

# NATIONAL FORUM

## NEW ALLIANCE PARTY

### Who Says They Didn't Make A Revolution? We Do!

The women's liberation movement, ignited by the Black liberation movement, erupted full force in the early 70's. Dismissed by the corporate-owned media as the hysteria of a few bra-burning loudmouths, "women's lib" was in fact a mass movement of women fed up with economic discrimination, political disempowerment and the cultural disfigurement that reached into every corner of personal life; it made an indelible mark on the thought, language and aspirations of middle class women and a significant dent in the laws upholding institutionalized sexism.

But the women's movement was never revolutionary; its leaders didn't intend nor did they organize to bring about the radical transformation of society, in particular its structures of power and privilege based on class, race and gender. Underneath their revolutionary rhetoric, they weren't about remaking an exclusionary and hierarchical system but about making it in that system; they wanted brothers, bosses and husbands to move over so there would be room for them and for women like themselves.

In fact the leadership weren't even feminists in the true sense of that word; what they meant by "sisterhood" was the loyalty of middle class women to their own class interests and the cooperation of working class women for the advancement of those interests. Then as now, the movement's leaders wanted nothing to do with "other" women--genuine radicals who put their lives (not to mention their careers and their comforts, if they had any) on the line, day in and day out, in the struggle to make a better world. The sham revolutionaries have never been willing to give credit where credit is due--to women like Angela Davis and Lolita Lebron, to the Maryknoll Sisters and the Weather-women, to Asata Shakur (formerly Joanne Chesimard) and Black Panther Minister of Information Elaine Brown.

By the late 70's the leadership of the women's movement had gotten much of what it came for the life of the movement went out of it. What remained was embodied in the National Organization for Women, whose lead-

ers settled down into a marriage of convenience with the Democratic Party. This arrangement (which included as a dowry millions of women's votes), made to benefit a handful of wannabees, permanently excluded the broad masses of poor women and women of color and left behind millions of progressive middle class white women who would soon be abandoned to the "dress for success" and "having it all" formulas of the Reagan years. As for the lesbian women who had done much of the work to build the women's movement, they were shoved back behind the scenes and into the closet. They, too, were not the right kind of woman.

I know all about the phony revolutionary/fake feminist leadership of the white women's movement, because as a working class Black radical I have never been their kind of woman, either. And they haven't hesitated to let me know it.

Two years ago, when I was making history as the first woman and the first African American Presidential candidate ever to be on the ballot in every state, 400 NOW members attending the organization's annual conference in Buffalo, New York signed a resolution calling for NOW to recognize the "historic achievement" of my independent Presidential campaign and to "inform all women across the country" that there would be an independent opinion on the ballot that year. But the phony revolutionaries who were the leaders of NOW were no more concerned with democracy than the party they had married. They didn't want the women of America to know that a radical Black woman was running for President as an independent. And so they made sure that the resolution would never see the light of day.

They went further than that. During the first plenary session of the Buffalo conference I responded to an invitation from NOW's president, Molly Yard, to every woman who was running for office to come up onto the stage. The audience cheered and applauded when I introduced myself. But as I began to say more, Yard grabbed my arm and tried to move me away from the micro-

phone! The "revolutionary" didn't want a radical Black woman to speak.

This past Sunday's New York Times Magazine featured an article called "Who Says We Didn't Make A Revolution?" Written by someone who made a name for herself in the 60's as one of the official chroniclers of the women's movement, the article is deeply offensive; it demonstrates that it's not just men (from the founding fathers of the 18th century to the talking leftists of our own day) who have given revolution a bad name in this country--and why the "revolution" of some white people, by some white people, for some white people, is dead. Stone dead.

"It is now 1990," the self-serving and unintentionally revealing article concludes. "The swirl and excitement of the 70's has, of necessity, abated." Yes, the white revolution is indeed dead. But in the streets of America's working class Black communities, on our college campuses, and at the polling booths, something very much alive, something very exciting, something very revolutionary, is going on. It is a movement, a Black-led and multi-racial, working class-wide, pro-woman and pro-gay, militantly independent political movement.

It is part of the world-wide movement for democracy, and its name is the New Alliance Party. I am proud to be a leader of it and to be building it with the support of many thousands of middle class women who are not content, as the author of the article is, with "the memory of visionary politics" but are still committed, still rebellious, and still young (because it's not a matter of time) enough to fight for--and not just talk about--a better world.

Dr. Lenora Fulani  
Chairperson, New Alliance Party

A quick, unthought-out answer is worthless to me; your thinking silence when asked a question is amply worth my wait.

### Essence Magazine Celebrates Its 20th Anniversary With Women Who Have Made A Difference

New York, NY--Founded in May 1970 to provide a forum for issues concerning African-American women, and a showcase for achievement and talent, Essence celebrates twenty years of growth, struggle, and progress in the May issue.

"The 20th anniversary issue of Essence is a living document to the struggle and victories of the African-American woman," said editor-in-chief Susan L. Taylor. "We have searched and traveled the country to find the witnesses and survivors who have made a difference."

In a year characterized by change around the world, Essence begins its third decade of publishing by paying tribute to women that have made a difference in the political, social, artistic, educational and business arenas. This bigger-than-ever Essence issue applauds the diversity of female heroines in a three-part feature entitled "Legends In Our Time."

In addition to Mother Hale, Harlem matriarch and founder of Hale House, a home for children with AIDS, Judith Jamison, former lead dancer and now president of The Alvin Ailey Dance Theater, Dr. Johnetta Cole, the first African-American and woman president of Spelman College, Faye Wattleton, president of the Planned Parenthood

Federation of America, Oprah Winfrey, talk show host and leading film producer, and Winnie Mandela, South African human rights activist, there are also the women of promise who will carry the tradition throughout the 21st century. Some of these women are, Barbara Ann Teer, founder of the National Black Theatre, award-winning director, actress and educator and Rev. Dr. Johnnie Coleman, a prime mover in the New Thought philosophy.

The 20th Anniversary issue scores a scoop with a timely feature on Oakland, California, whose resurgence is characterized by the return of the NFL Oakland Raiders from Los Angeles earlier this month. Essence editors explore the city that symbolizes the struggle of African-Americans, covering the 20 years between the Black Panthers and the complex social issues of the 90's.

Other special features in the May 1990 anniversary issue of Essence (due on newsstands April 15) are:

"Woman Talk"--a conversation between author, activist and poet June Jordan and advocator of change Angela Davis.

"Don't We Style!"--an incredible journey from our African past to today. Black women dazzle with an inherited sense of style.

"Graceful Passages"--Eleven of our

great American writers share life lessons and personal practice.

"What Have They Done For Us Lately?"--the rise and fall of affirmative action in the Supreme Court

"Black Women At Work"--we've made gains as managers, anchorwomen, mayors, entrepreneurs, and presidents of colleges; but where are we really?

"Our Families Then and Now"--a look at the African-American family over the last 20 years.

"Repeat Performance"--a pairing of great women performers with the younger ones who are carrying on tradition.

Essence will celebrate its Twentieth Anniversary throughout the year with more special features. One of the fastest-growing magazines in the United States, Essence has a guaranteed monthly circulation of 850,000 and a readership of more than 4 million. Its parent company, Essence Communications, Inc. (ECI), includes Essence Direct Mail, which distributes Essence By Mail, a catalog marketed to Black consumers, and Essence Art Reproductions. Essence Licensing, another division of ECI, includes the Essence Eyewear line and the Essence Collection by Butterick, a sewing-pattern wardrobe.



The Private Industry Council Graduates (see story front page) are seated, left to right:

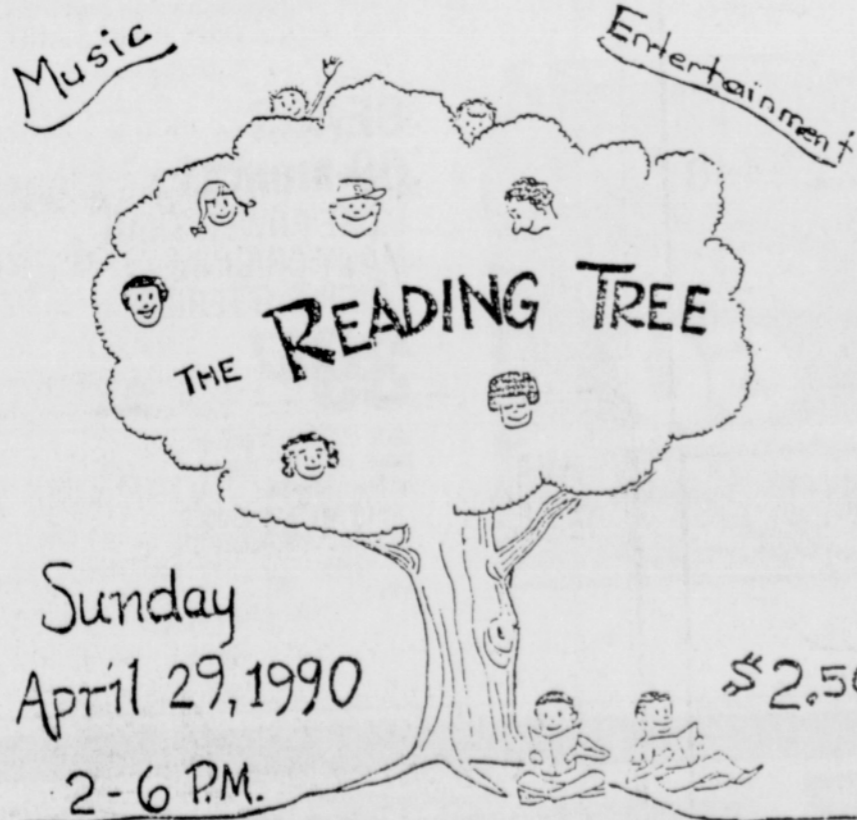
Yvonne Hudson, Veronica Curtis, Donald Rogers and Irene Washington.

Standing, left to right, John Miller, Brenda Clemons, Virgil Jackson, Kirsten Jones, Charlotte Rogers and Geri Howe.

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