the issue of so sensitized a racism - here in prison. My mind vacillated between the historical references: African feudalism and African communalism. I knew that we Africans were the first communists; J. Edgar Hoover calls it "primitive communism" in one of the glossaries of his anti-people books. Dr. Du Bois dealt with it in The Philadelphia Negro I think (I can't quite remember now) in a positive manner so I never had any of the really serious hangups in accepting revolution. But - I think for a while I sincerely felt that Europeans were not capable of communistic unitarian behavior. I felt this, however, only briefly since unitarian, progressive conduct seems to be a problem for all of us after hundreds of years of steadily centralizing capitalism and, in some areas, thousands of years of hierarchy. I've always understood that the new cultural-nationalist attempts to reconstruct the past beyond slavery, with a staged return to the day of African feudalism, leave the average black man more uncertain and insecure than ever. Why does the time machine break down or select negative, academic, and obscure exoticism when concrete examples of historical contributions can be called up to analyze and give meaning to our present and our future.

The necessity of total revolution means that aside from the economic motive, or better, side-by-side with the economic motive, the psycho-social motives must be examined, i.e. the oppressive

contract which perpetuates itself somewhat through the non-revolutionary methods employed by the victim on the various levels of unstructured, forced-reactionary society. For the black partisan, national structures are quite simply non-existent because they are not possible. But a people without a freaks, Afro-Amerikkans, Negroes, even Amerikkans or excuse me "Black Amerikkans." Without the collective sense of community, without its movement (Bobby Hutton, the shootout on Central, Aug. 7th) and institutions (our survival projects that will now grow into infrastructure) we simply never will be.

During the nationalist or contrived nationalist period of the collective oppressed mentality, the movement is of course frozen, static. This is the level of development favored by the oppressor, the artless empty ideals of the pseudo-nation, love and respect for a flag, a nationalistic song or beat, tempo, fervent belief in a bond or organization that does not exist. Where does it come from? It arises out of the intense longing for community. This level is either ignored or embraced by the establishment. They send in their agents at this point to insure that development is arrested, that revolutionary rage is redirected along empty outlets which provide pressure releases for well-understood desires that could become dangerous to "order" if allowed to progress. From this point on the two alternatives are aggressive and revolutionary activity or calcification. Conservative society, black or white, is decadent society; the absence of creativity and movement certainly make the relationships caustic. However, one can state equally well that our condition should and eventually will pass beyond the chauvinistic and static dependence upon others in similar conditions.

Your letter got right at the heart of that principle. The whole ideal of cultural nationalism has been all but smothered now. It was basically contrived out of the loss of community and the terms of the oppressive contract - coercive conformity and indulgent flexibility to the demands of hierarchy. But heavy collective drama reaches its fruition as we arrive at the revelation that the oppressive contract cannot be broken as long as any sort of hierarchy exists to perpetuate the sensitized relationships of tribalism (in Amerikkka?), class, and race. Society is rendered impossible by such relationships. With the establishment of society through intercommunalism, the entire social contract must be altered. Clearly alteration cannot take place unless hierarchy is destroyed. Can we expect the beneficiary of hierarchy to accept revolution? To do away with himself?

Then the real undertaking at present is the unconditional freeing of the people. We plunge beyond ideological debate before this immediate task. The black male and the black female must be, as I have mentally ordered things, in juxtaposition to each other exactly in the matter that is at hand - liberation! Of course I must accept my black mama with all her fears for my life that border on hysteria at times with the constant reminder that it is the "role of the living," of all the innocent to discover unitary practice and conduct and move against the institutions that close in on the oppressed.

But to all who would regard a united progressive left with less than they regard their own egos or self-interest and all those who abandon community altogether to take up positions small or not so small, that can be considered in contradiction to our real interests (permanent exiles, spies, police, mercenaries, emissaries to other nations in representation of this one), are actually attempting another form of escapism. They're reflecting the objective conditions of their real life and will eventually reach the ultimate contradiction of facing over the barrel of a gun their father or brother, or old class-mate, comrade, or wife. Or they will find themselves in noman's land, cast out by the people, suspected by their crime partners.

But, regarding the crisis (just past) in the party, as Huey Newton reminds us there is always a positive side to each negative. The confused resentment and reverse racism of the black partisan will eventually lead to a new and more productive, creative contribution. The point of substantiation has been reached over here really; there was no split in the party, only a defection, and it seems that we have come out of it stronger. We can now bring our strategy and tactics into a realistic conformity with our total objective situation. Recall we discussed Jonathan and guerrilla strategy in the urban situation at length over that piece of paper with circles and lines, arrows and question marks. I guess now that he is dead, and the guilty are safe from the muscle of his mind and arm, it is safe to reveal some of his thoughts and functions within the matrix of the party and movement. He felt along with me that the military and political branches, though married in purpose and direction, should, in these opening stages, function separately from each other for very obvious reason. The opposition's military strike forces are not 30 miles down a dirt road in the province capital; they're always within a few moments of strike. In the urban situation, we might mingle with them, thus we must be hidden.

There is no contradiction between the military thinking and acting for itself and the primacy of politics in our situation; rather it allows for such activity as the Aug. 7th movement without giving the enemy state forces the pretext they need to move in and destroy the political apparatus. The ideal takes into account the very convenient and much used Anglo-Saxon conspiracy laws. The primacy of politics will remain inviolate as long as the military re

reads, picks up and works well within the prevailing political matrix. So Jonathan's raid on the military and judiciary that Friday was at once an expression of his own aggressive consciousness and that of the party. It is easy to infer all of this in retrospect - that Jonathan was head of the clandestine army which saw the Black Panther Party as their political leaders. Operating on his own he was able to at least attempt to support some of the minimum demands of the people without placing Huey Newton and David Hilliard in jeopardy of loss of movement or death, i.e. persecution in courts.

That this is our only recourse at the present level of development is too obvious to even dwell on. It will not be possible in the advanced stages of revolution. of course; however, just a glance at the present level of consciousness and development of survival infrastructure will reveal the lie of Cleaver's analysis - that no separation should exist between military and political cadre, between military and political action. You know I sent him a message that unitarian conduct depends on a principled discipline and submission to democratic centralism instead of the egoism that sent him first against his Muslims (through the Sacramento Bee pig press that time), against the Peace and Freedom Party at one time, even against the progressive elements of the C.P. all the time (his unreasoned attack on the magnificent Angela Davis). Recently he has even attacked the dedicated, over-worked and brilliant Charles Garry. It seems to be a pattern with the man. You will recall the attack he launched against Fidel and Cuba, and those accounts that seemed disparaging of his hosts which have reached the pig press here from time to time.

My personal message to him was mild, considering that he was in fact leaving his old comrades open to attack again. I sent a letter reminding him that his behavior while in prison was far from exemplary and had that section of it signed by Ulysses McDaniel and Clifford Jefferson, two of the oldest (time in) black partisans in the California concentration camp system, two of the most respected. I then listed some of his behavior patterns since his release that did not indicate that he had changed much - a more complete list than the one just given. I finally asked him simply to show proof now that he was not a compulsive disrupter or agent provocateur, a very mild request I feel. He returned with a very scurrilous and profane set of invectives - in short, a vendetta. Tell him that 7,000 miles and the walls, steel and barbed wire do not make him safe from my special brand of discipline, tell him that the dragon is coming...The substructured prison movements are gaining momentum. My trial is set for early Aug. 1971, there'll be a hearing in between of course, if they are at all like the last you'll get to see my special bastardized style of martial arts; I'm working hard to stay in form also. I wasn't at my best last showing. I'll clean them all next time they attack - attend. Let me see your style.

Your comrade in arms - "He who does not fear the death of 1,000 cuts will dare unseat the emperor."

George Jackson

TOWARDS THE UNITED FRONT

by GEORGE JACKSON

reprinted from IF THEY
COME IN THE MORNING,
ANGELA Y. DAVIS AND
OTHER POLITICAL PRISONERS
edited by Angela Davis

There exists already a new unitarian and progressive current in the movement centering around political prisoners. The question at this point, I feel, is how to develop unitarian conduct further -- against the natural resistance of establishment machinations -- through the creation of new initiatives and a dialectic so clear in its argumentation, presentation and implementation that it will of its own weight force the isolation of reactionary elements. Both individual-attitudinized and organized reaction must be isolated.

Unitary conduct implies a "search" for that something in common, a conscious reaching for the relevant, the entente, and in our case especially the reconcilable. Throughout the centralizing-authoritarian process of American history, the ruling classes have found it expedient, actually necessary to insinuate upon the people instrumentalities designed to discourage and punish any genuine opposition to hierarchy. There have always been individuals and groups who rejected the ideal of society above society. The men who placed themselves above society through guile, fortuitous outcome of circumstance and sheer brutality have developed two principal institutions to deal with any and all serious disobedience -- the prison and institutionalized racism. There are more prisons of all categories in the United States than in all other countries of the world combined. There are at all times two-thirds of a million people or more confined to these prisons. Hundreds are destined to be executed outright legally and thousands quasi-legally. Other thousands will never again have any freedom of movement barring a revolutionary change in all the institutions that combine to make up the order of things. Two thirds of a million people may not seem like a great number compared against the total population of nearly two hundred and five million. However compared to the one million who are responsible for all the affairs of men within the extended state, it constitutes a striking contrast not at all coincidental, and perhaps deserving of careful analysis. What I want to explore now are a few of the subtle elements that I have observed to be standing in the path of a much needed united front (non-sectarian) to effectively reverse the legitimized rip-off.

I will emphasize again that prisons were not institutionalized on so massive a scale by the people. Though all crime can be considered a manifestation of antithesis, some crime does work out to the well understood detriment of the people. Most crime, however, is clearly the simple effect of a grossly disproportionate distribution of wealth and privilege, a reflection of the state of present property relations. There are no wealthy men on death row, and so very few in the general prison population that we can discount them altogether -- imprisonment is an aspect of class struggle from the outset. A closed society intended to isolate those who quite healthfully disregard the structures of a hypocritical establishment with their individual actions, and those who would organize a mass basis for

such action. U.S. history is replete with examples of both types, the latter extending from the early Working Men's Benevolent Association through the events surrounding the Ancient Order of Hibernians, The Working Men's Party who organized against the excesses of the 1877 depression, all the way to the present era when the Communist Party was banned (during this country's fascist takeover), and the Black Panther Party in the practical sense assaulted and banned.

The hypocrisy of American fascism will not allow it to openly declare that it does hold political offenders -- thus the hundreds of versions of conspiracy laws and the highly sophisticated frame-up. This is the first point of attack in the educational sense. Why do prisons exist in such numbers, what is the real underlying economic motive of crime, and the diacritical breakdown of types of offenders or victims? If offenders is the better term it must be clearly presented that the language of the law is definitely weighted and deceptive, it should be clear that when one "offends" the totalitarian state it is patently not an offense against the people of that state, offending the state translates into an assault upon the privilege of the privileged few.

Could anything be more ridiculous than the officious titles to indictments reading: "The People of the State . . . vs. Bobby Seale and Ericka Huggins" or "The People of the State . . . vs. Angela Davis and Ruchell Magee." What people are referred to? -- clearly the hierarchy, the armed minority.

Then in the John Doe cases where an actual robbery or theft was committed, we must elucidate the real causes of economic crimes; or any crime, of passion against repression, the thrill crime, we must be all inclusive. All crime is motivated by simple economic oppression, or the psychosocial effects of an economic order that was decadent 100 years ago. Objective socio-economic conditions equals social productive or counter-productive activity, in all cases determined by the economic system, the method of economic organization, the maintenance of that organization against the forces of progress that would change it. Even the psychology of the sick individual, perpetrator of a "thrill crime" must ultimately be traced to a sick society.

Prisoners must be reached and made to understand that they are victims of social injustice. This is my task working from within (while I'm here -- my persuasion is that the war goes on no matter where one may find himself on bourgeois dominated soil). The sheer numbers of the prisoner class and their terms of existence make them a mighty reservoir of revolutionary potential. Working alone and from within a steel enclosed society there is very little that people like myself can do to free the retrained potential revolutionary. That is part of the task of the "Prison Movement." "The People of the State . . . vs. John Doe" is as tenuous as the clearly political frame-ups. It's like stating "The People vs. The People." Man against himself.

The "Prison Movement" serves another important political end. It makes the ruling class conscious of our determination to never surrender our economic right to hold the implements of production in our own hands short of physical death. Detention will not check our movement. The August 7th move-

ment and all actual acts of, and attempts to, put the keeper to death serve this notice best. They also hint at the ultimate goal of revolutionary consciousness at every level of struggle, the major level at the point of production, and at all substructural levels. The goal is always the same: the creation of an infrastructure capable of fielding a people's army.

There should be no one among us who still doesn't understand that revolution is aggressive, and that the making of demands on the manipulators of the system, that they cannot or will not meet must eventually move us all into a violent encounter with that system one day. These are the terminal years of capitalism and as we move into significant areas of antiestablishment activities, history clearly forewarns us that when the prestige of power fails a violent episode precedes its transformation.

We can attempt to limit the scope and range of violence in revolution by mobilizing as many partisans as possible at every level of socio-economic life, but considering the hold that the ruling class of this county has on the apolitical in general and its history of violence, nothing could be more predictable than civil disorders, perhaps even civil war. I don't dread either, for there are no good aspects of monopoly capital, no good or beneficial guarantees, so no reservations need be recognized in its destruction. No interpretation of what revolution will be is required really, not in the U.S., not in the face of monopoly capital. As it stands above us monopoly capital is an obstruction that leaves us in the shade and has made us its servant. It must be completely destroyed, not rejected, not simply transformed, but destroyed utterly, totally, ruthlessly, relentlessly -- as immediately as possible terminated!

With this as a common major goal it would seem that unitarian conduct of all parties concerned in active anti-establishment struggle on various levels should find little difficulty in developing initiatives and new methods consistent with the goals of mass society.

Regrettably this has not been the case, although as I stated there can be detected in the prison movement the beginnings of a unitary current cutting across the ideological, racial and cultural barricades that have in all times past blocked the natural coalition of left wing forces: This brings us to another vital aspect of the activity surrounding political prisoners. Perhaps on our substructural level with steadily attentive efforts at building the united front we can provide an example for the partisans engaged at other levels of struggle. The issues involved and the dialectic which flows from the clear objective existence of overt oppression could be the basis of, or a spring board for our genuine entrance into the tide of increasing world wide socialist consciousness. In clearing away the obstacles that preclude a united left for the defense of political prisoners and prisoners in general there must first be a renunciation of the idea that all participants must be of one mind and should work at the problem from a single party line or methodical singularity. The reverse of this is actually desirable. "From all according to ability." Each partisan, outside the vanguard elements, should proceed in a popularization strategy in the area of their natural environment, the places where they pursue their normal lives when not attending the rallies and demonstrations. The vanguard elements (organized party workers of all ideological persuasion) go among the people concentrated at the rallying point with elevation strategy, promoting

commitment and providing concrete, clearly defined activity for them to popularize. The vanguard elements are first searching out people who can and will contribute to the building of the commune, the infrastructure -- (with pen and clip-board in hand) -- for those who cannot yet take that step a "packet" of pamphlets is provided for use in their individual pursuits.

Unity of the left factions in this substructural aspect of the movement, that centers around political prisoners and prisons in general is significant then in several ways. With our example we can begin to break the old behavioral patterns that have repeatedly won bourgeois capitalism, its imperialism and fascism, life after death over the last several decades. We free a massive potential reservoir of partisans for cadre work, and finally we begin to address one of the most complex psycho-social by-products that economic man with his private enterprise has manufactured -- Racism.

I've save this most critical barrier to our needs of unity for ~~last~~ Racism is a question of ingrained traditional attitudes conditioned through institutions -- for some, it is as natural a reflex as breathing. The psycho-social effects of the dichotomous habitudes set up by a particularly sensitized racism compounded with the bitterest of class repression has served in the past to render us all practically inactive, and where we attempt progressive action, particularly impotent.

If a united left is possible in this country the major obstacle must be considered racism, white racism to be blunt. The categories can be best simplified by reducing them to three, the overt self-satisfied racist who doesn't deign to hide his antipathy, the self-interdicting racist who harbors and nurtures racism ~~in~~ spite of their best efforts, and the unconscious racist, product of preconceived notions that must be blamed on history.

I deny the existence of Black racism outright, by fiat I deny it. Too much Black blood has flowed between the chasm that separates the races, it's fundamentally unfair to expect the Black man to differentiate at a glance the self-accepting racist, the self-interdicting racist and the unconscious racist. The apologist's term "Black racism " is either a healthy defense reflex on the part of the sincere Black partisan attempting to deal with the realistic problems of survival and elevation, or the racism of the government stooge organs.

As Black partisans we must recognize and allow for the existence of all three types of racists, as we accept ourselves in relation thereto, but all must still be viewed as the effect of the system. It is a system that must be crushed first, for it continues to manufacture new and deeper contradictions of both class and race. Once it is gone we may be able to address in depth the effects of its presence but to a great extent, we must combat racism while we are in the process of destroying it. The psycho-social effects of hundreds of years of mutually exclusive attitudinal positions on race and class and symbols, hierarchy in general must be isolated.

The self-interdicting racist, no matter what his acquired conviction or ideology, will seldom be able to contribute with his actions in any really concrete way. Their role in revolution, barring a change of basic character, will be

minimal throughout. Whether the basic character of a man can be changed at all is still a question. But. . . we have in the immediacy of the "issues in question" the perfect opportunity to test the validity of materialist philosophy again.

The need for unitarian conduct goes much deeper than the liberation of Angela, Bobby, Ericka, Magee, Los Siete, Tijerina, white draft resisters and now the indomitable and faithful James Carr. We have fundamental strategy to be proved -- tested and proved. The activity surrounding the protection and liberation of people who fight for us is an important aspect of the struggle, but it is important only if it provides new initiatives that redirect and advance the revolution under new progressive methods. There must be a collective redirection of the old guard, the factory and union agitator, with pamphlet and silenced pistol, the campus activist who can counter the ill-effects of fascism at its training site, the lumpen-proletarian intellectuals with revolutionary scientific attitudes to deal with the masses of street people living outside the system already. Black, Brown, White are victims, fight! At the end of this massive collective struggle we will uncover our new man; he is a creation of the process, the future, he will be better equipped to wage the real struggle, the permanent struggle after the revolution -- the one for new relationships between man.