

NATIONAL FORUM

Along The Color Line

by Manning Marable

Trends in the 1990s: The Economic Crisis Ahead

The collapse of the Eastern European regimes and the democratic reforms occurring inside the Soviet Union has generated a kind of ideological euphoria within the ranks of American conservatives. Gorbachev, they argue, is the result of the \$2 trillion military build-up under Ronald Reagan in the 1980s. The Russians are seeking peace because the American system of free enterprises and political democracy is superior. They point out that the Soviet economy is a mess, while the U.S. gross national product has reached \$5.3 trillion by the end of the decade.

But this is an illusion of prosperity. The crisis which exists in the Soviet bloc is very real. Decades of political authoritarianism, inefficient, centralized planning, and the terror generated by secret police and violations of human rights contributed to the failure of the Communist model. Yet the U.S. is not too far from its own economic crisis.

In the decade of the nineties, mounting political pressure will be targeted against the Pentagon's massive \$300 billion annual budget. With the Soviets making serious reductions in armaments, the American military budget is not only wasteful but irrational. However, the Pentagon has a vested interest in maintaining an "external enemy," in order to justify spending billions of dollars for useless weaponry. Since the Soviets no longer fit the label "Evil Empire," American military planners will probably target three new potential "enemies"—China, Japan, and/or Germany.

Japan's massive economic clout, plus the existence of a hardline Communist leadership in China, will be used to justify continued American military installations in the Far East. The spectre of a united, militarized Germany, and threatening memories of World War II, could be used to promote a continued U.S. military presence in Europe.

The most overlooked victims of the Cold War have been the American people. For two generations, American politicians

of both parties have lied about the so-called "communist Menace," in order to suppress domestic progressive social protests, and to justify American imperialism abroad. But this kind of repression has a price—the billions of dollars taken away from domestic economic development and human needs. Today, the U.S. national debt comes to nearly \$3 trillion, and the interest alone on this debt exceeds \$160 billion annually.

Most of the new jobs generated in the 1980s were in the lowest paying, service sectors of the economy. More than one in eight Americans—and one out of three Black Americans—live below the poverty level. The bottom one fifth of all American families earn less than \$8,900 annually. And two to three million Americans are now homeless, more than double the amount when Reagan was first elected president.

There are other signs that the Cold War and unchecked military spending contributed to the impending economic crisis within the U.S. The Reagan and Bush administrations have had an economic philosophy of spend and borrow now, and worry about the future tomorrow. But the bill has come due. Recent estimates for the maintenance of all American highways for the next ten years exceed \$300 billion. Just to repair all of the bridges in the U.S. would cost another \$72 billion. To remove the hazardous wastes from toxic dumps comes to yet another \$15 billion. Where's the money going to come from, since the majority of the white middle and upper classes are adamantly opposed to increased taxes for themselves?

Increasingly in the 1990s, American society will become more stratified by class and income. The upper classes, determined to maintain their own high standard of living, will look to the poor and working people to pay the costs for restructuring the collapsing economic system. Unfortunately, the Democratic Party will continue to move to the right, catering to the elite, and ignoring its Black, Latino and working class constituencies.

THIS WAY FOR BLACK EMPOWERMENT

by Dr. Lenora Fulani

Lest We Forget: Dr. King Died To Make Us Free!

Along with Reverend Al Sharpton, the president of the United African Movement, a multi-racial contingent of 100 New Alliance Party members observed the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King by marching for justice through the streets of Bensonhurst in Brooklyn, New York, where a 16 year old Black boy named Yusuf Hawkins was murdered late last summer by a white mob. We have good reason to fear that the prosecutors are dragging their feet in this case—for one thing, some of the 30 perpetrators of the lynch mob-style killing have managed to avoid being indicted. Meanwhile, another young Black man recently died in police custody.

New York City has a brand new African-American mayor—David Dinkins, the first Black mayor in the city's history. Were he here today, Dr. King would be pleased at the progress that has been made," David told a bunch of reporters recently. "and he would look down and be happy that I have succeeded, that Doug Wilder (the new Black governor of Virginia) has succeeded, that Ron Brown (the Black chairman of the Democratic Party) has succeeded..."

The election of New York's first Black mayor was indeed a victory for our people, a long fought for and hard-won victory. But as Reverend Sharpton says, "Dr. King didn't die to elect Blacks to office, he died to make us free." As long as our children are being slaughtered for the crime of being Black, those of us who have been left behind must continue to do the work that he began: "We who believe in freedom cannot rest until it comes."

Martin Luther King went to Chicago in 1966. He had been fighting raw Southern racism for ten years, but Chicago shocked him. In this northern industrial city, he found a system of "internal colonialism" so inhumane that he compared it to the "exploitation of the Congo by Belgium." It was Chicago which showed Dr. King that the demand for equality would require challenging the very foundations of American society.

He began forging alliances with progressive whites in the anti-war movement and with labor unions of impoverished, mostly Black service workers—alliances that had the potential to turn the country upside down. He turned away from the Democratic Party and began contemplating a third party Presidential run. Then he was shot down.

The Black Panthers rose up behind him, a radical grassroots challenge to the power structure. A short two years later they too were destroyed.

In 1972 some of the survivors gathered in Gary, Indiana. They mapped out a strategy for Black empowerment that entailed giving the Democrats "one more chance." Their plan was to win power through the ballot box, by electing large numbers of Blacks to local, state and federal office. They succeeded, but the power didn't come for the masses of Black people.

The coming together of political forces as diverse as Reverend Sharpton's United African Movement and the multi-racial, pro-socialist and pro-gay New Alliance Party in Bensonhurst this past January 15 represents the birth of the very kind of coalition which so terrified the powers that be in Dr. King's last days, when it seemed clear that Black and white America stood ready to follow a Black leader.

As Dr. Fred Newman, a Jewish leader of the New Alliance Party who represented me at the Bensonhurst march on Monday pointed out, "It is precisely bringing together such forces that makes a clear statement on what must be done to advance the struggle of working people. Each force becomes more powerful and the powers that be are rightly concerned that this could—and hopefully will—change the face of politics in this city and in this country."

Reverend Sharpton took a moment during the march to say, "The dream is still unfulfilled, but the dreamers are still in the streets. Happy Birthday, Dr. King. We still believe we shall overcome some day."

Yes, deep in my heart, I do believe that together we shall overcome some day.

Civil Rights Journal

by Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr.

Boston: Violence, Myth and Racism

To many persons in the United States, Boston, Massachusetts represents the historical setting for the founding of American democracy. Yet, for the past several decades, Boston continues to be a city polarized and rigidly divided by the forces of poverty and racism. In particular, the African-American community of Boston continues to be victimized by acts of racially motivated violence. Now the African-American community is confronted with the stereotype of being the spawning ground of vicious anti-white violence and crime.

The recent bizarre episode of the murder of a white woman, Mrs. Carol Stuart, allegedly by her husband Charles Stuart is yet another example of how quickly elected officials, the police and the established media of Boston are prone to conclude that the African-American community is the likely culprit of hideous acts against the white community of Boston. The truth is, however, that the African-American community during the last thirty years in Boston overwhelmingly has been the victim of racial violence in the city.

Charles Stuart had driven his seven-month pregnant wife to the predominantly African-American and Hispanic Mission Hill section of Boston where he shot her to death and shot himself but then proceeded to tell the police that an African-American male had jumped into their car, robbed and shot them. Mrs. Stuart was shot in the head and her baby did not survive the shooting. The local as well as the national media once again made it clear that another African-American male was the subject of another highly publicized manhunt.

When Charles Stuart learned that the Boston police had acquired evidence that he had lied about the incident and that the police were on the verge of charging him with the murder of his wife, he leaped to his death from a local bridge. Before Stuart committed suicide, he went so far as to falsely identify and accuse an African-American in a police lineup.

Although the truth of the Stuart murder eventually was revealed, the stigma and the virulent cloud of suspicion that was unjustly cast over the African-American community in Boston, has left the community vulnerable. In the wake of the increase in urban crime throughout the nation, racially stereotyping entire communities is becoming commonplace.

Democracy is not an abstract phenomenon. It demands social and racial equality. In this pluralistic society, justice demands fairness and an end to racist discrimination and subjugation. The Stuart case also has exposed the vulnerability of our society as a whole to the temptations of hatred and violence based on race.

We realized that merely commenting on the situation in Boston will do little to resolve the problem. It is important that when incidents like the Stuart case occur, there needs to be a multi-racial response which attempts to draw lessons from the incident. For example, the media both local and national really need to be severely criticized for the undue sensationalization of the crime. If more African-Americans and other racial and ethnic persons had more important upper management positions in the media, the tenor and the scope of the coverage of these kinds of cases would definitely change for the better. In addition, the Boston Police Department as well as other police departments throughout the country must be more responsive to and respect all communities and not disproportionately to just respect or protect the dominant community.

The 1990s can offer more hope in the area of race relations, if and only if more people will boldly challenge the malignancy of racism in our national midst by discerning more effectively the subtleties as well as the overt indications of racism. One of the tragedies of today is not only the myths and stereotypes of racism, but also the growing tendency for the victims of racism to accept it.

NO MAN CAN BE FREE UNTIL ALL MEN ARE FREE!

REVOLUTION

THE HOPE FOR THE HOPELESS
AN IDEA WHOSE TIME HAS COME!

UAI Will Host Largest African-American Cultural & Business Expansion In U.S. History

LOS ANGELES, CA--United Africans International, a cultural membership organization exclusively for the African race, has just revealed a 5-year plan to dramatically impact African-American culture and substantially boost African-American owned businesses nationwide. UAI, which does not accept donations, only private financing, is slated to premier in the summer of 1990 and estimates that 150,000 men and women enrolled in the special entrepreneurial membership plan will start new local, national, and international business ventures each year.

This ambitious plan has as one of its main features, the publication of a full color, monthly magazine. Outlined in it will be the exciting day-to-day life and business world of each of the 48 bustling Black African countries. Revealed will be these African nation's many cities with modern skyscrapers filled with Africans doing billions of dollars in business with each other as well as supplying every country in the world with what they need to survive. This exciting magazine will offer opportunities to find out about African manufactured products, delicious food, fantastic entertainment, and stunning fashions. Many African-Americans will choose to become involved in thriving African businesses around the world.

Included in this 5-year plan will be the development of commercial and financial centers in the heart of African-American communities, special national retail store chains, a special technology-based education system, and the introduction of a multi-channel national satellite network which will supply members with satellite dishes, all-new specially produced shows, and unheard of, low cost advertising rates for

business members' products and services.

United Africans International will begin approving men and women and families for community distributorships who will make up its national team of "Member Reps" who will start offering the membership plans to the 29 million African-Americans in the U.S. Member Reps will each receive a territory of 5,000 households in African-American communities. Member Reps, each required to be a resident of the 5,000 household territory they will cover, can earn up to \$71,000 each in commissions and fees from selling the various membership plans, personally delivering the monthly magazines to members, picking up annual dues, and answering member's questions. State Member Reps can earn commissions upwards of \$350,000 to train and supervise Member Reps. The one Country Member Rep can earn commissions upwards of \$1.7 million to supervise the national sales program and manage a national advertising campaign which can total up to \$40 million annually.

UAI is the first of Culture International's many planned membership organizations designed to protect each race's cultural identity and ensure their economic power in the world. Other planned membership organizations are United Latinos International, United Anglos International, and United Asians International. Members of each membership organization will have the exclusive right to become associate members of all the others.

For information on becoming a part of the UAI Management Group, UAI Member Rep Group, or UAI Finance Group, interested parties can contact United Africans International as soon as possible toll-free at 1(800) SEND-UAI.



SC Johnson Wax Sponsors Interns



Summer interns Kristine Johnson, left, and Renee Smith look over materials in the SC Johnson Wax Career Resource Center.

RACINE--As a part of its continued commitment to minority programs, SC Johnson Wax is sponsoring minority interns in the career development program, INROADS.

"Our sponsorship includes a comprehensive, paid, four-year summer intern program for two college students," said Randolph W. Lengyel, Information Services Resources Development Manager, who is coordinating the program.

During the four summers, the interns will learn concepts in Information Services, be assigned to a team and learn to write computer programs, and work in technical support and data base areas.

After successfully competing the College Intern Program and obtaining a four-year college degree, interns will be considered for employment at SC Johnson Wax.

Say You Saw It In The
Portland Observer!

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VANTAGE POINT

Articles and Essays by Ron Daniels

An Outraged Black Nation Needs To Take To The Streets

On the eve of the Martin Luther King Holiday celebration, the National Urban League released its annual State of Black America report. The report laid out what it common knowledge within the Black Nation. The masses of the Black poor, particularly in the rural south and in America's inner cities are living in desperate straits. More than two decades after the assassination of Martin Luther King, the condition of the African-American poor in many ways is worst than it was during King's lifetime. We have more Black elected officials. We have more prominent, successful and "influential" African-Americans in various areas of American life than ever before. Yet the sad fact is that the enormous wealth of this nation is not being directed to finally and permanently elevating the condition of the masses of our people.

In the African-American community we know that we are in trouble. But unlike the sixties and seventies our community seems incapable of mustering more than polite anger and outrage in the face of this crisis. Everyone from the Urban League to the N.A.A.C.P., from fraternities and sororities to Black colleges and universities are "urgently" conferencing on our plight. There have even been some marches and demonstrations. But even the marches are commemorations of some previous civil rights march or orderly events devoid of passion and the will to seriously confront a callous system which is still victimizing our people.

When John E. Jacobs, President of the National Urban League calls for a \$50 billion dollar Domestic Marshall Plan to tackle the massive problems plaguing the inner cities he is very much on target. This concept which was first proposed by Whitney Young in 1963 has considerable merit. However, the needs of African-Americans will not be met simply because they are righteous. Proposals which have merit must be backed with the muscle to move them from idea to policy. As we enter the nineties and reflect on the victories which Martin Luther King was able to achieve in the sixties it is clear to me that there is a need

to translate the sense of urgency about the crisis we face into a massive mobilization for change.

African-Americans need to revive the strategy and tactics of civil disobedience and disruptive direct action as a means of forcing America to deal with our plight. Our most recent marches have been too timid, too tame and almost predictably ineffective. It is inconceivable that we can watch peoples movements around the world bring down unresponsive and oppressive systems and not contemplate bringing America to its knees for failing to deal with the basic human rights - eg. housing, health care, education, child care, JOBS, JUSTICE etc. of the masses of disadvantaged African-Americans in this country.

In the sixties the freedom rides, sit-ins, wade-ins, pray-ins, selective buying campaigns etc. were utilized to confront unjust laws and dramatize the contradictions within the American system. John E. Jacobs is reissuing the call for a Domestic Marshall Plan. Just prior to his death Martin Luther King was calling for a "Economic Bill of Rights." The question is, are we prepared to march on Washington and stay until significant progress is forthcoming towards the enactment of these ideas? Are we prepared to tie up Congress, surround the White House, disrupt the orderly proceedings of things at the Pentagon and go to jail in MASSIVE numbers, if necessary, to dramatize the plight of our people to the world.

Across this nation in city hall after city hall and state capitol after state capitol, African-Americans in memory of King and in keeping with his legacy need to bring business as usual to a halt. No more ceremonial marches or ritualistic and routine protest. Our people are dying right now. It should either be freedom and prosperity for everybody or turmoil and disruption for everybody. In our outrage we must use civil disobedience to struggle for basic human rights for our people. The crisis in our communities is so desperate that either the government will respond or we must become ungovernable!