

Third World concept discussed

EDITOR'S NOTE: As a recent delegate to the National YWCA convention, I was a participant in several Black and Third World workshops, in which many relevant topics were discussed. Following is a discussion of the Third World concept, which we as Black people should be aware of and be able to react to.

The term "third world" is a relatively new word and many people do not understand what this concept means. We, therefore, offer the following brief explanation of its derivation and meaning.

The first world consists of the nations built upon the so called "free enterprise" system, including the United States, as well as much weakened European nations of England, France, Germany, Belgium, Portugal, etc., and more recently, Israel and South Africa.

The second world is composed of the socialist nations led by the Soviet Union and includes Czechoslovakia, Poland, East Germany, Bulgaria and other white socialist nations of Eastern Europe. These nations have broken the bondage of capitalism ("free enterprise" system based on competitive economics) and are working to create socialist societies.

The Third World consists of the colonized or formerly

colonized countries of the world. These includes the nations and peoples of Asia, Africa, Aztlan, and Latin America. They have the unique distinction of having been oppressed and pillaged by the first world, i.e., by the colonialist European and American powers.

The advent of Western industrialization brought with it imperialist expansion and oppression of the nations and peoples of the Third World. However, this industrialization also perfected communication and transportation systems which had the effect of exposing the international nature of the oppressor.

Through the process of slavery, African peoples found themselves scattered throughout the world, all victims of systematic exploitation by the Western powers. The Asian peoples, likewise, found their labor exploited and imported to the United States, their lands invaded and pillaged and their culture and religions trampled upon and repressed.

The original inhabitants of Latin America and Aztlan had the unfortunate experience of having been "discovered" by Europe, and, as a result, were colonized and their population completely decimated. After

throwing off the chains of European feudalism, the Latin American population — made up of people of Spanish-Indian-African ancestry, were immediately recolonized by their northern neighbor, the United States, and the familiar process of rape, murder and exploitation was continued.

Within the confines of the United States, the Third World nation consists of the descendants of people from Asia, Africa, Aztlan and Latin America. This community is made up of Blacks, Latinos, Asian Americans, Native Americans and Eskimos. We have all suffered from the same kind of exploitation and colonial oppression as our brothers and sisters in our homelands.

It would be a mistake, therefore, to think that the concept of Third World represents an ideology unto itself. When we use this term, it merely describes lands and peoples who have suffered the oppression and exploitation of internal and external² colonialism.

Some people use this expression in an attempt to avoid the ever-sharpening international and economic conflict that is taking place in the world. They talk about adopting a position of

"neutrality." In spite of these proclamations, the fact remains that there can be no middle road.

To combat an international enemy (i.e. expansionism in the name of God and "free enterprise") international cooperation is needed; therefore, the need for third world unity.

The concept of Third World unity encompasses the struggles for liberation in the Americas, the Caribbean and on the continents of Africa and Asia. It is our belief that one must be committed to liberation wherever they may be. These statements must be interlocked with one another in order to obtain the most effective results. It is clear, therefore, that mass migration back to our respective homelands is not necessary for Third World peoples to achieve freedom.

We must likewise be concerned with the long range results of our struggles. Since we have a common oppressor, we must try to achieve a society which is free from racism, and the exploitation of man by his fellow man, nation by nation and woman by man. All Third World people have suffered under the yoke of white racism and economic pillage by the expansionist powers.

In spite of cultural differences, this common

historical oppression unites us in the struggle to eradicate these evils. We occupy a unique place at a critical time in history. We are located within the most wealthy, powerful, expansionist country in the world. Rising Third World nations in the world have effectively countered and spoken against its power policies (i.e. U.S. aid and presence in Angola, Brazil and Indochina). It is up to the Third World peoples living in the United States to identify its exploitative history and to curtail and bring to an end its economic and political expansion.

¹ Colonization — the process of an extension of a system. Control (political, economical and cultural, psychological, military, etc.) over an area and a people.

² Internal colonization — internal U.S. colonization has affected indigenous peoples, Native American, Chicanos, Blacks, and Asians by cultural, political, economical, social genocide resultant in reservations, forcible confinement (Japanese relocation centers), ghettos, barrios and deportation of Raza.

(Excerpts from Statement of Third World Womens' Coordinating Committee United Presbyterian Women, U.S.A.)

My Country

by Angela Wright

"My Country 'Tis of Thee"

I really wish that someone would tell me what this line means. MY country? 'tis of whom?

"Sweet land of liberty"

REALLY? Two words of this line are questionable. Is this land really sweet? Where is the liberty? And for whom?

"Of thee I sing"

I ain't singing a damn thing!

"Land where my fathers died"

It's true that my Black fathers have died here. In fact, they were murdered here and that's nothing to sing about.

"Land of the pilgrim's pride"

This line is legitimate. Doesn't every thief take pride in what he steals?

"From every mountain side let freedom ring"

Freedom can ring from the mountain's side until hell freezes over. But until it can ring in the hearts and in the minds, and in the souls, of Black folks, it ain't real.

Words of Wisdom

... We are Americans, not only by birth and by citizenship, but by our political ideals, our language, our religion. Farther than that, our Americanism does not go. At that point, we are Negroes, members of a vast historic race that from the very dawn of creation has slept, but half-awakening in the dark forests of its African fatherland. We are the first fruits of this new nation, the harbinger of that black tomorrow which is yet destined to soften the whiteness of the Teutonic today. We are that people whose subtle sense of song has given America its only American music, its only American fairy tales, its only touch of pathos and humor amid its mad money-grabbing pluracracy.

—W.E.B. DuBois

What we are discovering, in short is that the United States—all of it, North as well as South, West as well as East—is a racist society in a sense and to a degree that we have refused so far to admit, much less face... The tragedy of race relations in the United States is that there is no American dilemma. White Americans are not torn and tortured by the conflict between devotion to the American creed and their actual behavior. They are upset by the current state of race relations, to be sure. But what troubles them is not that justice is being denied but that their peace is being shattered and their business interrupted.

—Charles E. Silberman
from *Crisis in Black and White*

Sadaukai and Lee speak on education and our survival

by Angela Bryant
News Editor

During the Black Arts Cultural Festival, Mayor Howard Lee of Chapel Hill and Owusu Saudaki (Howard Fuller) from Malcolm X Liberation University spoke on the role of education in the cultural survival of Black people. They both made points that should be reiterated.

Mayor Lee feels that education should teach one to learn to make goods and services respond to Blacks. The focus is too much on helping Blacks adjust to the system. He also emphasized that education should help one to learn his personal role.

Lee emphasized: "There are two powers, economics and politics." Education should provide us with the tools to make economics work for our people and teach us to maneuver the political system to our advantage.

He also feels that Black culture has not found a receptive place in the American educational system. Any adequate education should help us recall what made us endure then and use that formula today. It should prepare us to function competitively in this system and make the system serve Black people. Education should give one the necessary skills to achieve personal goals. It should make us recognize from whence we come: we are first generation escapees from poverty and the first generation to compete with any advantage, Lee says. He also admonished that we not forget our responsibilities to the communities we have left.

Owusu stated that before he discussed the role of education in the cultural survival of Black people, the whole question of Black people must be answered. So he ran down his view of the nature of the Black struggle. First he defined who are the Black people? The Black people are people of African descent whose contributions to world civilization gives them a dual character—international people. As African people our main struggle is versus racism and imperialism. Racism is the idea that one race feels superior to another for no rational reason except color, and the race that feels superior has the capacity to put that idea into practice, thus discrimination. Imperialism is a higher extension of capitalism. There are four significant characteristics of capitalism: a complex (mass production) commoditized economy, monopoly of the means of production by a few people, the masses have to work for those few, and strictly profit oriented.

The historical relationship of Blacks to racism and imperialism began in the fifteenth century when feudalism broke down and Europe needed a favorable balance of trade. Europe needed people and resources, so they "ripped off" Africa. Then came the development of chattel slavery.

Three factors need to be emphasized about chattel slavery. First, it was bitterly fought by Africans. Secondly, it worked because whites had superior weapons and because Africans helped enslave Africans. Thirdly, it was an intrusion into

the logical and historical development of African history. Institutions were destroyed and material production was disrupted. Africa was civilized because civilization is determined by how well a society meets the needs of its people. And by that criterion, the United States is far from civilized.

Racism developed as a rationale for the national oppression of African people. We became affected by imperialism after the Berlin conference where Europe divided up Africa. In 1877 with the Great Compromise (let the south deal with the "Negro" question), imperialism began to develop in America. This compromise eliminated the rights gained by Blacks during reconstruction and racism became a psychological benefit to the white working class.

Our international struggle involves the liberation and unification of Africa and understanding of the world struggle. Our national struggle is to change conditions of the masses of Blacks in America, as defined by Owusu.

He feels that our present educational system is racist and supports imperialism. It trains managers of imperialism. We need culture to enhance the struggle. For example, drama to encourage people to do something about the struggle. Owusu emphasized that we as oppressed people do not have the luxury to engage in aesthetics for aesthetics. Education should encourage us toward the struggle.