MARXISM AND BLACK NATIONALISM IN
THE 1960's: THE ORIGINS OF
REVOLUTIONARY BLACK NATIONALISM

by
John Bracey

Paper to be presented at 72nd Annual Meeting
of the
Organization of American Historians
New Orleans, Louisiana
April 14, 1979

Session: Marxism and Afro-American History
Moderator: Herbert Aptheker
Panelists: Mark Solomon, Herbert Shapiro
Commentators: Ewart Guinier, Neil R. McMillen
One of the major problems inherent in attempting to write the history of events and a period in which one was actively involved, and to assess ideas and viewpoints to which one was/is deeply committed is that of perspective. It is quite probable that it is much too early to be able to write an analysis of the 1960's that will have much validity several years hence. The events are much too close for those of us involved and many relevant sources are still not available, e.g., those of local, state and federal law enforcement agencies. I think that this is certainly true of the histories and analyses of the civil rights and Black liberation movements that have appeared thus far: such as the general surveys of Robert Brisbane, Black Activism: Racial Revolution in the United States, 1954-1970, (Valley Forge, Pa.: Judson Press, 1974) and Thomas Brooks, Walls Come Tumbling Down: A History of the Civil Rights Movement, 1940-1970 (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1974) and the books by sociologists Thomas Blair and Alphonso Pinckney.¹

While it is possible to point out the quantifiable gains and losses achieved by Black America there is a considerable debate as to what they all mean. During this return to the "end of ideology" the great debates of the 1960's: black nationalism vs. integration, socialism vs. black capitalism, armed struggle vs. non-violence, etc., generate neither interest nor enthusiasm, especially among black students, who if eighteen or nineteen years old were five years old when Malcolm X was killed, two years old when the march on Washington took place, and infants or unborn during the freedom rides and sit-ins. Even more
significant, and disturbing is the tendency on the part of scholars and the general public to read back into the early pre-Watts 1960's the consciousness of the later Black Power, Black Panther, 'we are an African people' period.

This realization struck me quite forcefully as I began to review my files of documents and the periodical literature of the early 1960's. The political naivety of myself and my colleagues/comrades, and the vacuum in which we tried to work out our ideology was staggering. The actual tone and ambiance of this period is missing in all the analyses I have mentioned, and is best conveyed in the autobiographies, biographies, and "oral histories" that have begun to appear. The autobiographies of Julius Lester and James Forman are quite effective, that of Bobby Seale less so. Peter Goldman's study of Malcolm X's last years and Howell Raine's oral history of the civil rights movement, though marred by an integrationist bias, do capture the flavor of the period.  

What I will attempt in this paper is to present the broad outline of my assessment of the sources of the Marxist and Black nationalist ideas that were fused into the ideology known as revolutionary Black nationalism. In brief, revolutionary Black nationalism advocates the overthrow by any means necessary of capitalism in the United States and the seizing of power by the Black proletariat as part of a world-wide revolution of the masses of Africa and the Third World. This ideology developed among a number of Black college age students and activists during the period from 1959-1965, finding its clearest organizational expression in the Revolutionary Action Movement, though it was also held by activists in SNCC, Core, Act and numerous local nationalist organiza-
tions. The indepth analysis of the many sources I will mention cannot be done within the time and space allowed. For that analysis you will have to wait for the longer version that will be published in the near future. As a final caveat: I will not attempt to factor out my own involvement in such groups as Core (Chicago Chapter), Act, and the Revolutionary Action Movement. In fact my own experiences often will serve as a guide through this material. My experiences were not typical, but they also weren't unique. When I speak of we I mean the group of young Black Nationalists who were active in such urban centers as Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit, Cincinnati, Philadelphia, New York, Washington and Oakland. It is hard to measure either our total numbers or influence. To attempt that measurement is one of my long-range research tasks.

One theme that emerged as I traced the confluence of Marxism and Black Nationalism is the paradoxical (or contradictory) one of white Marxists fueling Black nationalism through their advocacy of the study of Afro-American history, and of radical African nationalists, and Black self-evident during the confusing and hot-house atmosphere of the early 1960's. In retrospect it is quite clear, and will help serve to organize this paper which will begin with a discussion of the intellectual climate at one Black college in the late 1950's and then move to the presentation of the international and domestic sources of the Marxist and Black nationalist ideas that were most influential during the period from 1959 through 1965.
At the height of the Cold War and anti-communist hysteria of the Eisenhower years a free flow of ideas and knowledge about how societies can or should be organized did not exist in the United States. Basic works by Marx, Engels, Lenin—not to mention Mao, Gramsci, Lukacs, et al—were available only in collections of snippets, if at all. Professors who were knowledgeable about Marxism were reluctant to let it be known, and discussed Marxist ideas only in a most cautious and tentative manner. Liberal ideology was so predominant that its apologists could proclaim that ideologies were non-existent or irrelevant. The situation concerning the discussion of the future of Black Americans was equally constraining. Few of DuBois' writings were in print or readily available. The full-length studies of Marcus Garvey and of Blacks and the left were misinformed and/or hostile. The dominant ideology was non-violent integrationism and the mood was the optimism expressed in "From Slavery to Freedom" and "Free By '63," and "Freedom Now."

As an eighteen year old freshman at Howard University in 1959, I was fortunate to have friends, teachers and fellow students who were much committed to racial equality and who exhibited a range of viewpoints that I found bewildering. To mention just the students, the names of Laurence Henry, Dion Diamond, Timothy Jenkins, Courtland Cox, Claude Brown, Stokeley Carmichael and Michael Thelwell should be familiar to any serious student of the early days of the civil rights movement. Those from the West Indies were truly Pan-Africanist in outlook and kept up with current events in Africa as well as the West Indies.
including Cuba. It was from this group that I first heard the view that a revolution (other than the American Revolution) was not necessarily a bad thing. I heard the view that socialism might be a solution to the social and economic problems of Black people.

All of this was beyond my comprehension, and I made no connection between those ideas and the endless trips into the South or to Maryland's Eastern Shore or to downtown Washington, D.C. to sit-in at lunch counters, restaurants, bus stations, etc. As a product of the Washington, D.C. schools which provided segregated, but hardly inferior, education at the elementary and junior high school levels, and of a reluctantly integrated high school, I was not at all convinced that white people had much to offer the world. I was taught they kept Blacks segregated because they feared open competition with a people who had weathered their best shots, and still endured and kept coming. The excessive interracialism was what curtailed my interest in the Beat movement, led at Howard by a philosophy student, Percy Johnston, who made us aware of LeRoi Jones seminal contributions. The Howard faculty had a number of extremely capable and committed scholars. The efforts of the Law faculty have been amply documented by Richard Kluger in *Simple Justice* (N.Y.: Knopf, 1976) but the influence of many of the others has not been thoroughly assessed. E. Franklin Frazier's *Black Bourgeoisie* (N.Y.: Free Press, 1957), was a major topic of discussion and among black college students the term "bourgeois" or bourgeoisie was a term of derision one applied to other Blacks, and not to the white owners of the means of production. In their Introduction to Social Science courses Frazier and Chancellor Williams of *The Destruc*
tion of Black Civilization (Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt, 1971), taught and recommended C. Wright Mills' *White Collar* and *The Power Elite*, and Mills himself visited Howard to give the Sidney Hillman lecture during the 1959-60 academic year. It is difficult to estimate the influence of Mills' ideas among the general population of Black students either at Howard or elsewhere, but his discussion of the American "power structure" in *The Power Elite*, along with Floyd Hunter's *Community Power Structure* (Chapel Hill: U. of N.C. Press, 1953), gave the civil rights movement one of its favorite phrases: white power structure. The usage must have been fairly extensive since it provoked Arnold Rose to write a five hundred page book attempting to refute the contentions of Mills and Hunter.

In addition, the Howard faculty generally were very much attuned to and sympathetic towards the leaders of the newly (or soon-to-be) independent African states. Frazier headed the African Studies Program, Chancellor Williams was soon to publish the first of his studies of African history and society, *The Rebirth of African Civilization* (Washington, D.C.: Public Affairs Press, 1961). William Leo Hansberry's influence was still being felt, and Nnandi Azikewe invited Howard to help recruit faculty for Nigerian universities. Kwame Nkrumah, Leopold Senghor and Patrice Lumumba all visited Howard during this period. Mercer Cook, then Professor of Romance Languages, translated Leopold Senghor's essays *On*
African Socialism, (N.Y.: Praeger, 1964). Professors Cook and Frazier were active in the Society of African Culture (S.A.C) and were only two of the six Howard faculty to contribute to Africa Seen by American Negroes, (Paris: Presence Africaine, 1958). The others were Rayford Logan, historian; Hildrus Poindexter, medical doctor and public health specialist, Dorothy Porter, curator of the Moorland collection and James Porter, artist and art historian. Logan, Porter and Cook were also active in the American Society of African Culture formed in 1957 as an affiliate of S.A.C. We have here the paradox of integrationist Black scholars encouraging an identification with African nationalists most of whom advocated some form of socialism. To continue with the African connection, Nkrumah's Ghana welcomed such radical Blacks as W.E.B. DuBois, Shirley Graham DuBois, W. Alphaeus Hunton and Julian Mayfield. George Padmore served as Nkrumah's adviser on African Affairs from 1957 until his death in 1959. Alex Quaison-Sackey, Ghana's ambassador to the United Nations, was extremely popular among Blacks in New York and Washington, D.C.

The personal interaction between African nationalists and Afro-American civil rights activists was important in broadening the outlook of Black Americans. The visits to Africa by Malcolm X and James Farmer are well known, but not enough emphasis has been given to the personal influence of Quaison-Sackey, and Oginga Odinga of Kenya and Muhammed
Oginga Odinga visited the South in late 1963 and met with SNCC activists. The event is described in Forman's *The Making of Black Revolutionaries*, (p. 360), and preserved in song on *The Freedom Singers Sing of Freedom Now!* (Mercury Records M.G. 20924, 1964, side 2, cut 2). Odinga of course was imprisoned by Jomo Kenyatta in 1966 for his attempt to point out the dangers of neo-colonialism in *Not Yet Uhuru: An Autobiography*, (N.Y.: Hill & Wang, 1967). In the 1959-64 period Kenyatta, of Mau Mau fame was popular among nationalists. Sweatshirts with Kenyatta's picture entitled "Burning Spear" were a minor fad. Sekou Toure invited SNCC workers to visit Guinea in October, 1964, and had a good reputation among young Blacks as being sympathetic to the struggle of Black Americans. All of these African leaders Marxist and socialists of varying degrees were the African students--primarily Nigerian and Ghanaian--who led the Pan-African Student Organization in the Americas (P.A.S.O.A.) which was quite active during this period in the Midwest. The leaders I knew best were Chimere and Obi Wali of Nigeria who were well read in the literature of Marxism. Their active involvement with Afro-American nationalists caused their deportation in 1965.8

Events in the Congo from 1960 to 1964, i.e., the assassination of Patrice Lumumba in January, 1961 and the U.S. intervention in 1964 helped to dispel our allusions concerning the ease with which African nations were gaining
independence and moving to implement socialism. The U.S. role in the killing of Lumumba provoked a group of Afro-American intellectuals, activists and artists to carry out a loud demonstration at the U.N. Security Council in February, 1961.9 Dan Watts, a New York based architect, and one of the group's organizers founded the Liberation Committee for Africa and began the publication of the offset newsletter that evolved into Liberator, (1961-1971) one of the most influential journals of Black radical, nationalist and Pan-Africanist thought in the early 1960's. Discussions of Marxism, socialism and revolution were a part of almost every issue.

The story of Robert Williams and the Monroe, N.C. affair are part of the general history of the 1960's (though Howell Raines manages to omit any mention of it in My Soul is Rested).10 What I want to stress here is the fact that when Williams fled into exile he went to a socialist country Cuba (1962-1966) [and later to China (1966-1969)]. Despite Williams militancy a careful reading of The Crusader reveals a number of statements that support integration. At any rate, with the exception of "Potential of a Minority Revolution," The Crusader went largely unread among my colleagues in the Mid-West precisely because of Williams' basic integrationism, and what seemed to be an over-emphasis on the relevance of the Cuban and Chinese experiences to Black Americans. Williams' pronouncements were no more help to the Revolutionary Action Movement in day-to-day organizing than the demand for separate
states was to the Nation of Islam or "self-determination in the Black Belt" was to the C.P.U.S.A.. What Williams did was to force a study of the revolutionary processes in Cuba and China, and of the Marxism-leninism espoused by Fidel, Che and Mao. Williams also effectively championed revolutionary internationalism, at least among Third World countries, and served to balance the provincialism of the Nation of Islam and the traditional Garveyite Black nationalist groups.11

The other major Black nationalist who encouraged revolutionary internationalism and interest in socialism was Malcolm X. The favorable press coverage given him in the Socialist Worker's Party paper, The Militant, his favorable reception in radical African countries during his visits in 1964, and his well-known interest in world affairs were all factors in Malcolm's increasingly strong anti-capitalist statements. In his most famous speech "Message to the Grass Roots," Malcolm challenges his audience to consider what a revolution actually is and to examine the revolutions that took place in America in 1776, China, Kenya and Algeria.12

In sum then, among a significant segment of Black students, faculty, artists, writers and activists, there was an active interest in Marxism-leninism and socialism as these ideologies related to the problems of newly independent African and West Indian nations, and increasingly as they related to the situation of Blacks in the United States. Neither among the Africans, the West Indians, nor in relation to Black Americans
was Marxism seen as a mandate requiring interracial cooperation. Neither was any great attention paid to events in the Soviet Union, nor to such classic Marxist debates as the correctness of Stalin vs. Trotsky, etc. Marxism-leninism and socialism were offered as vital to the effective liberation of colored peoples throughout the world. The feeling if expressed at all, was that white workers were more race conscious than class conscious, i.e., their primary identification was as whites rather than as workers, and on the whole were notoriously unreliable allies. The exceptions so often cited by white Marxists, e.g., the populist movement, C.I.O., and C.P. in the 1930's served to prove the rule.
The interaction between the white student movement and the civil rights movement has been much discussed. Though many individuals in the student movement, i.e., N.S.A. and the newly formed S.D.S. were sympathetic to Black nationalist ideas and supported some efforts led by Blacks, the thrust of these groups during the pre-Watts rebellion period was generally integrationist, and the younger Black nationalists kept their distance. The relation between Black nationalists and the traditional left organizations—the Socialist Party, the Communist Party, the Socialist Workers Party, and several smaller splinter groups—has not been explored in depth. I will try to sketch out some of the intellectual interaction that took place during the 1959-1964 period.

Members of the Socialist Party were very active and influential in the civil rights movement, were vocally anti-Black nationalist, and were firm advocates of non-violent integration, change by education and persuasion. The writings of Bayard Rustin, Thomas Kahn and August Meier express this point of view. Advocates of social democracy were dominant in CORE until 1965. In addition the intellectual influence of members of the Socialist Party and the Young People's Socialist League (Y.P.S.L.'s) remained negligible because of a basic contradiction in their ap-
proaches to the struggle of Blacks and to the state of Israel. In numerous discussions with Y.P.S.L.s and with Saul Mendelson, a faculty member who was quite active in the socialist party during my undergraduate days at Roosevelt, and within the Chicago chapter of Core, Blacks were told that 1.) armed struggle and violence were corrupting in and of themselves and led to totalitarianism, 2.) that Black Americans were a minority and they resort to the use of weapons, even in self-defense, would provoke genocidal repression, and 3.) that assimilation and amalgamation should be the goal of mankind, and therefore, nationalism of any sort was divisive and reactionary.

These same people supported the state of Israel which was established by a minority who were intensely nationalistic and separatist, who used violence to achieve their aims and who remained armed to the teeth. Furthermore, in pushing our argument we never got a satisfactory answer to the question if integration between Blacks and their white oppressors was such a great idea why didn't the Jewish population pursue this strategy with their oppressors in Germany and in Eastern Europe.

The influence of the Communist Party, or of several of its members concerned with "the Negro people," was much greater than that of the social-democrats but probably not in the way that the Party intended. First, the major contribution to the development of Black nationalism were

Dr. Aptheker's works were indispensable. The single most potent antidote to the ideas that Blacks had no history of struggle or that it always took the form of legal actions and non-violent protest was *American Negro Slave Revolts*, issued in a paperback edition by International Publishers in
1963. It would be difficult to overestimate the importance of this book on young Black nationalist activists. It was that link with that part of our past that few thought even existed or were willing to help us find. Almost on a par with American Negro Slave Revolts were what were known affectionately as "the Documents": A Documentary History of the Negro People in the United States, two volumes (N.Y.: Citadel Press, 1962, 1964). "The Documents," especially volume one, opened our eyes to the complexity of our history and to the immense talents of our forebears who seemed to have anticipated the form and content of every strategy or tactic that we thought we were inventing for the first time. Dr. Aptheker had placed before us the words of such giants as H. Ford Douglass, Martin Delany, David Walker, Henry Highland Garnet, John S. Rock, and of course Nat Turner and Frederick Douglass. We read and re-read, marveled at and discussed Douglass' 4th of July speech numerous times.

In political terms the C.P.U.S.A. was not a strong independent presence in the civil rights movement and the politics of the Party often were not of much interest to us outsiders. Little attention was paid to C.P. positions on national and world affairs in general. On the contemporary
racial situation the C.P. literature was anti-nationalist, (generally ignoring Robert Williams, Malcolm X, the Nation of Islam), pro-integration and consistently in favor of Black and white working-class unity.

My initial experiences with Black communists was puzzling. In Chicago, Ishmael Flory headed the African American Heritage Association (A.A.H.A.) and was active in a wide range of civil rights activities. It was Comrade Flory who sold (or gave) the books by Aptheker, DuBois, Nkrumah, that I have mentioned, and who had on the back shelves of his book store an amazing stock of C.P. pamphlets on the race question dating back to the 1930's. Flory was an orthodox Marxist with the exception that he took as his focus the struggles of African and Afro-American peoples. Flory consistently berated us for our nationalism, but always wore a leopard skin African hat, and said that Blacks were Afro-Americans not Negroes. More confusing was the influence of Blacks close to the C.P. on the Nation of Islam in Chicago. Muhammad Speaks was edited by a Black Marxist and the University of Islam was headed by a Black Marxist who continued to be active in the A.A.H.A.

There was little interaction with Blacks in the national leadership of the C.P. with the exception of Claude Lightfoot who was from Chicago. Lightfoot's views in personal conversations never deviated from his published positions.

The content of Freedomways, a quarterly founded in the
and West Indian nationalists and Pan-Africanists, on the domestic front the overwhelming tendency was to support integrationism and to call for working class unity.

In sum the C.P.'s influence was primarily in its making available significant studies and documents of the history of Black people. The Black members of the C.P. most in contact with younger nationalists shared the intellectual focus on Africa and Afro-Americans on one hand yet shared the party's integrationist viewpoint in their support of CORE, SNCC and Martin Luther King, Jr. This was too much confusion for young minds who were looking for clear theory as a basis for a coherent effective practice. The distinction between the willing acceptance of the C.P.'s contribution to the study of Black history, and the unwillingness to accept their analysis of contemporary events is crucial to an understanding of the reaction of many Black nationalists to the ideas of Harold Cruse.

The interest of the Socialist Worker's Party (S.W.P.) and the Young Socialist Alliance (Y.S.A.) in Black nationalism included forming the Committee to Aid the Monroe Defendants which supported Robert Williams and the others indicted in Monroe, North Carolina in 1961 and 1962, providing press coverage for Malcolm X and the Nation of Islam and
and publishing post-humorously a large number of Malcolm's speeches and a biography supporting the short-lived Freedom Now Party, and giving ideological support for some Black nationalist ideas and programs. The problem with the S.W.P. and Y.S.A. was that despite their rhetoric their organization was overwhelmingly white and few nationalist cared what they thought of nationalist programs and organization. We were quite willing to accept their very valuable efforts to get Malcolm's ideas into print and to cover nationalist activities in The Militant, but LeRoy McCrae and Clifton DeBerry were deemed to be every bit as integrationist as Bayard Rustin, Lightfoot, Ben Davis, et al.

The only other input from the organized left during this period was from two Trotskyists splinter groups based in Detroit: The Facing Reality Committee which included Martin Glaberman and Grace and James Boggs, and The News and Letters Committee led by Raya Dunayerskaya. The pressures of time prevent a full discussion of the influence of the Boggs. James Boggs' The American Revolution: Pages from a Negro Workers Notebook, (N.Y.: Monthly Review Press, 1963) has a chapter "Rebels with a Cause" that supports the nationalist view on the necessity for independent struggle linked to the thesis that the current Black movement is the leading force for revolutionary change in the U.S.. The Boggs were also quite active in revolutionary nationalist activities in Detroit and published "Towards Revolutionary
Action Movement Manifesto" in the March, 1964 issues of Correspondence their newsletter. The News and Letters Committee published a monthly newspaper edited by Charles Denby, a Black worker. News & Letters which reported and commented on the racial situation and two pamphlets that got fairly wide circulation among Black nationalists: Raya Dunayevskaya's "Nationalism, Communism, Marxist Humanism and the Afro-Asian Revolutions" (Detroit, 1961) and "American Civilization on Trial: The Negro as Touchstone of History," (Detroit, May, 1963). The News & Letters group had no practice to speak of and Denby's recent autobiography isn't much help in filling in the blanks for this period.16 My admittedly premature conclusion is that the anti-Leninism of these groups and the recognition of their own petty-bourgeois class origins painted them into a corner where no action was possible, and where the study-group was the only legitimate form of organization.

The years 1963 - August, 1965, saw the attempt to develop a theory that would synthesize the divergent concerns and interests that were characteristic of a developing revolutionary Black nationalism. SNCC was praised for the courage of its activists and for its skill in organizing and mobilizing Blacks in the rural South who were considered hopelessly bent or broken by racial oppression. But SNCC received its share of the general critique of non-violence, integrationism, and the willingness to continuously place Blacks in situations
where they could be assaulted and murdered. The Nation of Islam and the various heirs of the Garvey movement were not active politically and were burdened by religious mysticism and/or an overly romanticized view of pre-colonial Africa. What was needed was an ideology and analysis that would offer a coherent theory of the history of Afro-Americans as it related to U.S. history; the relationship of the contemporary struggle of Afro-American to those of Africans and other peoples of the Bandung world; the development of a class stratified Black America; and the relevance of Marxist-Leninist views on the revolutionary process to the situation of Black Americans. We needed a theory that would include SNCC activism, Malcolm's nationalism and Robert Williams' armed struggle. The Marxist left was conscious of the importance of the Black struggle, but always as an aspect of the working-class struggle for a socialist transformation of the United States and imperialism worldwide. Apthekers "The Soul of the Republic," Breitman's "How A Minority Can Change Society," News & Letters American Civilization on Trial: The Negro as Touchstone of History, despite their differences, all share this assumption. Many of us were not so sure that America was worth saving in any form, and none of us wished to serve as a vanguard of a struggle to bring better conditions that whites would reap benefits of.

The one writer who made the greatest stride in producing the analysis needed was Harold Cruse, not the Cruse

Cruse was not well-known outside of New York City and "Revolutionary Nationalism" was brought to the attention of nationalists in the Mid-West by white members of the New Left who distributed Studies on the Left. I recall buying my copy primarily because of the attractive cover, and not reading it until the summer of 1963 when a Black friend, familiar with the New York scene, was discussing Cruse, and I remembered seeing his name in the magazine. I and my colleagues were greatly impressed by it and it soon became a major building block in our attempts at formulating a synthesis of Marxism and Black nationalism. Much of the later analyses of the Revolutionary Action Movement, Act and the shortlived Organization of Black Power (1965) was based on Cruse's early essays.17

Let's look now at "Revolutionary Nationalism and the Afro-American." In the opening section subtitled "Revolution-
tionary Nationalism and Western Marxism," Cruse sees the failure of "American Marxists" to anticipate and give early support the Cuban Revolution as proof of their inability to understand revolutionary nationalism. This failure, Cruse continues, has "special significance to the American Negro."

Why, because, Cruse asserts:

For the Negro has a relationship to the dominant culture of the United States similar to that of colonies and semi-dependents to their particular foreign overseers: the Negro is the American problem of underdevelopment. The failure of American Marxists to understand the bond between the Negro and the colonial peoples of the world has led to their failure to develop theories that would be of value to Negroes in the United States. (p. 12)

As the colonial world has seized the revolutionary initiative from the Left in the West so has the Negro from American Marxists. Cruse concludes that:

Here, the Negro is the leading revolutionary force, independent and ahead of the Marxists in the development of a movement towards social change. (p. 13)

The next section "The American Negro: A Subject of Domestic Colonialism: begins to sketch out the colonial analogy its relationship to the various forms of nationalism. Cruse also makes a distinction between the nationalist and the integrationist traditions that date back to the turn of the century. Cruse sees Robert Williams as embodying a "third trend" of "revolutionary" integrationists. Throughout this section Cruse is critical of American Marxists who fail to understand or deliberately observe these distinctions.
"Integration vs. Separation: History and Interpretations," examines the DuBois-B.T. Washington, i.e., DuBois (politics) vs. Washington (economics), controversy within the framework of domestic colonialism, and is quite critical of the analysis of Dr. Aptheker and of other members of the C.P.

The concluding section "Negro Nationalism and the Left," begins by attacking the concept of the "Negro People" and asserts the importance of class divisions among Negroes. Cruse says that except for the question of civil rights, there is no unity between the Negro working and middle-classes, and that the Negro bourgeoisie has abdicated all responsibilities to the national Black community. Cruse zeroes in on the "dilemma" of the Black intellectual is attracted to the revolutionary nationalism of the colonial world, but is reluctant to adopt a nationalistic stance in domestic affairs. The masses of Black workers seek economic control of their community as a prerequisite for an effective politics. Marxists have ignored nationalism and therefore appeal only to members of the Black middle-class.

The issue of the way to achieve racial equality has to be addressed now and can't be postponed or seen as an inevitable by-product of socialism. The issues of separation must be faced squarely as an inevitable response to American racism. Cruse concludes by placing the burden on the Negro himself:
Due to his semi-dependent status in society, the American Negro is the only potentially revolutionary force in the United States today. From the Negro, himself, must come the revolutionary social theories of an economic, cultural and political nature that will be his guides for social action—the new philosophies of social change. (p. 25)

To young Black middle-class intellectual/activists with healthy distrust of white America and its institutions Cruse had much to offer. Cruse gave us a theory of our history, he related it to the struggles of the Bandung World, he explained the importance of intra-Black class divisions, he was not anti-Marxist only anti-Western Marxism, he articulated the reasons for our alienation from U.S. society, and he challenged us to join the struggle with the masses of our people and to produce the theories that would help them achieve liberation. Cruse explained our affinity for SNCC, Malcolm X and Robert Williams. All of the theorizing and strategizing, etc., during the 1963-65 period was grounded in Crusean theory. Cruse got much the best of it in the subsequent exchanges in Studies on The Left, (Vol. III, No. 1, 1962, pp. 57-71), with Richard Greenleaf and Clark Forman. We found Cruse's distinction between the ideas of Marx and those of Lenin particularly useful. Cruse's Liberator articles were read as further explications of the basic ideas expressed in "Revolutionary Nationalism." As the first skirmishes in the "race wars" Cruse predicted (p. 25) began to appear—(Birmingham, 1963; Harlem, Rochester,
Philadelphia, 1964) his analysis grew in stature. With Malcolm's death and the Watts Rebellion, Cruse's insights appeared to be confirmed. What we thought we were in was the first stages of an armed struggle for the national liberation of Black America. The realization that this was not so, and might not even be possible, came with further analysis, and equally important, more age and experience. As of August, 1965, the ideology known as revolutionary Black nationalism seemed sufficient.
FOOTNOTES


4. The term is mentioned by several interviewees in Howell Raine's My Soul is Rested, pp. 156, 168, and esp. 457, and is the subject of an article by J.H. O'Dell, "How Powerful is the Southern Power Structure," Freedomways, (Winter, 1964), pp. 76-92.


