

The basis for this document came out a National Black Political Agenda that was drafted in 1972 at the National Black Political Convention in Gary, Indiana. That original document led us to develop this C.O.U.P. Proclamation.

We, the Organized Community of United People would like to first thank the writers of the "Gary Document" and the attendees at that historic convention for providing us with a blueprint for our work.

We would also like to thank Mr. Tom Porter, for locating the original Gary Document for us to read, study, learn from and be inspired by. . . that act, on his part, has shaped our organization in innumerable ways.

We would like to thank all revolutionaries past, present and future for inspiring us, teaching us and continuing the struggle.

Lastly, we would like to thank our ancestors for their survival and for passing to us that spirit of resistance.

Introduction

This document is addressed primarily to Black*¹ people in America. It rises naturally out of the bloody decades and centuries of our people's struggle on these shores. It flows from the most recent surgings of our own cultural and political consciousness. It is our attempt to define some of the essential changes which must take place in this land as we and our children move to self-determination and true independence.²

While addressed primarily to the Black* people of the Americas, we recognize and stand in solidarity with all the oppressed people of the world and seek to form a platform and world that is in all ways inclusive and reflective of that recognition. We reject the oppositional binary imposed by white supremacy and white supremacist socio-political thinking.³ Instead, we seek to offer up a framework and platform that moves away from the notion of the world in Black and white. While those terms are politically meaningful, they are in no way accurate or indicative of the world's population. The terms and the binary imposed by the Black/white opposition exclude five-eighths of the world's population. Just as notions of East, West, North and South setup binaries that force a separation between neighbors. The Black/white binary establishes an oppressive and unrealistic way of looking at the world and its problems. This exclusionary tactic of the world's power structure has divided the people of this planet for too long. We, as Organized COUP, as people of the African Diaspora, and as citizens of the world seek to place ourselves, and our movement, in historical and spatial context. We have moved away from the notion of them and us in terms of Black and White and instead have recognized the true opposition of rich and poor, oppressed and oppressor, liberator and tyrant.

Our Black* Agenda assumes that no truly basic change for our benefit takes place in Black or white America unless we Black people organize to initiate that change. It assumes that we must have some essential agreement on overall goals, even though we may differ on many specific strategies.

Therefore, this is an initial statement of goals and directions for our movement. Anyone who claims to be serious about the survival and liberation of Black* people must be serious about the implementation of the Black* Agenda.

What Time Is It?

We come together at a time of great crisis and tremendous promise for America. While this white supremacist patriarchal nation hovers on the brink of chaos, while its politicians offer no hope of real change, we stand on the edge of history

* Please read and become conversant with Organized Community of United People's definition and use of the term Black located in our endnote section, endnote number 1.

and are faced with an amazing and frightening choice: We may choose to slip back into the decadent white supremacist politics of American life, or we may press forward, relentlessly, to create our own world based on respect for all human life and people. The choice is large, and time is very short.

Let there be no mistake. We come together in a time of unrelieved crisis for our people. From rural communities in Alabama to high-rise compounds of Chicago, from the sprawling Black cities of Watts and Nairobi to the decay of Harlem and Roxbury, the testimony we bear is the same. We are the witnesses to and victims of social disaster. We are also the witnesses to the most profound ecological crisis in the history of human existence. The depletion of our rainforests, the destruction and extinction of thousands of plant and animal species each day and the depletion of the ozone for the financial gain of a few are and will continue to have unprecedented impact on the very survival of all people.

Our cities are crime-haunted dying grounds. Huge sectors of our youth, and countless others, face permanent underemployment and unemployment. Those of us who work find our paychecks able to purchase less and less. Neither the courts nor the prisons contribute to anything resembling justice or reformation. The schools are unable -or unwilling -to educate our children for the struggles of the real world. Meanwhile, the officially mandated epidemic of drugs threatens to wipe out the minds and strength of our best young warriors.

Economic, cultural, and spiritual depression stalk America, and the price for survival often appears to be more than we are able to pay. On every side, in every area of our lives, the American institutions in which we have placed our trust are unable to cope with the crises they have created by their single-minded dedication to profits for some and white supremacy above all.

Beyond These Shores

Beyond these shores, there is more of the same. For while we are pressed down under the dying weight of a bloated, inwardly decaying white civilization, many of our sisters and brothers in the rest of the so-called "Third World"⁴ have fallen prey to the same powers of exploitation and deceit. Wherever America faces the unorganized, politically powerless forces of the non-white world, its goal is domination by any means necessary -as if to hide from itself the rumbling of its own systems of life and work.

Citizens of the United States of America cannot hide. They can run to China, to the moon and to the edges of consciousness, but they cannot hide. The crises we face as Black* people are the crises of the entire society. They go deep, to the very bones and marrow, to the essential nature of America's economic, political, and cultural systems.

They are the natural end product of a society built on the twin foundations of racism and capitalism.

So, let it be clear to us now: the desperation of our people, the agonies of our cities, the desolation of our countryside, the pollution of the air, land and water – these things will not be significantly affected by new faces in old places in Washington, D.C. We must face this truth if we are to join our people everywhere in the movement forward toward liberation.

White Realities, Black* Choice

A Black* political movement, indeed all progressive movements, must begin from this truth: The current system does not work for the majority of its' people, and it cannot be made to work without radical fundamental change. Indeed, this system does not work in the favor of the humanity of anyone, the world over.

In the light of such realities, we push for the eventual establishment of an independent, national political party, which will implement the Black* Agenda. Until that time we will continue to steadfastly assure that political leaders are challenged to vigorously represent the people and to use their positions to defend the interests of those they have been elected to represent. We must address "leaders" who sacrifice our rights and freedoms for personal gain just as we must watch for those who are sent to lead us right to our own downfall.

Out of political naiveté, we have followed the path of political dependence on the white men and their systems. From the Liberty Party in the decades before the Civil War to the Republican Party of Abraham Lincoln, we trusted in white men and white politics as our deliverers. Sixty years ago, W.E.B. DuBois said he would give the democrats their "last chance" to prove their sincere commitment to equality for Black* people – and he was given white riots and official segregation in peace and in war.

Nevertheless, some twenty years later we became Democrats in the name of Franklin Roosevelt, then supported his successor Harry Truman, and even tried a "non-partisan" Republican General of the Army named Eisenhower. We were wooed like many others by the superficial liberalism of John F. Kennedy and the make believe populism of Lyndon Johnson. We expressed our "Americanism" by casting a vote for the "so-called first African-American president," William Jefferson Clinton, a white southerner, and the former governor of one of our nation's poorest and most segregated states. Finally, we create and support "Black" candidates for office and political appointees to high level positions based solely on skin-color ignoring their political views. This blind allegiance to the current two party system in the United States has reduced the African-American

vote to a state of irrelevancy. Our political acquiescence has led only to the further degradation of our communities.

Let there be no more of that.

Both Parties Have Betrayed Us

Let us never forget that while the times and the names and the parties have continually changed, one truth has faced us consistently, never changing; the American political system, like all other white supremacist institutions in America, was designed to operate for the benefit of the white race: It was never meant to do anything else.

That is the truth we must face. If white "liberalism" could have solved our problems, then Lincoln, Roosevelt, Kennedy and Clinton would have done so. But they did not solve our problems or the problems of rest of the nation. If the problems of the United States could have been solved by forceful, politically skilled and aggressive individuals, then Lyndon Johnson would have retained his presidency. If capitalism could have accomplished this then every nation in the world would have changed to a democratic capitalist state after U.S. President Ronald Reagan and British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher 1980's world tour to promote capitalism. The "American Way" has failed. Despite claims by the current un-elected president, September 11, 2001 was not a result of "them" hating "our freedoms" but rather it was a response to the lack of freedom imposed on the rest of the world by the United States government and its' foreign policy initiatives.

We must realize that Bill Clinton, under the guise of "liberalism," represented the worst of corporate greed and public manipulation through empty rhetoric and deception. By pushing through The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the Clinton Administration revealed their true lack of concern for working people the world over and for "nationhood." Business before flags has always been the case in the United States of America and these latest maneuvers are but the most recent forms. We can no longer allow mere words, smiles and skin-color to confuse us into thinking that politicians concerns are the people's concerns.

If we have never faced it before, let us face it now: The profound crisis of Black* people the world over and the disaster of America are not simply caused men and women by nor will they be solved by women and men alone. These crises are the crises of flawed economics and politics, and of the cultural degradation. No candidate for political office – regardless of their vague promises to us or to their white constituencies – can solve the problems of this country without radically changing the systems by which it operates.

We Are Here and Here is Now

The challenge is thrown to us here; it is the challenge to consolidate and organize our own role in the struggle for a new society. To accept that challenge is to move toward an independent Black* politic. There can be no equivocation on that issue. History leaves us no other choice. The politics of white supremacy has not and cannot bring the changes we need.

Our challenge is to stop taking reactionary steps toward policy and to, rather, take proactive measures to attain and maintain holistic empowerment⁵ in society. As it is the responsibility of each generation to attain and maintain its humanity and freedom we are taking our places among those who have been unwavering in their defense of the defenseless.

We are working to develop programs of assertion and resistance. Our purpose is to assert our fundamental human rights and to resist the various and continuous assaults on the humanity, culture, politics, economics and society of Black/African and all oppressed people.

We are focusing on scholarship coupled with community work and activism; combining the strengths of intra-system political action as well as grassroots community-based activism. We will press our so-called leaders to become voices of the people rather than the choir of silence they have become. We recognize and act on an understanding that the freedoms we now have are earned and that they must be used to acquire more for those here in America as well as those around the world.

Towards A Black* Agenda

So then, we turn to the Black* Agenda, we move in the truth of history, in the reality of the moment. We move recognizing that no one else is going to represent our interests but ourselves. The society we seek cannot come unless we organize to advance its coming. We lift up our Agenda recognizing that white supremacist America and the white world move toward the abyss created by its own racist arrogance, misplaced priorities, rampant materialism, and ethical bankruptcy. Therefore, we are certain that the Agenda we now press for is not only the future of humanity, but is probably the only way that America can save itself from the harvest of its criminal past and its uncertain future.

We stand now as people whose time has come. From every corner of the world, from all liberation movements, from the graves of our ancestors and the coming world of our children, we are faced with a challenge and a call: Though the moment is perilous, we must not despair. We must seize the time, for the time is ours.

We begin here and now. We begin with an independent Black* political movement, an independent Black* Political Agenda, an independent Black* spirit. Nothing less will do. We must build for our people. We must build for our world. We stand on the edge of history. We cannot turn back.

Action Agenda for Black* People

It is clear that the political officials can only deal with a portion of the problems that face the world's people. The remainder of the task falls to us, acting as political units, as community organizations and as committed persons.

It is up to us to advance an Agenda of community development that rises from the conditions of our people. For this Agenda to become real, we must organize to demand it, not as temporary protest or pressure group faction, but as a new political force in American life whose time has come.

We base the following Agenda on the United States of America and hope that this example may serve as a basis for holistic empowerment for all of our oppressed sisters and brothers.

This document serves as a starting point for a discourse that we hope leads to a true revolution of mind, consciousness, worldview, and socio-political understanding. We reject the nationalistic and americentric ideals that bolster the ideal of the United States of America as a "superpower" at the center of the world it has created. We simply offer the United States of America as a case study, an example and framework of operation.

Like our revolutionary fore bearers we look inward first, in the hopes of solving and improving from the inside out. Just as Ernesto Che Guevara modeled his Guerilla Warfare ideology on the conditions in Central and South America because they were the countries and communities that shaped his political awareness, we are modeling our social change ideology in the country and communities that have shaped our existence. Like Guevara, we see the future clearly; we realize and are working toward a universal movement.

Our comrades on the continents of Africa, Asia, and South America must, under the dictates of self-determination, devise their own strategies of how to best work, live and effect social change. We offer our model as a building block just as we seek out the models of others to inform our small piece in the global struggle for independence.

Holistic Approaches

A holistic way of living must be incorporated into our everyday life. Holistic thinking moves us away from the "conditioned mindset" that supports the controlled consciousness of white supremacist "I" centered thinking. This white supremacist thinking is at direct odds with the communal, collective thinking necessary for a Pan-Africanist, humanist mode of thinking. The right (logical) and left (creative) brain work together to create a multidimensional (mind, body, spirit) mode of thinking. This holistic approach demands a consideration of how one's choices affect the community, their family, the work environment, and the world. Making conscious decisions in this way instills the type of morals, values and ethical standards that build accountability to, and in, the community.

Holism is the balance created by having all parts of oneself: mind, body, spirit/soul, health, and well-being in balance and communion with the self and the community. This balance operates to bring forth a clearer understanding of a tribal community. This understanding recognizes that one man or one woman cannot dominate a true community. It demands recognition of the divine balance created and maintained by the existence of female and male attributes functioning collectively in true partnership.

Holistic living and thinking is not taught in our schools because it works against the conditioning needed to make white supremacist patriarchal thinking work. Transmitting and implementing holistic thought and action in our daily lives will transmit a vibration that will mandate the preservation of a healthy people, culture and community.

Each generation has a purpose and a mission. We recognize that the concept of well being is often based on dysfunction and an anti-communal perspective of the self as the center of interaction. Because of this, our communities are in urgent need of holistic surgeons to resuscitate them. Recognizing our tribal community and approaching it with a holistic mind-set means creating a worldview based on notions of sharing:

"if you eat, we all are eating,"

"if you have knowledge, we all receive an education,"

"if you are not feeling well, we all play a part in nursing you back to good health,"

"if one achieves success, we all celebrate the victory,"

"if one prospers financially, the wealth is shared amongst the community"

ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

The current economic system in the United States, and the world, can never yield equality and justice for a majority of the world's people. Poverty, and all its resultant effects including war, crime, illness and mis-education, is predetermined and the purposeful outcome of this economic system. The economic positions of all the world's people are intimately linked, making significant economic change impossible without a variety of grassroots and community efforts. That said, we are pushing for a more accurate discussion of economics in order to develop methods for a more equitable distribution of wealth and services. Despite myths of scarcity, the earth provides plenty. There is no reason for so few to have so much while so many suffer unnecessarily.

It is important for us in the United States to recognize our position in an international economic system. Our economic destiny is now, as it always has been, intimately linked to those of the oppressed around the world. We must recognize that, though not well, we in America are better off than most in the world. At the same time, we are far worse off than those in power here and abroad. We are the world's house slaves. Across racial, ethnic and religious lines, we are house slaves residing in the masters' home while they create, in the words of Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur (D-Ohio), "corporate slums and global plantations with penny-wage jobs." We may be in a better position relative to those in the fields but we remain slaves nonetheless. We must use our relative prosperity to develop methods that will help those in the field. This offers our best chance to improve our economic condition.

The fundamental purpose of all economic systems is to determine who controls land, natural resources and labor. Regardless of the name given these systems (i.e. capitalism, socialism, communalism, communism, etc.) they all refer to various ways of distributing the wealth produced by land, natural resources and labor. If people are forced to viciously, compete for everything from essential food and water to housing and medicine they will behave differently than if such competition is not made necessary. Seen this way economics is best understood as a means of controlling human interaction, how people behave, think and act. This, in turn, determines who gets what and how much and this is the basis of all economic systems.

In the past European and American invaders used currency as a coercive method to force indigenous people to accept new systems of enslavement. Land and necessities, such as access to food and water, were seized and then parceled out only to those with the new currency. In order to get this new currency, the indigenous people of Africa and the Americas had little choice but to take the jobs offered them. Today, it is credit that is offered as the means to get needed and wanted items. We are offered credit, which then forces us to behave in a certain way to service that debt. In fact, when countries adjust national policy in

order to simply make interest payments on loans they have accepted, it is known as "servicing the debt." We are then in the service of that debt. Credit works locally just as international bank loans work globally. This is how a tiny minority of the world's population is able to control the vast majority of the world's population.

Economic systems are rarely described as having any cultural aspects but as these systems do affect social, intellectual, spiritual, political as well as economic development they are cultural. The economic system in which we find ourselves today is by its own cultural definition incapable of benefiting a world's majority. This system developed in a culture of private ownership, competition, rivalry, exploitation, greed and avarice. It requires an exploitable majority of people in order for it to produce an inordinately wealthy minority. By its nature, it must feed on the labor and poverty of the world's majority so that it may supply wealth to a few. A proper reading of the history of the United States clearly shows that this country was founded by business people for the benefit of business people.

This society has never been designed to perform its articulated ideals of democracy and equality. James Madison was clear when he said, describing his worries as a member of the elite, that they should have an ability to control the "tyranny of the majority." In no uncertain terms, those in power must have mechanisms in place to weaken the potential power of the majority of the citizens of this nation. Media confuses us, education lies to us and we are then left without an ability to interpret our environment, including our economic one.

Capitalism is the descendant of slavery and is based solely upon private ownership of industries, ideas, banks, and anything that can generate money. This, in turn, feeds the cultural viewpoint of individualism, personal rather than collective accumulation of wealth, goods and services and forces us into a cycle of harmful greed and competition. Competition is fine in game or sport but not when it is for the necessities of life such as food, water, and adequate health care or education.

Capitalism and democracy are often incorrectly described as interchangeable or one and the same. This confuses reality. Capitalism is an economic system whereas democracy is a method of governance that allows each citizen to be directly involved in the governing of her or his nation. Because capitalism is an economic system (a method of determining the distribution of wealth) whose only focus is private or individual accumulation of wealth and not societal well being it cannot be democratic. It cannot, by definition, allow a majority of the population to have its voice heard and followed. Open democracy threatens by "tyranny of the majority" the overwhelming wealth of the tiny minority. Democracy is weakened when, as is so today, 1% of the American population controls roughly 60% of the wealth and globally, 300 of the wealthiest people

are worth more than the poorest 3 billion. That leaves the rest of us to fight it out for what is left. This actually places capitalism at odds rather than in league with democracy. This helps explain the current appointment of an un-elected president.

Further evidence of the lack of democracy and the nature of this economic system can be found in just a brief look at "free trade." This supposed cornerstone of capitalism is yet another myth. The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) both assure that national sovereignty and democracy mean nothing compared to business profit. They weaken the ability of the countries of the Americas to determine their own economic course by forcing them to submit to the business interests of international and American corporations. The fact that they are agreements and not treaties allows them to be put in motion without any Congressional involvement and certainly no public discussion or explanation. Similarly, the World Trade Organization (WTO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank all function to maintain supremacy of the dollar over the will or well-being of the people of the world. These harmful economic policies that force people to go without food or clean water even resulted in the resignation of Joseph Stiglitz as the World Bank's chief economist and senior vice-president. However, understanding economics as a coercive method makes clear that these agreements and organizations serve their actual function; that is, to coerce the majority of the people of the world to succumb to the will and interests of an extremely small minority. By doing so they reveal our true relationship to the economic order.

A word or two about "Corporate Socialism" is in order. Let us be clear. While this nation's leaders talk publicly about individualism, big business and their paid for representatives in government practice a great deal of socialism among each other. Socialism, as an economic system, generally means a more equitable redistribution of wealth, goods and services. It means sharing wealth with more people. It might mean paying more taxes but in return, it would provide free education, health care and a guarantee of employment and housing. But, rather than discuss this issue, supporters of the current economic order refer to this, as "a welfare state." What is rarely properly discussed is that our current order is a welfare state for the wealthy. Our tax dollars fund big business in a variety of ways. Millions of acres of public lands containing minerals, timber, oil and grazing areas also belong to the public. But like the airwaves, government allows major corporations to use and abuse these resources for far less than their market value. It has also allowed public lands to be used even though ecological harm is likely to result.

The federal government is also the sponsor and steward of enormous stores of

federally sponsored research, reports and databases. Taxpayers have paid hundreds of millions of dollars for risky basic research for new medications, often resulting in major breakthroughs. Yet the profits -- and they are hefty -- typically accrue to the drug companies alone.

So what we have here is an elite that professes capitalism for the masses and practices socialism for each other. Perhaps the largest example of this is the Pentagon and the defense industry. The Pentagon is best seen as the world's largest transmitter of public funds to private business. Through the Pentagon corporations such as Lockheed Martin and Boeing have guaranteed perpetual contracts that are publicly funded and politically protected.

Similarly, "globalization" is tossed around as though it were new and at the same time is also never properly discussed. Economics has always been global. Africa, Asia and Native America had long interacted with the various nations in each society and across the globe with one another long before Europeans discovered the world was round. Europe as we now know it only exists due to the internationalization of their economic policies. The world outside of Europe discovered what European "globalization" meant starting in the 15th century through their conquest of Africa and the Americas. This same relationship remains intact as the modern form of globalization means Western domination of the world's land, labor and natural resources.

ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT ACTION AGENDA

We need an economic system that better distributes the wealth, goods and services produced by our society. We champion, at the core of any new economic system or thought process, the idea of collective responsibility and accountability. As solutions are easier to come by when there is consensus, we seek avenues with which to reach consensus, in general, and ways to apply cooperative economics specifically.

This is not an unknown phenomenon. Variations of socialism are in fact practiced in regions of the world right now. We have already mentioned the corporate version of socialism, but in countries like Austria, Holland, Denmark and Canada there is also a people's version in practice. For example, in these countries there is no unemployment, no homelessness and total access to education and healthcare as a result of their socialized policies. Parts of Africa, Asia and Latin America and certainly Cuba have attained or are striving for just such an arrangement. A relatively poor nation such as Cuba offers comprehensive healthcare and education. A pregnant woman in Cuba is given in-hospital care from three months before birth to three months after. There are no homeless and nobody is denied an education. We can look at these genuine examples for ideas and methods to follow.

We must create and support legislation that seeks to strengthen our ability to curtail the moves of big business. We must find ways to pool our wealth. Whether we patronize small businesses or create common funds to supply funding to each other for healthcare or schooling needs we must find ways to have our wealth help each other. Just as we provide the labor and funding that creates enormous wealth for others, we must begin to provide some for ourselves.

On a concrete level, we advocate a re-assessment of our role as consumers when "celebrating" Holidays (Christmas, Easter, Halloween, July 4th, New Year's Day, Valentine's Day, etc.). Often for the working poor, working class and middle class, these holidays result in actions that cause people to go into debt. We must recognize that these actions are counter-revolutionary. The money invested in "Christmas shopping" must end in order to redirect the cycle of financial support and spending in Black* communities. Furthermore, educational trainings must be offered on the origins and worship of "Corporate Gods" that prey on the gifts that do not provide equal reciprocity. This awareness should be supported by local, national and international economic boycotts.

Furthermore, we must begin to provide for one another so that we can explore the more positive tendencies of humanity. Current economic policy encourages the worst in humankind which leads to crime, violence, and cultural depravity. Once our basic life needs are met we can focus on other forms of enlightenment and access our humanity. An economic system that requires poverty cannot ever produce the healthy, free, safe and peaceful world most claim to want. There is also little incentive for those in power to offer change. We must not only demand change from leaders but produce it for ourselves.

POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT

The bondage of Black people in the United States has been sanctioned and perpetuated by the American political system – for the American political system is one of the politics dedicated to the preservation of white supremacist, patriarchal power. It was white supremacist politics that enslaved Black people and disenfranchised them without a second thought. It was white supremacist, patriarchal politics that enlisted Black men into the Union Army in the Civil War and then cruelly betrayed them when the white Republic was restored. It was white supremacist, patriarchal politics that marauded Mexico and plundered the Philippines, raped Latin America and sought and still greedily seeks to possess Africa and subjected Asia to its will. It is white supremacist, patriarchal politics that daily exposes itself as a politics of bribery, corruption, special privilege and moral dishonor. And it is white supremacist, patriarchal politics that now has brought America to be sneered at and despised by the majority of the worlds people.

White supremacist, patriarchal politics is the politics of racism. It cannot be made to work on the behalf of the aspirations and the ideals of human justice; it can only be a politics of racism. It cannot deliver Blacks* from the clutches of Babylon.

At this moment in history Black* people must, to an extent, “choose sides.” We must be clear that we are either on the side of our communities and of humanity or that we are on the side of personal and financial gain at the expense of others. This is the decision that will affect our future in the Americas. This is the decision that Blacks* must honestly face with all its implications and with all its meanings.

The plight of Black* people is the result of the workings of the American system. Our political Agenda then must transcend this system; it must speak boldly and without reservation to the problems of Black* people now and in the future. Understanding this, we are proposing an eventual development of an independent political party.

We need to expose and hold accountable those who by claim represent the people but who, by action, in fact do not.

POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT ACTION AGENDA

Our political Agenda must transcend the United States of America's supremacist, patriarchal system. It must speak boldly and without reservation to the problems of Black* people now and in the future. We must align ourselves with the international Black* Agenda to meet this goal. We must help to equip Black* people with the tools needed to use balance-for-power politics effectively by creating a through understanding and use of available political power.

As Organized C.O.U.P. membership grows and becomes more sophisticated, we will seek input in the implementation of our plan to become a political party that will fill in the gaps that currently exist in the disproportioned and misrepresenting government. With this action we intend to fill the seats that control Black* schools, local, state, federal, and judicial governments where Black* people are the majority, and abroad, so that those who truly work in the interest of Black* people will be in a position to do so.

Our tactics should be multi-directional. We must register and, most importantly, educate voters on candidates and issues. In our nation's capital this means assisting movements that seek full enfranchisement for Washington, DC residents. We also seek to provide community activist education and assistance programs around the country. This serves to encourage voters to become aware of the issues -both real and discussed- and take their involvement in politics beyond the act of voting. We must inform voters that the only way they can have true democracy and access to power is to vote their conscious. That means suspending forever the notion of voting for the "lesser of two evils" and putting our votes where they will potentially be of use. This again necessitates supporting an independent political party. The donkey and the elephant are both wolves.

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

In every phase of our history in America, the Human Development of people of African descent and the poor has been seriously impeded because of the essential commitment of society, in general, to white supremacy. Because we, Black* people, do not control the instruments and institutions of social, cultural and educational development we have been, and are now, a colony, living in the midst of a society committed to values other than the development of the human spirit.

Worldwide the proper emphasis and respect for basic human rights, liberties and freedoms is not a priority. Instead, those in power champion the rights of the wealthy and powerful at the expense of the majority of humanity. We seek the development and implementation of programs that place respect for humanity above all else.

The development of community will lead us to the creation of a world society based on human rights. In order to accomplish this aim we must break the bonds of colonization,⁶ create new institutions, and wrest control of existing institutions from the hands of white supremacist patriarchal governance. We must define the human development we need, and we must move to create the necessary conditions for its realization.

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT ACTION AGENDA

Human Development is at the core of transforming our communities. Despite classism,⁷ how rich or poor you are, what side of the neighborhood you live in, the job title you have under your name, the designer name attached to the clothing you wear, political and/or social status in society you are a HUMAN BEING first. We must collectively organize to regain the essence of being human by acknowledging that we have inalienable *human rights*. Knowing this, we must treat each other as such, instead of interacting with one another based solely on material possessions, wealth and perceived personal gain. We are not that far gone!

Take a tour of your neighborhood (near and far) to survey the human needs in your community. Speak to individuals and families to find out what needs to be done to make our communities functional and harmonious. In so doing, we can begin to assess the immediate and long term needs of the community, restore relationships with our neighborhood and begin movements toward the mental, physical, spiritual, social and economic change we absolutely need to transform our communities.

With such goals in mind, we offer these elements as part of a working Agenda for Black* human development, recognizing the centrality of the Black* family to all aspects of our growth. This Agenda will include, but is not limited to, the development of African centered education in our schools. Such education will develop a much needed appreciation of our culture and our contributions to society. We also seek to systematically review the treatment and legal status of Black people within mental institutions and prisons, to establish rehabilitative alternatives to the prison industrial complex using Measure 62, which seeks to establish alternatives to jail time for nonviolent drug offences, as an example of the kinds of alternatives we advocate. Measures like these work to ensure that no one's human rights are infringed.

INTERNATIONAL POLICY

Because the history and culture of Black people is fundamentally related to our African birthright, we are concerned about the movement of colonized African countries from subjugation to independence and from neo-colonized states to fully independent ones. African people are dominated, exploited and brutalized by Europeans, and particularly the NATO powers- headed by the United States. This situation manifests itself not only in Africa but also in Vietnam, the Middle East, the Caribbean and other places in the Third and Pan-African World. It is worldwide military imperialism.

The situation of global white oppression arose because "westerners" needed to expand their control of resources, cheap labor and raw materials into African and the "Third World" in order to continue to reap profits. These countries seek to protect their domination and exploitation through the establishment of treaties that provide for military bases and communication facilities used to suppress Africa and "Third World" revolutions and maintain the racist status quo.

Therefore, Black people will no longer abdicate their international responsibilities. Instead, we must support an international policy Agenda designed to create a truly independent world. Furthermore, We seek to re-actualize, with the assistance of the African Union, the non-aligned movement that began in the 1960s for the advancement of the Black* international Agenda.

INTERNATIONAL POLICY ACTION AGENDA

As it stands now domestic colonies - the poor, mostly African and Latin American population- and foreign nations constitute a vast array of cheap labor and plentiful natural resources but beyond that our well-being is of little importance. We must understand that until this changes we cannot expect that majority of the world's people will ever see equality, safety and peace.

In Africa, this would mean supporting pan-African ideals with socialized and people-first tendencies. This would include supporting debt-relief from IMF and World Bank loans, which should be immediately cancelled. This cancellation is based on the fact that Western wealth is entirely based on African resources. We support the development of a strong and independent African Union, one that achieves the original, un-realized goals of the Organization of African Unity. In so doing, this new African Union will operate on a pan-Africanist and socialist course that benefits the people of the continent of Africa and not multinational corporations and "first-world" countries. We support the complete reworking or the eradication of the most recent attempt at neocolonial rule, New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD).

We support economic independence for the continent of Africa and seek to help the continent achieve self-sufficiency, thus ending their role as the supplier of labor and raw materials for European, American and other imperialists. We seek to effect the worldwide disintegration of the economic and political control and racist exploitation of African and "Third World" people by Europeans and Americans. We also seek to dissolve the myth that programs like the African Growth and Opportunity Act and trade promotion by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank help develop African economic independence.

We must support an end to the debt that "Third World" countries owe European banks and countries considering that these European countries base and owe their wealth and existence to the theft of African land and labor. These loans are what allow foreign domination of economies, political structures and cultural expression and development. We must support an end of this type of globalization⁸; this neo-colonial relationship between all nations and people must end.

Further, we must revisit the situation of the African continent. Given that so much of the world's sustenance, culture, spirit and natural resources come from the continent of Africa, we must support a drastic change the relationship of African countries have with one another and the global community. We must regain the focus and vision of the great revolutionary leaders from Queen Nzinga, Steve Biko, Amilcar Cabral, Kwame Nkrumah, Sekou Toure, Tom Mboya, Julius Nyere and Nomzamo Winnie Madikizela-Mandela. . .

COMMUNICATIONS

Media is the most effective method of social control and conditioning. This was recognized by Samuel Cornish and John Russwurm, who in 1827 created the *Freedoms Journal*, the first African-American newspaper. The main purpose of *Freedoms Journal* was to properly inform the Black Community. Their mission was to provide the information and perspective purposefully kept from us by those in power. We must recognize that this reality is even more powerful and more apparent today and move accordingly.

This requires challenging, "Black journalists" to stop referring to themselves based solely on complexion. We must demand that they make the phrase applicable to only those who perform their duties for the community. Independently wealthy and/or famous Black personalities are of no more use to the average African-American than their white counterparts. A Black journalist must be someone who can properly explain not only the full story, but also how it relates to Black and oppressed people. Without this minimum requirement, we are simply supporting Black-faced representatives of the same evil. The National Association of Black Journalists is one place we must start; this organization must be challenged to move beyond being another Black social club. It must aid Black* people in our need for succinct and relevant information otherwise it is useless.

As the Congressional Black Caucus has said, ". . .it is still impossible to find in the media anything like an adequate picture of Black culture and Black lifestyles." With these realities in mind, we move toward a Black Agenda for Communications.

COMMUNICATIONS ACTION AGENDA

We must support and develop independent media sources. We can no longer accept making money as an excuse for poor dissemination of information. Currently, the media -including television, radio, film and literature- does more than schools to "educate" our people. This is dangerous because this monopolization of the industry this means that fewer and fewer people will be able to determine what we see, read and hear. We cannot turn our education and need for information over to those who would prefer we knew nothing at all.

We must revive the mission set forth in 1827 by John Russwurm and Samuel Cornish. In founding the first African American publication, *Freedom's Journal*, they called for an independent voice that would take the responsibility of informing the population away from the enslaver and give it to the people whose own views were ignored. That mandate is as necessary today as it has ever

been in human history. The ability for images and sound bytes to manipulate entire populations of people cannot be overstated nor can it be ignored.

The Telecommunications Acts of 1967 and 1996 in television and radio and a general monopolization in publishing and music distribution have made the freedom of exchange all but impossible in major media as power has been given to the advertisers over the viewing public. This means we have little say on what is shown, discussed, printed or heard. We cannot expect that the owners of these media will willingly pass along information that would properly inform the populace. We understand that if everyone knew tomorrow what happens on a daily basis in our world there would be a revolution by nightfall. So do the owners.

We must not only be critical of the media, we must become the media.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Energy and environment are essential for sustainable human development. The poor are disproportionately affected by environmental degradation and lack of access to clean affordable energy services. These issues are also global as climate change, loss of biodiversity and ozone layer depletion cannot be addressed by countries acting alone. Traditionally, the United Nations has led the way in the development and implementation of environmental initiatives. While these initiatives are researched and formulated with the best of intentions and with a true desire to help the environment and the lives of rural people all over the world, they have repeatedly failed to improve the lives and living conditions of the world's poor. The United Nations is largely controlled by the United States government and through the U.S., multinational corporations. The white supremacist patriarchal structure inherent in this relationship makes the aforementioned goals impossible.

In the United States, rural Blacks have historically been subjected to the lash of Southern oppression and terror. We have always lived under a political and economic system that limits the rights of political and economic participation, and circumscribes our capacity for growth and development. Governmental policy and practice has historically sought to repress our self-determination, manage and control our rate of progress, and often deny our very existence. Our material environment is characterized by the worst the American social system has to offer.

Worldwide, housing for the poor is structurally unsound and is, more often than not, unfit for habitation. The poor around the world control none of the housing production processes; they are mainly tenants forced to work and survive under the yoke of wealthy landowners that hold a monopoly on the world's land. Even the land, on which the poor have toiled for centuries, has seldom been ours to own, control, or pass on to our heirs. Health services, when they are available, are of low quality, high cost and outside the control of our communities.

The recent technological revolution in agriculture has been particularly vexing for the world's poor, agricultural labor. This labor, long a valued commodity, has been rendered virtually useless. When other jobs are available for the poor, they are generally low-waged, debasing, and short-lived. Many of the world's people live on as little as two dollars a day or without any income at all.

Faced with these conditions, we are left with few real options. In the U.S., millions have fled in a forced exodus from the rural South, seeking refuge in northern cities. Others, perhaps a quarter of the nation's Black population, have

remained to eke out a living as a landless class with no rights that are respected by the dominant society. The situation is repeated worldwide.

In many places around the world and especially on the African continent, we are in the midst of the second or third consecutive year of food shortages. The causes of the food crisis are complex and vary from country to country. They, in different proportions, reflect a mixture of poverty and vulnerability, bad weather, poor governance, bad advice from donors and economic collapse.

We believe that food security is a human right and should be top priority for all people and their governing bodies. Food production is fragile and needs to be carefully thought-out and carefully implemented policies, not policies driven by white supremacy and its' dogma, political opportunism or hypocrisy. At the same time as African farmers are told they can no longer have free seeds or fertilizers, some U.S. farmers are receiving an average \$20,000 a year in subsidies - which is soon to increase by 70% - and EU farmers \$16,000.

Genetic engineering⁹ in agriculture has significantly increased the economic uncertainty of family farmers throughout the U.S. and the world. American farmers have lost critical markets in the U.S. and Europe, which are closed to genetically engineered products. In African, as famine threatens to kill thousands U.S. corporations are "cashing in" on this near disaster to push genetically modified foods that have been rejected by U.S. and European consumers on a starving populace. Corporate control of the seed supply also threatens the financial independence of farmers worldwide. The risk of genetic drift has made it difficult and expensive for farmers to market a pure product. Genetic engineering has created social and economic disruption that threatens traditional agricultural practices for farmers around the world. Farmers, who have maintained the consumer's trust by producing safe, reasonably priced and nutritious food, now fear losing that trust as a result of consumer rejection of genetically engineered foods. Many scientists believe genetically engineered organisms have been released into the environment and the food supply without adequate testing.

Genetic engineering empowers corporate agribusiness to accelerate capital and chemical intensive agriculture at the expense of family farmers and rural communities around the world, increases corporate concentration in agriculture, and poses unknown risks to the safety and security of the food supply. Genetic engineering disrupts traditional agricultural practices creating social upheaval in rural communities and threatening agrarian cultures throughout the world. The corporate ownership of genetic resources and the corporate use of genetic engineering in agriculture is not designed to solve the problems farmers face in agriculture such as increased weed resistance, growing staple crops on marginal land, or making traditionally bred crops available to farmers worldwide, but rather to enrich corporations. In Zambia, for example, the recent rejection of

GMO's has led to media sources declaring a national food shortage, this declaration has been, according to Zambia's leaders, a grave exaggeration on the part of "western" media in the hope that worldwide pressure will force the government to reconsider it's stance against genetically modified foods.

The "human condition" of Black* people in the world is a product of white supremacist racism and is aggravated by economic dependency. The absence of sovereignty and a land base also contribute substantially to our condition of powerlessness, and powerlessness leads to serious disparities in the allocation of capital resources, services, and social overhead investments to our communities.

While much of what constitutes our condition is clearly the work, design, and capriciousness of our oppressors, we must not totally remove ourselves from blame. Far too often, we choose to support economically White supremacist enterprises, deals, plans and programs that are detrimental to our own self-interest as a people. It is, therefore, incumbent upon us to organize and mobilize to develop and support our own enterprises. Nothing less than our total resolve, resources, and energy are required to save and rebuild our communities.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION **ACTION AGENDA**

In rural communities, the worldwide environmental problems loom large and threaten the basic ways of life of all community inhabitants. The recent trends and moneymaking ventures of multinational corporations; water privatization, land-lease programs and the like have significantly impaired the ability of these communities to simply survive. We are seeking new ways to improve the lives of rural and poor communities in ways that are environmentally advantageous to the planet.

Old ways of living are not working anymore. We must work toward more cooperative relationships, conserving lifestyles, and stronger mutual support to achieve new ways of using energy and materials. Both demographic realities and ecological constraints will eventually force us into a new approach to being neighbors, families, friends, co-workers. We badly need practical tools to help in this great transition to sustainable living.

The critical impact of environmental pollutants - noise, air, solid waste, sewage, rodents and pests, and lead poisoning - on Black inner-city residents has not yet been fully recognized. So far, the major thrust of the ecology movement has been directed toward environmental issues that do not adequately protect the health and life of Black urban dwellers.

The major consequence of the present policies and practices of industrial plants, slumlords, and governmental agencies is the powerful pollute, while the powerless suffer the atrocities of the pollution. The residue from leaded gasoline as emitted by motor vehicles accounts for more than 90 per cent of the carbon monoxide found in cities. Carbon monoxide blood poisoning can result from the continuous inhalation of such pollutants. In the world's cities street noise, which has been increasing at the rate of one decibel a year, often exceeds the minimal safety levels set for industrial workers.

Developments in alternative energy sources; i.e. solar and wind powered energy need to be further explored and then implemented around the world. We hope to work in conjunction with organizations and think tanks the world over that are trying to eradicate worldwide environmental inequalities that adversely effect the world's poor. In so doing, we seek to develop and implement environmental policies that benefit our communities.

One new way of living is the creation of an Urban Cooperative Block (UCB) which acts to bring neighbors together and shows how a cluster of existing older single-family houses and lots can be upgraded, and units, bedrooms, and common facilities added to create a self-reliant urban community. It calls for the removal of back yard fences and the creation of common areas and amenities for the benefit of all the members while also designing for private and semi-private spaces. This is the highest level of ecologically sustainable development, because it creates self-reliant community living in the city where the maximum of cultural, educational, social, and livelihood opportunities are to be found, especially when the UCB is located in a transit village, near a local rail station and major bus lines. Revitalization instead of gentrification of older neighborhoods allows for the infill, reuse, rehab, and redesign of existing low-density housing into mixed-density and ecological cluster villages. The UCB is the most affordable way to provide mixed income housing without having to invest large capital for all-new construction or major rehabilitation. Co-ownership, self-management, self-help, and sweat equity improvements are the ways that self-reliant communities can provide empowerment and affordability. This complete urban intentional community can be organized with small businesses, work and tool shops, child-care center, gardens and fruit trees, food processing center, and social, play, and recreation areas. The UCB community is the way for a diversity of people to share mutual resources and contribute to the ending of poverty. It is affordable living not just affordable housing.

SELF-DETERMINATION FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

The health status of many District residents is shocking. Life expectancy for DC men is 10 years below the national average, for women 5 years. For Black men in DC, the life expectancy is now 58 years or less, for Black women 72. The life expectancy for Black men in the District is lower than for any nation in this hemisphere except for Haiti. This shortened lifespan is a direct result of income inequality and shorter life spans. The District of Columbia compared to other states reveals that DC has the highest income inequality in the nation. DC's ratio of the top fifth to bottom fifth of average income of families with children is 27 to 1, \$203,110 to \$7,498, compared to the national ratio of 10 to 1. DC's ratio just a decade ago was 16. The middle fifth of family income, averaging \$36,918, has not kept up with inflation.

At least one half of DC's children still live in poverty, the highest rate in the nation and DC has the highest child death rate in the nation. In the District, one in four children under 12 years old are either hungry or at risk of being hungry. AIDs and TB infection have spread like wildfire in our community as a result of the racist and genocidal drug war and cutbacks in preventative health care. Many District residents lack health care and must rely on understaffed emergency room treatment. There are over 80,000 uninsured people, 15,000 children.

None of these crises has been addressed by the elected government of the District of Columbia, largely because this government has been paid for by corporate interests. The Control Board was created by Congress on the pretext of eliminating a large budget deficit. However, the real Agenda of this un-elected body has been to promote privatization, a process that weakens income security for workers and the poor, thereby increasing economic inequality.

Accelerating gentrification and economic development for corporate interests is eroding the remaining democratic rights of District residents. The District has become a laboratory for Structural Adjustment and neoliberal globalization

This restructuring of the economy of the Metro DC area is the local application of neoliberal¹⁰ policies. Policies set by transnational banks and corporations which result in growing polarization of rich and poor. The World Bank is a sponsor of the Economic Resurgence plan for the District. World Bank economist and developing courtiers privatization specialist Darius Mans, sits on the Control Board. This "economic resurgence" will benefit the wealthy while driving out the working class of the District.

The dramatic divisions between the District's haves and have-nots widened over the 1990s, according to new census data that show a growing number of rich and poor even as the middle class is shrinking.

In 1996, the Human Rights Committee of the United Nations issued General Comment 25, which held that the status of the residents of the District to be a flagrant violation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The U.S., along with 136 nations ratified this Covenant. The lack of full congressional representation of DC residents and continued erosion of home rule are direct violations of the Covenant's Article 25 which guarantees the right of every citizen to participate in national and local government through elected representatives. It holds that every citizen has the right to "take part in the conduct of public affairs, directly or through freely chosen representatives", to vote and to be elected by "universal and equal suffrage" and to have access to public service on "general terms of equality".

The U.S. government, with the near complete acquiescence of DC government, continues to stand in clear contempt of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Signed by the United States in 1995; the U.S. along with Somalia are the only nations in the world which have still not ratified this Convention. This Convention asserts that all children have the right to the highest standard of health and medical care attainable. All of these social and economic rights have been systematically violated as a result of DC budget cutting, implementation of the national welfare reform, and the continued denial of political rights of District residents.

SELF-DETERMINATION FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA ACTION AGENDA

We seek to work with local District organizations that are working to assure equal right to the residents of the District of Columbia. We stand in solidarity with these groups and their demands for first-class American citizenship for D.C. residents. We recognize that the lack of self-determination affects education, health care, criminal justice, jobs, housing, and the very quality of life for the residents of the nation's capital. We, through educational forums, voter education, citizenship training, and local, national and international outreach, hope to help improve the conditions of those who live in the District

We demand the end of taxation without representation and full voting representation in the US Congress; in both the Senate and the House of Representatives. We want for District residents to have local control over DC's budget; ending the Congressional Appropriations process for locally raised tax-dollars. We seek local control over DC laws and an end to the Congressional review and veto powers over locally approved laws, ballot initiatives, and referenda which impede that control. Furthermore we seek the removal of the

Congressionally imposed riders to DC's budget, such as the annual prohibitions on clean needle exchange, and DC's medical marijuana Initiative 59. An effective needle exchange for intravenous drug users would greatly contribute to the fight against the spread of HIV and AIDS, a near epidemic in the District. A District wide sexual education program for the teens of our nation's capitol would greatly reduce the spread of HIV and AIDS as well as other sexually transmitted diseases.

We demand an accountable judicial/criminal justice system, including an elected Attorney General for DC, and elected local judges, the return of the District's incarcerated-population, prosecuted under local law, to facilities locally controlled and accessible. We want the right to tax income earned in the District of Columbia, so that suburban commuters pay their fair share of the services they use. We oppose the federally mandate death penalty. We stand in solidarity with DC residents who overwhelming oppose the imposition of the death penalty on District residents.

Finally, we seek the restoration of the federal payment, so that DC taxpayers are compensated for tax-free federal properties and Congressionally mandated tax-exempt organizations.

¹ We recognize that the term Black needs to be reexamined. As scholar Manning Marable states in his article "Clarence Thomas and the Crisis of Black Political Culture" (*Race-ing Justice, En-Gendering Power*, Toni Morrison, ed. 1992 Pantheon) "Racial identity is essentially passive, a reality of being within a social formation stratified by the oppressive concept of race. . . ethnically (some). . . have ceased to be. . . African-American, in the context of political culture, social values and ideals, and commitment to collective interests." As such, terms like Black, African, African-American etc. can no longer be used as the yardstick and marker of community. Marable goes on to state that "the fundamental contradiction inherent in the notion of integrationist 'symbolic representation' is that it presumes a degree of structural accountability and racial solidarity that binds that Black public figure with the larger masses of African-Americans. . . in the post-civil-rights period, in the absence of legal structures of formal discrimination, the bonds of cultural kinship, social familiarity and human responsibility that had once linked the most affluent and upwardly mobile African-Americans with their economically marginalized sisters and brothers were severely weakened.

With this reality in mind, we, for purposes of historical continuity, continue to use the term Black with the understanding that not all people of African descent fall under this term. We also seek to expound on the term Black to incorporate and connote a much larger social and political understanding and solidarity. All the world's oppressed stand in solidarity. This solidarity reaches beyond notions of race, gender, and sexuality and addresses the real problems of the people. Liberated from the 'divide and conquer' mentality that has enslaved humanity we seek to unite against our common enemy. . . oppression. This solidarity creates a reality in which all oppressed people are "Black." As such, the term Black in this document connotes all such people.

² . **Self-determination** is a term that is often used in dialogues and action plans for freedom. This term, however, is one that begs explanation. Self-determination is a doctrine that holds that the actions of a self are and should be determined by that self. It is a state that is free from external compulsion imposed by force or correction. In our model, we use and define self-determination as an inalienable right. Simply put, it is the determination of the people. This determination has historically been understood as one that relates to political status of a territorial group. We seek to expand this definition to include the ability of people to self-regulate and self-resolve actions in all aspects of life. Self-determination is guaranteed access to adequate health care, education and protection of civil and human rights. This guarantee can potentially come from either or both the federal government and community itself. True independence is derivative of self-determination in that it comes from the ability of a given community or people to determine the course of their society. This cannot occur without access to the basic rights just described. Determining the course of a society refers to having a meaningful voting process and having equal and total access to these same rights.

Independence is a term everyone is familiar with but that most recognize as something that few have ever experienced it on any level. Because of the lack of experiential understanding, we find it necessary to define its nature in relation to the current condition of people. Let us be clear; independence is freedom, the act of showing a desire for freedom, and absence of constraint, a state of self-governing where one that is not controlled by or subject to the control of others, a reality free from force, not being compelled to look to others (outside of one's self) for one's opinions or guidance. Not being bound to or by another. The state is free from definite commitment to a political party or entity.

³ . **White Supremacy** is most often defined as the social, economic, and political oppression and exploitation of nonwhite peoples, esp. Blacks, by white people, based on notions of racial superiority. While this definition is accurate, it again, introduces the binary of Black versus white at the exclusion of all others that we are seeking to overcome. By deleting all of the "non-Black" and "non-white" peoples of the world from a large part of the discussion once again, the powers of dominance and oppression divide those that they oppress. The social and political oppression is best evident in the practice of institutionalized racism and neocolonialism. Capitalism is the economic expression of white supremacy.

⁴ **Third World**; We understand that the term "third world" is a euphemism created to perpetuate that "third world" countries are underdeveloped, poor, ill-technological, uneducated, primitive. This term gives people the overall sense that a country is behind in all ways. This also installs into the minds of those who live in "second world" and "first world" countries that those who live in "third world" countries are inferior to those who live in "first and second world" countries and creates a sense of superiority. We also recognize that the majority of countries labeled "third world" are countries of color and the majority of countries labeled "first and second world" are white countries, fabricating an awareness of white supremacy in the world. We do not consent with the propaganda characterized onto "third world" countries and therefore recognize that the term "third world" does not exist, out of a consciousness that all people are created equal regardless of race and prosperity. This is likewise with the words minority and majority, the reality is that white people of European descent they are the minority and "colored" people are the 'majority'. For more information on how this relationship is manifest in economic matters see our section on Economics.

⁵ **Wholistic Empowerment** is enfranchisement in the political, social and economic structure of society, as well as a cultural and historical input in society. We do not want Black* people in the United States to just have a sit in or fit into the system, we want Black people of the United States to have their culture recognized as being inexplicably intertwined in all aspects of society.

⁶ In order to understand **colonization** and the ways in which it affects Black* people the world over we must first examine the nature of imperialism. Colonization is a direct result of imperialism; colonization cannot and does not exist without imperialism. Imperialism simply, is an extension of power by a state or government in order to control another country or people economically, politically, and culturally. Imperialism dates back to the establishment of Persian, Chinese and Roman Empires but most recently applies to the European expansion of the last 4 centuries. In those 400 years, European nations colonized the Americas, parts of Asia and most of the African continent. Colonialism is a variety of imperialism. The main distinction between the two being that while imperial expansion may result in the political integration of a conquered territory, a colony is by definition an exploited subordinate of the "dominant country." The colonial occupation of large parts of Africa was often cloaked in benign rationales that assumed the cultural and racial superiority of Europeans, who saw themselves as bring civilization, progress, and Christianity to "backward, primitive" non-white people. In the modern or postcolonial world imperialism has taken subtler, more insidious forms. For example, in the so-called cultural imperialism by which Western (white supremacist, patriarchal, capitalist) values, consumer fashions, and popular culture infiltrate other countries through the power of mass media and economic influence. Colonization is the condition of having a people's politics, economics and social lives controlled by another group. We recognize this as being analogous to the condition in which African, Latin and most poor Americans live. Politically, and particularly with African and Latin Americans (the Native American situation is largely different, not better nor worse, but different), our leadership is generally selected or determined by an outside ruling body and administered through a local version of international colonialism and neo-colonialism. In America, political leaders are determined more by the amount of money they can raise from wealthy donors than by their connection to voters. This is how an elite class can rule through someone else. On the global level, this practice is conducted by the International Monetary Fund and World Bank- wealth private investors give money to whichever leader or group that will behave to their liking. These institutions often pressure so-called third world countries into patterns of development that favor the corporate interests of the industrialized world. The term **neocolonialism** is used to describe the economic domination of developing countries by transnational corporations seeking raw materials, cheap labor, and new markets.

Economically, we stand in solidarity with the workers of the world. Just as the workers in other countries represent cheap labor to the countries and corporations that sponsor them. We too provide cheap labor that is poorly educated, living with little or no excess to adequate health care and living conditions. These conditions cause here, as they do the world over, poor relationships with defenders of property and law, the police domestically and armed forces internationally. These conditions create a system where African-Americans are treated as animals by animals in domestic law enforcement and why workers in Nigeria and Colombia are slaughtered by militaries that are themselves agents of the more powerful "western" nations. In all cases, we are underpaid and under provided for in terms of health care and education.

Socially, our lives are negatively affected as a result of the political and economic abuse under which we suffer. This manifests itself in several forms; from having status and access to goods and services determined by skin color to having music and art that we create co-opted and resold to us at enormous mark-ups with little monetary benefit reaching the originators. This is evident most clearly in music but also appears equally in art, literature and so on. This creates the "cultural genocide" that Dr. King described.

⁷ At this time, we also seek to address **classism** and classist notions of superiority and difference. We define a class as our oppressors do. It denotes a group that shares the same social and economic status, as a group, set or kind sharing common attributes, a division or rating based on grade or quality, those having common status. Reflectively it connotes a collective reality and world-view. For too long race, religion, so-called nationality, sexuality and age have divided us in our social movements. We recognize that in order to build a future that is not based on the reactionary tactics of white supremacy and white supremacist culture we must eliminate these derisive ideals. We recognize that this system of categorization has been imposed by our oppressors; those inhabitants of our planet that seek to dominate. Often depicted as the white, European male lawgiver because historically it has been accurate in this new era of social and political consciousness and struggle we recognize the true nature of oppression. We reclaim the definition of class offered above and seek to unite ourselves with the working people of the world. We recognize our community.

⁸ Globalization can be most simply defined as the expansion of global linkages that organize or re-organize social life on global scale resulting in the growth of global consciousness, hence consolidation of world society. More accurately, globalization is simply euphuism for the consolidation of white power and supports the corporation and corporate building over nation states and nationalism. It is responsible of the erosion of democracy and for the lack of sovereignty that people have over their own lives. Historically globalization has resulted in the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade, and the eradication of the Indigenous populations of most of our planet. The term globalization connotes the exploitation of the few over the many. We stand in solidarity with those looking to build a global society based on human kindness and compassion. We work in solidarity with those seeking to redefine globalization so that it reflects the definition that we have offered. We reject the notions of globalization offered by the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and many of the world's multinational corporations. We recognize that their purview is one of exploitation and control.

⁹ **Genetic engineering** involves taking a gene from one species and splicing it into another to transfer a desired trait. This could not occur in nature where the transfer of genetic traits is limited by the natural barriers that exist between different species and in this way genetic engineering is completely new and incomparable to traditional animal and plant breeding techniques. Genetic engineering is also called biotechnology. Another name for genetically engineered crops is genetically modified organisms (GMOs).

¹⁰ **Neoliberalism** is the theory that the market should be left to function without burdensome regulation or social constraints, including the social safety net, environmental and occupational protection, and labor rights. The World Bank and IMF have led the way in transforming the global economy following the neoliberal agenda.