

## An Interplay of Shadows and Light: The Decolonial Potential of Red-Black Unity (Part 1)

Ward Churchill

*Editor's Abstract:* This essay traces the history of Red-Black unity within the context of U.S. settler colonialism and is presented in two parts. Here is the first and the second will be published in *Zanj* Volume 3, Number 2.

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We have sunk to a depth at which the restatement of the obvious is [our] first duty.  
— George Orwell

“Mainstream America,” more accurately described as the U.S. settler society,<sup>1</sup> received quite a jolt on the evening of November 2, 1972. Fully expecting the nightly television news to focus as usual on the wrap-up phase of incumbent president Richard Nixon’s reelection campaign, it was instead greeted by the lead story that several hundred American Indians had seized the Interior Department’s Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) headquarters building in Washington, D.C. With the notion of Indians as having long since “vanished” from the popular consciousness, other than as the dehumanizing stereotypes endlessly replicated in a couple thousand Hollywood westerns and

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<sup>1</sup> The U.S. is by definition a colonial settler state. This is to say that it originated as a cluster of overseas colonies established primarily by England along the eastern seaboard of Great Turtle Island (North America) with the goal of replacing the peoples indigenous to the impacted area(s) with steadily increasing numbers of English settlers. During the late eighteenth century, of course, the settlers asserted their independence from “Mother England” by force of arms, establishing a “postcolonial” state—conceived as a slave-holding “empire of liberty” imbued with the “manifest destiny” of expanding across the continent “from sea to shining sea”—in which they themselves, and such other “free white men” as they could recruit in coming decades, would comprise the entire citizenry. While citizenship criteria were later modified, the notion of an American “mainstream,” alternately styled as “the general population,” continues to reflect the settlers’ founding racial conception of “national identity” (a matter inseparably linked to the ongoing reality of white privilege). Needless to say, the territorial construction of the U.S. was at every step contingent upon expropriating the homelands of indigenous peoples, while maintaining the resultant “domestic” empire requires our ongoing colonial subjugation. See generally, Hixson 2013; Horne 2018; and Saito 2020.

embodied in sports team mascots/names like the Washington “Redskins,”<sup>2</sup> the very idea that we not only continued to exist in actual human form was undoubtedly jarring in itself. That we might be angry about the real-world circumstances attending our “disappearance” and engaging in a forceful corrective action was all the more so.

Predictably, no time was allowed for those inside to explain the nature of the issues before riot-equipped capitol police began to mass nearby, openly gearing up to evict those inside from their newly acquired “Native American Embassy.” The occupiers, all part of a broader coalition calling itself the Trail of Broken Treaties but spearheaded by members of the American Indian Movement (AIM), quickly barricaded the building and set about fashioning weapons with which to defend it. It was then that the next shock materialized in the form of “Black Power firebrand” Stokely Carmichael, who, neatly reversing America’s hallowed on-screen narrative of blue-coated cavalymen arriving just in the nick of time, appeared on the scene, deployed a contingent of burly security personnel, and announced to a scrum of wide-eyed reporters that, “If the cops want to get at those Indians, they’re going to have to come through *us* to do it.”<sup>3</sup>

This altered the equation significantly, since, as White House staffer Bradley Patterson put it at the time, Carmichael had succeeded in “raising the specter of Washington’s Black community, making common cause with the Indian occupiers.”<sup>4</sup> Nixon, anxious to contain the increasingly volatile situation before voters headed to the polls on November 7, quickly called off the police assault and dispatched a pair of negotiators—White House special counsel Leonard Garment and future deputy CIA Director/Secretary of Defense Frank Carlucci, then running the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO)—to cut a deal enticing the Broken Treaties group to leave both quickly and quietly.<sup>5</sup> By the afternoon of the 5th, however, it was clear that the usual ploys—offering those perceived as leaders “career opportunities” or running short-term “development

<sup>2</sup> It should be emphasized that, contrary to popular misconception, the term “redskins” is *not* simply a racist epithet referring to a melanin supposedly peculiar to America’s indigenous peoples. Rather, it was/is slang for scalps taken as proof of death of American Indian men, women, and children (including infants), for which bounties were paid at one time or another by every English colony along the eastern seaboard of North America, as well as every U.S. state and territory until the late nineteenth century. Under Massachusetts’ 1755 Phips Proclamation, for example, the bounty was set at £50 each for adult male scalps, £25 each adult female scalps, and £20 each for scalps of children under twelve years of age. The formula became much simpler over time. In Minnesota, for instance, “The State reward for dead Indians” as of late September 1863 was “\$200 for every red-skin.” See Holmes 2014.

<sup>3</sup> Carmichael’s “troops” were members of Kwame Nkrumah’s Guinea-based All-African People’s Revolutionary Party (A-APRP), of which Carmichael had recently been appointed North American coordinator. He remained in direct contact with the occupation leadership for the duration, while the Party’s membership maintained itself in a state of continuous mobilization. Also putting in an appearance to register support was future Washington mayor Marion Berry, at the time an up-and-coming local politician and, like Carmichael, a former chair of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). See LaBlanc-Ernest 2013; Akwesasne Collective 1973: 15; Burnette with Koster 1974: 211.

<sup>4</sup> Smith 2012: 175.

<sup>5</sup> Garment and Carlucci were at various points joined in their effort by top Nixon aides H.R. Haldeman and John Ehrlichman—both of whom would go to prison in 1975 for their roles in the Watergate cover-up—as well as White House counsel John Dean (who avoided prison by turning state’s witness in the case) and Garment’s executive assistant, Bradley H. Patterson, Jr.

programs," for example—would find no traction.

Worse, from Nixon's standpoint, the occupiers had in the interim mounted a rather effective media campaign, thereby accomplishing precisely what the idea of an immediate police assault had been intended to preempt. Among other points they'd gotten across was that they had arrived in the city from as far away as California with no intention of taking over a federal building. Rather, officials had provoked their action by pressuring local churches to renege on commitments made weeks beforehand to provide lodging for the thousand-odd Trail participants while they were in Washington, leaving many people with nowhere to stay<sup>6</sup> and further fanning the flames by refusing permission for the group to conduct honoring ceremonies at the graves of Ira Hayes and John Rice, the only two Indians buried in Arlington National Cemetery.<sup>7</sup>

More damaging still was the revelation that the only barrier to the group's leaving was its requirement that the administration first meet with a small delegation to discuss, and thereafter provide, a written response to the Trail's "Twenty Points," a collectively authored and endorsed plan to alleviate the utter destitution of Native North America by reconfiguring the federal/Indian relationship by bringing the U.S. into compliance with its obligations under the 400 treaties historically ratified by the Senate<sup>8</sup> with indigenous nations. This was a conversation in which, for

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<sup>6</sup> While Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Land Management Harrison Loesch met with Trail of Broken Treaties organizers more than a month earlier and pledged the BIA's active support in such matters, he was actually pursuing a diametrically opposing course. In an October 11 memo to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Louis Bruce, for example, he imparted the "very specific instruction" that the bureau was *not* to provide "any assistance or funding, either directly or indirectly...to American Indian Movement demonstration in Washington in early November [emphasis added]." Deputy Indian Commissioner John Crow seems to have taken the lead in contacting local churches to "warn" them that the Trail was an "unsavory" undertaking. Ultimately, only St. Stephen's Episcopal Church—in the predominately black Columbia Heights neighborhood—delivered on its commitment to provide sleeping space, while People's Involvement, a black community organization, provided most of the food needed by the several hundred Trail participants thus accommodated. The number of participants greatly exceeded St. Stephen's capacity, however, and the 400 or more who "took up residence" in the BIA building might thus be viewed as "overflow." Loesch, Bruce, and Crow were fired in the aftermath of the occupation. See generally, Burnette with Koster 1974: 199-204; Smith 2012: 174-75; Akwesasne Collective 1973: 56-57.

<sup>7</sup> Hayes, a Pima, was one of the marines captured in Joe Rosenthal's iconic photo of their raising the U.S. flag atop Mt. Suribachi, on the island Iwo Jima, in 1945, an image later translated into sculpture as the massive Marine Corps War Memorial monument in Washington. Rice, a Winnebago, was a decorated Korean War veteran refused burial in a Sioux City, Iowa cemetery because he was an Indian. The National Park Service denied permission for contingents from the Trail of Broken Treaties to hold ceremonies at the Marine Memorial as well as Arlington. Akwesasne Collective 1973: 17.

<sup>8</sup> At the time the Twenty Points were advanced, it was generally held that there were 371 such treaties. Subsequent research by the Yankton Nakota legal scholar/historian Vine Deloria, Jr. and his colleague Raymond DeMallie unearthed a number of others, bringing the count up to 400. Since most—though by no means all—of the treaties involved cessions of land to the U.S. in exchange for the various federal commitments, they have been described as the country's "most fundamental real estate documents." Land titles based upon ratified treaties retain their validity only to the extent that the U.S. has fulfilled or continues to fulfill its reciprocal obligations, which are often perpetual in nature. A number of additional treaties, invoked as the basis of U.S. title to large swaths of land in California and elsewhere, were never ratified and thus have never been legally valid. See Kappler 1973; and Deloria and DeMallie 1999.

a host of reasons, the federal executive wished *not* to engage, even in a closed meeting, and most especially not in a manner subject to publication.

Stymied by the occupiers' refusal to alter their position, officials sought once again to intimidate them, obtaining a court order early the next afternoon that the building be retaken by 6 p.m. Police tactical units once again began to mass. At that point, Carmichael returned and, together with AIM leader Russell Means, a principal spokesperson for the occupiers, and Jim Williams, head of the local branch of the Black Panther Party (BPP), publicly reaffirmed the unity of the Black and indigenous liberation struggles.<sup>9</sup> Nixon got the message. Not only was no one going to blink at the last moment, but support for the "AIM radicals" among "lack mBilitants" was gaining momentum, increasing the prospect that sending in the cops would trigger an election-eve débâcle of exactly the sort he had been trying to avoid. His final bluff had been called.

That being so, he abruptly acceded to the occupiers' demands, instructing his emissaries to arrange a White House meeting with representatives of the Broken Treaties group later the same afternoon and authorizing them to sign agreements promising both that the stipulated response to the Twenty Points would be forthcoming within sixty days and to "recommend non-prosecution" of participants in the occupation.<sup>10</sup> The latter, their immediate agenda fulfilled, thereupon agreed to relinquish their Embassy. To expedite their departure, not only from the BIA building, but from Washington itself, Nixon even provided travel money to the group, using Garment and Carlucci as bag men to covertly—and perhaps illegally—deliver \$66,650 in cash (all in small bills).<sup>11</sup>

Whatever else may be said of the "BIA take-over," as it has come to be known, it produced a range of tangibly beneficial results. One was that American Indians were—at least temporarily—no longer "invisible" in the U.S. or conveniently out of sight and mind of the settler society. Another, since some of Nixon's clandestine travel subsidy was used to rent a pair of trucks into which several tons of bureau documents were loaded before they were driven out of town by selected AIM

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<sup>9</sup> Williams declined to specify the form the Panthers' support for the Indians would take in the event of a police assault. Some things, he later explained, were best left to the imagination. Suffice it to say, however, Panthers had quietly joined the occupiers in the BIA building. Means, for his part, promised that, "If we go, we're going to take this building with us," thereby sending "one helluva smoke signal" to the country. He also accused the tactical police—a seemingly disproportionate number of whom were Black—of acting like nineteenth century Buffalo Soldiers, "kill[ing] for the white man." See Smith and Warrior 1996: 160; Means with Wolf 1995: 234. Also see note 36, below.

<sup>10</sup> The Twenty Points, and the administration's response to each, is included in *B.I.A. I'm Not Your Indian Any More*, a now hard to find account of the Trail of Broken Treaties published by radical Mohawk bimonthly, *Akwesasne Notes*, in 1973. Suffice it here to note that points 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 are devoted entirely to treaty issues. For further background, see Deloria 1974; 1985.

<sup>11</sup> The sum, which actually *was* used to underwrite travel expenses, was apparently arrived at by applying the then-standard government rate of 10¢ per mile for reimbursements to an arbitrarily determined number of "eligible parties." The source of the money remains ambiguous, however. It was initially believed that it was from a "discretionary fund" maintained by Nixon's notorious Committee to Re-Elect the President (CREEP). As was later learned, a more likely scenario is that Carlucci arranged for a local bank to advance it on the guarantee that it would be reimbursed from OEO funds. Either way, the transaction was of dubious legality. See Akwesasne Collective 1973: 26-27; Means with Wolf 1995: 235; Smith and Warrior 1996: 164-65.

members,<sup>12</sup> was a series of revelations about how its “colonial office” exercised the country’s self-assigned “plenary power” over indigenous nations within its claimed borders. The ramifications of exposing the mechanics of how the government systematically and perpetually syphoned off of those nations’ wealth continue to be felt even now.

Still another benefit could have been a realization of the potential inhering in red-black political unity to effect constructive changes in U.S. domestic power relations. This, however, would necessarily entail gleaning the lessons lodged in such events as the BIA take-over, a matter entirely contingent upon a generalized awareness of their occurrence. Unfortunately, as historian Sherry L. Smith has observed, “None of the recent studies that track the story of civil rights era interracial cooperation and conflict incorporates Indians.”<sup>13</sup> This has been especially true in accounts/analyses of the Black Power movement,<sup>14</sup> as well as those harder-edged elements of the struggle for Black liberation,<sup>15</sup> including even biographies of Stokely Carmichael.<sup>16</sup> By and large, material focusing on the red power and indigenous liberation struggles of the 1960s and ’70s has reciprocated the

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<sup>12</sup> Only certain types of files were taken. The plan was to examine them, copy and distribute documents of interest to particular indigenous peoples—in some cases, to reliable media contacts as well—and return everything to the government as it was processed. The FBI, however, shortly arrested Assiniboine/Lakota attorney Hank Adams, who, as a non-AIM member of the Trail leadership, had agreed to serve as a go-between with the BIA for such purposes, along with Les Whitten, an assistant to muckraking journalist Jack Anderson, as they delivered a batch of files to the Interior Department. As a result, although charges against the pair were soon dropped, much of the missing material was never returned. See Akwesasne Collective 1973: 58-59; Burnette with Koster 1974: 216; Smith and Warrior 1996: 171-72.

<sup>13</sup> Explanations of this omission can be perplexing, to say the least. A prime example will be found in Pulido 2006: 6. Although LA had the largest population of urban Indians in the country and a highly visible AIM chapter during the mid-70s, she “decided not to include them in [her] study” because, she writes, no radical “American Indian group was based in Los Angeles [emphasis hers].” It seems not to have occurred to Pulido that her stated rationale would have applied equally to the LA branch of the Oakland-based Black Panther Party, which she of course discusses at considerable length. More often, as with Frost, 1995, wherein “Native Americans” are mentioned only twice—and then only in lists of “ethnic communities”—the omission is left entirely unexplained, as if the reason were self-evident. Many Indians construe the pattern as signaling that we are considered irrelevant by self-styled progressives no less than by openly triumphalist scribes of the settler colonial narrative.

<sup>14</sup> While two pages of Ogbar 2004 are devoted to what he misleadingly describes as “Native American Ethnic Nationalism,” Indians aren’t mentioned at all in Joseph 2006a. The omission would have been repeated in Joseph’s edited volume (2006b), were it not for a contribution by Ogbar, wherein there is a near verbatim repetition of what he’d written two years earlier.

<sup>15</sup> Despite the strength of its relations with AIM, and the concrete support it extended to various indigenous liberation struggles, there are exactly two passing references to American Indians in the 486 pages of Bloom’s and Martin’s “definitive” history of the Black Panther Party. See Bloom and Martin 2013.

<sup>16</sup> Oddly, in view of his strong and sustained relations with AIM and the International Indian Treaty Council from the early ’70s onward, American Indians are barely mentioned in Carmichael’s autobiography. While this may have resulted from his having died before the book could be completed, the same can hardly be said of the single paragraph devoted to the topic in Joseph’s biography of him. See Joseph 2014: 297.

slight.<sup>17</sup> Overall, the situation bespeaks a generalized squandering of the opportunity to avoid replication of past errors while building upon a vitally important legacy of resistance.

## A Mixed Heritage

While the red-black solidarity on display during the 1972 BIA take-over came as a great surprise to North America's settler mainstream, it really shouldn't have. The forging of alliances between American Indians and imported Africans for the common purpose of opposing white supremacy traces back to the late seventeenth century, when both were commodified as chattel slaves by the English in what is now the southeastern U.S.,<sup>18</sup> a trade creating "shatter zones" in which indigenous societies were radically altered on both sides of the Atlantic.<sup>19</sup> Indeed, such unity was in many cases not only inevitable but intrinsic, the circumstances of bondage having shortly resulted in the emergence of numerous red-black and triracial peoples along the eastern seaboard from Maryland to Florida, and along the Gulf Coast as far west as present-day Texas.<sup>20</sup> These offered the most effective resistance to Anglophone colonialism in the southeast throughout the eighteenth and first two-thirds of the nineteenth centuries.

An early example is that of the Yamasees, a red-black people in what is now South Carolina who assembled a multinational military coalition to wage a war in 1715 that effectively ended the colony's trade in American Indian slaves.<sup>21</sup> Better remembered today are the Seminoles, a people whose very name derives from the Spanish word *cimarrón*, meaning "run-away" or "free," and who first began to cohere in northern Florida during the 1770s as an amalgam comprised in roughly equal parts of Hitchiti/Mikísuúki-speaking Yamasees, Guales, and Apalachees, Maskóki-speaking

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<sup>17</sup> A pair of noteworthy exceptions are Smith 2012 and Shreve 2011, both of which include substantive discussion of the influence of the Black Power movement on American Indian activism and perhaps to a lesser extent vice versa, as well as the interorganizational relations that emerged during the late '60s and early '70s.

<sup>18</sup> See, e.g., Bossey 2010; Saunt 2002.

<sup>19</sup> The term "shatter zone" to describe the impact of the slave trade on West African societies was first used in Wolf, 1982: 230. Use of the term in connection with the southeastern U.S.—i.e., the "Mississippi shatter zone"—is much more recent, as is scholarship concerning the sheer volume of the trade in American Indian chattel slaves. See, e.g., Ethridge and Shuck-Hall 2009; Reséndez 2016.

<sup>20</sup> An indication of how extensively this occurred is found in the dozens of regional terms catalogued by Brewton Berry and others—Alabama Cajans, Blackfeet Saponis (not to be confused with the Montana Blackfeet), Brass Ankles, Buckheads, Carmelites, Chavises, Clappers, Creels, Creoles, Croatans (known to themselves as Lumbees), Guineas, Haliwas, Indian Cajans, Issues, Melungeons (also called "Goins"), Moors, Portuguese, Ramps, Red Bones, Redbones, Redlegs, Sabines (known to themselves as Houmas), Smilings, Turks, Wesworts, Yellowhammers, and so on—as being employed when referring to particular "triracial isolates" (some of which are quite sizable). As Powhatan-Renapé/Lenape scholar Jack Forbes has shown, most began as red-black peoples. See Forbes, 1993. Denise I. Bossey and Faye A. Yarbrough, among others, have demonstrated quite convincingly that this in large part originated in a British policy of meeting plantation labor quotas with African men and American Indian women. See Bossey 2010; and Yarbrough 2008.

<sup>21</sup> See Ramsey 2010.

Upper Creeks and Yuchis, and Creole-speaking Afro-descended Estelustis (Black Seminoles).<sup>22</sup> Beginning in 1815, the latter played a crucial role in fighting the U.S. to a draw in three separate wars, the last of them not ending until 1858.<sup>23</sup>

In North Carolina, there was the Lowry Band of Lumbees, a triracial people centered in Robeson County, who conducted a successful guerrilla campaign against local white supremacists from 1861-1874. Basing themselves in the area's numerous swamps, the "Lowry Gang" assembled a veritable rainbow coalition including not only local Indians but escaped black slaves and white Union prisoners to fight the Confederate Home Guard to a standstill, continuing operations after the war to meet the incipient Klan head-on. The latter was dealt a crushing blow in 1870 when John Taylor, "presumed head...of the [area's] Ku Klux," was killed by Lumbee guerrilla leader Henry Berry Lowry.<sup>24</sup> It was 1958 before the "invisible empire" made another bid to organize in Robeson County, only to be publicly humiliated when the Lumbees turned out *en masse* to rout a contingent of kluxers imported mostly from South Carolina to stage a nocturnal cross-burning.<sup>25</sup> While similar pockets of politically conscious unity among racially hybridized indigenous peoples have persisted in other locales as well, in view of credible estimates that at least one in three contemporary African Americans is of red-black or triracial admixture, it might be reasonably expected that the pattern would be far more pervasive. That it isn't is due mainly to the corrosive effects of settler policies specifically designed to divide red from black during the last third of the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth centuries.

Tellingly, this was the period in which the number of American Indians acknowledged as such by the federal government, typically by applying a "standard" of one-half or greater "degree

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<sup>22</sup> It has been argued that the Estelusti were never "really" Seminoles because they maintained their own communities, separate from "the Indians." This blinks the fact that, although the three languages involved were mutually intelligible, Hitchiti/Mikisuúki-speakers and Maskóki-speakers also tended to form their own communities, indicating that the practice was culturally/linguistically rather than racially based. Also ignored are the realities that the Yamassees were *already* biracial, and that intermarriage between the Estelusti and both groups of "Indian" Seminoles was by no means uncommon. A prime example is that of Osceola, probably *the* most emblematic figure of the Seminole resistance, who may well himself have been of partial African ancestry and who was in any case married to an Estelusti woman. Seminoles being matrilineal, Osceola's children by her would thus have been considered Estalusti. See Twyman 1996; Wickman 2006; 42, 58, 160-61.

<sup>23</sup> Instructively, the Second Seminole War (1835-42) was also known as "The Negro War." "Of all U.S. conflicts with Native Americans, [it] was the longest...most expensive [and] also the deadliest" in terms of U.S. casualties. In fact, "Until the Vietnam conflict, the Second Seminole War was the longest war ever fought by the United States—and like the Indochina fiasco, it did not end with American victory." Porter 1996. Also see Dixon 2014; Buckmaster 1966.

<sup>24</sup> See Evans 1995.

<sup>25</sup> Three days after the "kinky haired so-called Indians," as the wife of North Carolina grand dragon Catfish Cole characterized them, sent the dragon and his mighty legion scurrying off into the night, most of them jettisoning their weapons and regalia in the process, a package was delivered to Cole's home. In it were his own robe and hood, together with a note from "General Custer" expressing his "deepest sympathy." Robeson County remained a Klan-free zone until 1984. See Gjohnsit 2016; Williams 2009: 65; Tyson 1999: 137-40.

of Indian blood” (i.e., “blood quantum”) for identification purposes,<sup>26</sup> was reduced to its nadir of barely over 237,000.<sup>27</sup> Concomitantly, under the “one-drop rule,” all persons of red-black or triracial descent were officially designated black or “colored.” In Virginia, for example, despite the ongoing existence of the Pawmunkeys, Chickahomins, Rappahannocks,<sup>28</sup> and several other racially mixed indigenous peoples, these eugenics criteria were used in combination to declare the entire state “Indian-free” under its 1924 “Racial Integrity Act.”<sup>29</sup>

It is of course true that in some instances indigenous nations adapted white supremacist notions of racial hierarchy and segregation to their own purposes. Most notoriously, the Cherokees, having repeatedly suffered the exterminatory ravages of its ranger units—“America’s first way of war,” as military historian John Grenier puts it—sought to preserve themselves through ingratiation, not only allying with the settler society in its wars against the Seminoles and traditionalist red-black Creek “Red Sticks,”<sup>30</sup> but openly abandoning the “savagery” embodied in their own traditions by

<sup>26</sup> It should be noted that the U.S. had clear material interest in employing a method of defining Indians that would reduce our number to the greatest extent possible. Under the 1887 General Allotment Act, every Indian on a reservation was to receive title to a land parcel ranging from 40 to 160 acres. Once the Indians had been allotted their parcels, the balance of the land on each reservation was declared “surplus” and either opened to acquisition by white settlers and corporate interests, or converted into military reservations, national parks, and other forms of “federal ownership.” By 1934, when the Act was repealed, the aggregate reservation land base, totaling 138 million acres at the outset, had been reduced to 48 million. For background, see McDonnell 1991.

<sup>27</sup> Had traditional indigenous methods of determining group membership been employed, the count would have been substantially higher. The effects of using federal procedures have increased over time. As Jack Forbes demonstrated with regard to the 1980 census, the upshot was that an indigenous population in the U.S. numbering at least fifteen million at that point was officially tallied at just over 1.4 million. A large segment of the “missing” ninety-plus percent was of either red-black or triracial admixture and typically counted as black, while a substantial number of others were designated “Hispanic” (a classification based entirely on surnames). See Forbes 1990.

<sup>28</sup> It should be recalled that Mildred Loving (né Jeter), of the 1967 *Loving v. Virginia* case that served to nullify anti-miscegenation statutes in the U.S., while designated “black” under Virginia law, was always quite clear that she was in fact a Rappahannock and that being of partly African descent in no way nullified her identity as such. See Coleman 2013.

<sup>29</sup> The actual “integrity” of the 1924 Act can be glimpsed in state registrar of vital statistics, Walter Plecker’s *post hoc* alteration of birth certificates, and other records to obtain the desired result. In 1983, Virginia finally reversed its position in this regard and officially recognized the ongoing existence of a half-dozen indigenous peoples, all of them triracial and two of them—the Pamunkey and Mattaponi Nations—still holding land titles confirmed in a 1658 treaty with the Virginia Colony; a seventh such people was recognized in 1985, an eighth in 1989, and three more in 2010. Eleven triracial peoples have also been recognized by Louisiana, beginning with the Houmas in 1972. In North Carolina, there are six—three of them branches of the Saponi (often called “Blackfeet”)—in addition to the Lumbees. South Carolina has also recognized seven, Georgia, three. Florida and Mississippi recognize none, although, especially in the latter, several continue to exist. On effects of the 1924 Act, see Smith 1992.

<sup>30</sup> Like the Seminoles, the Creeks (Muscogees) also included an Estelusti (Estelvste) contingent. The so-called Red Sticks (*Baton Rouge*) consisted of a large number of traditionalist Upper Creeks who aligned with the Shawnee leader Tecumseh’s effort to forge a broad coalition of indigenous peoples to halt settler encroachment all along the frontier. The Red Stick War of 1813-14 was fought both to expel settlers who had moved into Creek territory in Alabama and to revitalize Muscogean culture by expunging European influences. The Estelusti fought with the Red Sticks, who targeted not only white settlers but Creeks of red-white admixture for elimination. See Zellar 2007; Saunt 1999.



mimicking its supposedly “higher civilization.” Key maneuvers in this regard included a wholesale embrace of Christianity, prohibition of intermarriage with blacks—but not with whites—and exclusion of black and red-black persons from Cherokee citizenship.<sup>31</sup>

These practices led to the emergence of a red-white élite which began to develop a plantation economy, complete with black slaves, well before establishing a U.S.-modeled constitutional form of government in 1827, and which began to publish a newspaper in their own language a year later, and so on. A similar pattern prevailed among the Chickasaws and Choctaws in Mississippi.<sup>32</sup> None of this, including internalization of the settlers’ antiblack racism, had the least effect in terms of preventing any of the three peoples from being “removed” at bayonet-point from their homelands east of the Mississippi and force-marched along their respective Trails of Tears to Oklahoma during the 1830s.<sup>33</sup> Perversely, given this experience, the privileging of lightly complected mixed-bloods and development of settler-style slave economies actually *intensified* in all three societies—especially Cherokee—in the aftermath of removal.<sup>34</sup>

On the flip side of the ledger, for many peoples indigenous to vast areas west of the Mississippi, the first experience with those of African descent came in the form of what the Cheyennes dubbed “buffalo soldiers,” i.e., the black volunteers who filled the ranks of the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> U.S. cavalry regiments, who participated with “distinction” in the army’s genocidal campaigns to subjugate not only the Cheyennes, but, among others, the Kiowas, Comanches, Lipan and Mescalero Apaches,

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<sup>31</sup> See Yarbrough 2008.

<sup>32</sup> It should be noted that of the more than two million black slaves in the U.S. in 1835, fewer than 1,600 were owned by Cherokees, virtually all of them by red-white mixed-bloods, and more than a hundred by a single individual. By 1830, red-white Choctaw planters owned 512 black slaves, while 255 of their Chickasaw counterparts owned a total of 1,123 as of 1836. All told, then, the three indigenous peoples principally at issue with regard to settler-style slaveholding in the antebellum South held roughly 3,200 slaves. For perspective, it should be borne in mind that, as historian Carter G. Woodson found in an early study of the matter, about 3,800 free blacks contemporaneously owned nearly 13,000 slaves. See generally Perdue 1979; Krauthamer 2013; Doran 1978; and Woodson 1924.

<sup>33</sup> This was done despite that fact that the Cherokees, in yet another forlorn accommodationist gesture, placed their faith in the “due process remedies” allegedly embodied in the U.S. judicial system, successfully challenging the legality of the policy of Indian removal before the Supreme Court in 1832. The president, Andrew Jackson, a staunch advocate of removal, reputedly responded that, “[Chief] Justice Marshall has rendered his opinion, now let him enforce it.” Troops were eventually used to herd the Cherokees into “stockades” (concentration camps) from which, in 1838, they were forced to traverse the 1,200-mile distance to the “permanent Indian territory” of Oklahoma. It has been credibly estimated that about half of all Cherokees died during or as a result of this “Trail of Tears.” The Creeks fared somewhat better, suffering a death rate in the thirtieth percentile range after their “voluntary” removal in 1836-37, while the Choctaws and Chickasaws may have lost “only” about 15%. Thornton 1984: 293.

<sup>34</sup> The 1860 federal census shows that the number of slaves owned by 338 mostly red-white Cherokees had grown to about 4,600, while 385 of their Choctaw counterparts owned 2,297, and 118 red-white Choctaws owned 917. The total thus came to about 7,800 slaves, as compared to the more than 3.9 million in the U.S. at that point.

Utes, Kickapoos, Chiricahua Apaches, and Lakotas between 1866 and 1890.<sup>35</sup> Indeed, it was the “black white men” of the 10th Cavalry who fought the final “battle” of the so-called Indian Wars against a tiny group of Yaquis in Arizona’s Bear Valley on January 9, 1918. Needless to say, neither the nature of these interactions nor the attitudes otherwise displayed by “colored” troops lent themselves to the indigenous peoples involved adopting an especially cordial view of blacks,<sup>36</sup> much less to red-black fusions of the sort earlier apparent in the East.

Strikingly, even as the still “wild” Indians of the Great Plains and other regions of the West were subjected to a seemingly endless series of massacres as a means of subordinating them to the settlers’ New Order of white supremacy,<sup>37</sup> emancipated blacks in more easterly locales were suffering comparable slaughters designed to remind them of their “place” in that same race-based sociopolitical/economic arrangement. The 1873 massacre of more than 150 residents of the self-sufficient and autonomous black community of Colfax, Louisiana, for example, was virtually identical in scale to the much better known Sand Creek and Washita massacres of Cheyennes, in 1864 and 1868 respectively,<sup>38</sup> while the tolls taken in the massacres of “uppity” black communities in East St. Louis, Illinois (1917), Elaine, Arkansas (1919), and Tulsa, Oklahoma (1921) were quite similar to that of the 300-odd Lakotas butchered at Wounded Knee thirty years earlier.<sup>39</sup> Similar comparisons could be continued at length.

While such horrors might otherwise have served to underscore red-black commonalities and the urgent need for solidarity in the face of settler aggression, the conceptual structure of white racism—now packaged as a “scientific truth” that blacks and Indians alike were being increasingly “educated” to accept—racially-differentiated policies, and the geographic realities of interracial isolation all militated against anything of the sort. The residue of Indians still surviving in the West by 1900 had been driven onto reservations, typically remote tracts of arid or semiarid terrain deemed useless for agriculture or in many cases even for grazing and thus unwanted by settlers. In effect, they were places reserved for what was said to be left of the indigenous population to finally and rapidly “vanish” altogether, the agony of their death throes conveniently out of sight and

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<sup>35</sup> It should be noted that a number of indigenous peoples in the West at various points also provided scouts and auxiliaries for the army in its campaigns against other indigenous peoples, and in certain instances even against dissident elements of their own. The animosities both within and between indigenous societies generated by such collaboration have not uncommonly persisted into the present. See Dunlay 1982.

<sup>36</sup> By the same token, the record is replete with examples of Black troopers referring to Indians as “redskins,” “red niggers,” and worse, to say nothing of one who turned up at a masquerade ball at Ft. Bayard, New Mexico, in 1894, outfitted as “an idiotic Indian squaw” (for the record, “squaw” is a corruption of the Mohawk word for female genitalia). To all appearances, the Buffalo Soldiers fully embraced the virulent anti-Indianism displayed by white troops and comported themselves accordingly, both in and out of combat. The same largely held true when the two Black cavalry regiments, together with four regiments of “colored” infantry, fought in “America’s ‘Indian War’ in the Philippines” (1899-1903). While much has been made of the fact that of the 5,000 Black troops involved, nine actually crossed over to fight with the indigenous Filipino guerrillas, and most refrained from referring to the dark-skinned locals as “niggers,” the majority seem nonetheless to have adopted the practice of their openly racist white counterparts in disparaging them as “gugus,” “half-naked savages,” or simply as “Indians.” See Cook undated; and Miller 1982.

<sup>37</sup> For explication of the parallel implied, see Kakel 2011.

<sup>38</sup> See Keith 2018; Hoig 1961; Hoig 1976.

<sup>39</sup> See Rudwick 1964: 50; Stockley 2001: 36-49; Ellsworth 1992: 69; Andrist 1964: 347-52.

mind of the settler society that had destroyed them. Until 1924, the near-total isolation essential to attaining this objective was enforced by the requirement that Indians obtain a written pass to leave reservation confinement, for whatever reason and however briefly.<sup>40</sup>

Not only did this render Indians as invisible to most blacks as it did to the settlers themselves, but African-descended people had a full plate trying to cope with a raft of noticeably different but equally harsh policies aimed specifically at *them*. For those legally classified as black, slavery, which was partially abolished in 1865 under the Thirteenth Amendment, was quickly replaced in the South by their wholesale consignment to terms of imprisonment during which they were typically “leased” as laborers to various white-owned agricultural and industrial concerns.<sup>41</sup> Were this not bad enough, white supremacist régimes throughout the “New South,” borrowing from a traditional and ongoing Spanish rationale for enslaving Indians in west Texas and New Mexico, imposed systems of debt peonage which reduced most *unincarcerated* black folk in rural areas to a condition of “slavery by another name.”<sup>42</sup>

These were merely two facets of what had by 1890 become a *de jure* system of Jim Crow segregation/subjugation throughout the former Confederate states, and *de facto* counterparts in states north of the Mason-Dixon Line.<sup>43</sup> In all regions of the country, the codes of white supremacy were strictly enforced, both officially and through the massive extralegal violence dispensed in the earlier-mentioned massacres—usually characterized, with grotesque inaccuracy, as “race riots”—as

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<sup>40</sup> The U.S. pass system was comprehensively implemented in 1873 and sustained for the next 50 years. See Marks, 1998: 155. Indeed, the U.S. reservation system during this period served as the template upon which South Africa’s apartheid régime later created and managed its system of Bantustans. See Fredrickson 1981.

<sup>41</sup> Under the Amendment, slavery was abolished “*except* as punishment for a crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted [emphasis added].” Needless to say, Afro-descended people were shortly being “duly convicted” of all manner of “crimes” and put to work under conditions that have been aptly described as “worse than slavery.” There is, for example, no record of anyone surviving a 10-year sentence under the conditions prevailing in Mississippi’s convict leasing system from 1866 to 1890. See Oshinsky, 1996: 46. Also see Mancini 1996; and Blackmon 2008.

<sup>42</sup> Although New Mexico’s peonage system was formally outlawed in 1867, it remained very much in effect a century later. In mid-1967 the *Albuquerque Journal* estimated that about half the rural labor force in New Mexico—all but entirely composed of Indians and Mexicans—was still held in “a state of semi-peonage.” In “rebuttal,” it was officially asserted that “only” about 120,000 of the state’s field hands were suffering under conditions of genuine “economic peonage” at the time. See Reséndez 2016: 314. The system was adapted for application to blacks throughout the Deep South—not only by way of convict leasing, but also sharecropping—beginning in 1866. See Ransom and Sutch 1972; and Winters 1988.

<sup>43</sup> A major difference between the southern version of Jim Crow and its counterpart in the north was the latter’s ubiquity of rural “sundown towns,” i.e., municipalities prohibiting the very presence of an African American after dark. This had the effect of creating an essentially black-free countryside from eastern Pennsylvania westward into Nebraska, a circumstance that in many locales remains little changed today. See Loewen, 2005; Jaspin, 2007.

well as several thousand lynchings and a continuous tone of lesser atrocities.<sup>44</sup> While the particular combination of ingredients varied from place to place, and in some places from time to time, the objective was always and everywhere to maintain “coloreds” of whatever hue in a “proper” state of subjugation.

## Divided by Oppression

All things considered, it is unsurprising that during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries each of the statutorily demarcated “racial minorities” in the U.S. tended to focus upon developing survival strategies tailored to the particular circumstances imposed upon it, typically with little or no regard for the others. Often, those of red-black or triracial heritage found it useful or necessary to define themselves and the issues they addressed strictly in accordance with the settler-imposed “black/white binary” of racial identity, thus tacitly repudiating the indigenous dimension of their own backgrounds, in order to function effectively as organizers or to find the resonance essential to advancing a political agenda.<sup>45</sup>

One will search in vain for references to American Indians in the many publications of the noted anti-lynching crusader Ida B. Wells, for example, although she was herself of red-black descent.<sup>46</sup> Similarly, while he acknowledged that by 1860 “more than a quarter” of all blacks in the U.S. were actually triracial, North America’s indigenous peoples went unmentioned in the early work of the distinguished historian/sociologist/NAACP founder W.E.B. Du Bois,<sup>47</sup> and remained

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<sup>44</sup> Until recently, the most definitive tally of lynchings of persons of all races in the U.S. between 1882 and 1968 was 4,743, of whom 3,446 were counted as Blacks, 1,297 as whites (although many of them weren’t). Ongoing research has, however, documented the lynchings of 3,959 blacks in only twelve southern states between 1877 and 1950. Equal Justice Initiative, 2015. To this total, the several hundred lynched both before 1877 and after 1950 should necessarily be added. Further, since a number of Blacks are recorded as having been lynched in locations well outside the South during the period—the furthest north was in Duluth, Minnesota, in 1920—and many others remain to be documented, the actual total was likely nearer 5,000. In a related development, researchers have lately completed the first systematic study of the lynching of “Mexicans” in the Southwest between 1848 and 1928, documenting 547 victims while observing that this reflects “only a fraction of the actual number” that even “[c]onservative estimates place in the thousands.” See Carrigan and Webb 2013: 5-6. Similarly, comprehensive studies regarding the lynching of American Indians and Asians have not as yet been undertaken.

<sup>45</sup> Not uncommonly, efforts by mixed-race Indians to maintain/assert their indigenous identities in defiance of racial classifications designed to negate them were construed by Blacks as being, at best, attempts to “pass” as whites. Being perceived in this light would obviously destroy any organizer’s ability to make headway in Afro American communities. Such tensions have in some ways persisted into the present, as evidenced by Timothy Tyson’s rather tart comment about the Lumbees keeping themselves “clearly on a side of the color line different from that of African Americans.” Tyson 1999: 138.

<sup>46</sup> Wells’ mother was a quarter-blood “Native American” born into slavery in Virginia. Giddings 2008: 15.

<sup>47</sup> According to one biographer, the ancestry of one of Du Bois’ great-grandfathers, a slave named Tom Burghardt, was “Native American,” as well as English, Dutch, and West African. Lewis 2009: 13. Other sources, however, indicate that Burghardt was born in West Africa sometime around 1730, in which case his having *any* sort of racially mixed lineage seem quite unlikely. For Du Bois’ estimate of triracialism, see Du Bois 1935: 3.

so even after he subsequently elaborated his concept of “the dark world.”<sup>48</sup> Indeed, it would be 1945, in his explicitly anticolonialist *Color and Democracy*, before he said anything substantive with regard to Native North Americans, and then only by way of observing that we were becoming increasingly “integrated into the blood and culture of the whites,” thus echoing the settlers’ myth of our inevitable “vanishing” (and consequent irrelevance to the global struggle for decolonization).<sup>49</sup>

Du Bois was hardly alone in articulating such views. Marcus Garvey, founder and head of the million-member United Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), had long since offered the example of North America’s indigenous people(s) to illustrate what he termed “the extermination of the weak,” depicting us as being “almost extinct” and “no more a race,”<sup>50</sup> thus consigning us to Trotsky’s “dust-bin of history.” More usually, we were simply ignored by even the most radical proponents of Afroamerican liberation, notably the brilliant theorist and self-described “Black Bolshevik” Harry Haywood, who, beginning at least as early as 1928, spearheaded development of the idea of establishing an independent “Negro Nation” in the “Black Belt” region of the Southeast. Most comprehensively elaborated in his 1948 book, *Negro Liberation*, Haywood’s plan only once and passingly mentioned “the remnants of the American Indians.”<sup>51</sup>

In a sense, it might be argued that Indians reciprocated in kind. There were, after all, exactly the same number of references to blacks in Santee Dakota physician/writer Charles Eastman’s 1911 *The Soul of the Indian* as there had been to Indians in Du Bois’ *The Souls of Black Folk* eight years earlier—which is to say, none at all. More to the point, perhaps, is the reality that, while each was imbued with an obvious logic in its own context, neither the sort of integrationist “equal rights” objectives pursued by organizations like the NAACP, nor the incipient “Third Worldist” orientation of the later Du Bois,<sup>52</sup> nor the efforts of Haywood and others to inculcate a genuine

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<sup>48</sup> Interestingly, while Du Bois explored the implications of red-black and triracial admixture in *South America*—especially Brazil—he remained silent with regard the phenomenon in the U.S. portion of the northern continent. In any case, he for the most part construed the “dark world” in purely Afro-Asian terms.

<sup>49</sup> According to then-current census data, about 45% of 350,000-odd federally recognized Indians were still “full-bloods,” a substantially greater proportion than could be attributed to the Afro American population with regard to persons of “pure” African descent. Du Bois’ representation of Indians—offered in a single brief paragraph—was badly distorted in other ways as well, e.g., he quite accurately described Indians as being “for the most part...poverty-stricken,” but then unaccountably added “landless.” At the time, the aggregate reservation land base encompassed about 60,000 square miles, an area comparable to that of Tunisia, and considerably larger than such contemporary African countries as Malawi, Benin, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Togo. The Navajo Reservation alone was/is larger than Guinea-Bissau, three times the size of Gambia.

<sup>50</sup> The observation—intended to underscore the urgent need for blacks to develop the capacity to physically defend themselves against white aggression—was made in a speech delivered in St. Andrew, Jamaica, on January 8, 1928, shortly after Garvey’s deportation from the U.S. See Hill 1991: 96.

<sup>51</sup> The single reference came on page 140, in a list of other peoples of color in the U.S. There was no suggestion that any such indigenous “remnants” might retain land rights within the area at issue. The same can be said with regard to those subsequently advancing Haywood’s thesis, e.g., Allen 1936.

<sup>52</sup> It wasn’t only Du Bois, of course. As is obvious in Penny Von Eschen’s overview of African American radicals’ engagement with anticolonialism from 1937-1957, the colonization of American Indians was nowhere a point of discussion. Hence, there is not so much as an index entry on the “topic.” See Von Eschen 1997.

nationalist consciousness among Afroamericans offered anything of utility to Indians.<sup>53</sup> Quite the opposite, in fact.

Far from seeking to be integrated into the settler state's institutional fabric, North America's indigenous peoples were largely engaged in bitter and often desperate struggles to preserve our own cultures in the face of a comprehensive and concerted federal campaign to eradicate them once and for all. This policy of "assimilation," the innocuous-sounding term which was/is usually employed to describe the cultural genocide at issue,<sup>54</sup> involved everything from the wholesale prohibition of traditional spiritual practices to abolishing the matrifocal/matrilineal systems of marital/kinship/gender relations through which most indigenous societies were organized and imposing the fragmenting and patriarchal structure of Christian monogamy in their stead, supplanting our practice of collective land tenure with individuated property ownership, and usurping our traditional systems of law and governance.<sup>55</sup>

Most insidious of all was the compulsory "education for extinction" in boarding schools to which, from the 1880s onward, successive generations of American Indian children were subjected for years on end, isolated from their families and communities, forbidden to speak their own languages, and otherwise denied opportunities to acquire autochthonous knowledge of any sort.<sup>56</sup> The goal, openly stated, was to "kill the Indian" in every pupil thus processed, an outcome contributing substantially to attainment of a broader objective, no less candidly remarked: that there no longer be *any* Indians culturally recognizable as such in the U.S. by some point well before 1950.<sup>57</sup> Under such circumstances, refusal to relinquish "the old ways"—in effect, an abiding rejection of integration—constituted the bedrock of indigenous resistance.

Similarly, strategies to develop a nationalist appreciation of our situation(s) found no resonance among Indians for the simple reason the we already understood ourselves as comprising nations (not "tribes"), the majority of them formally recognized as such by the U.S. through the

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<sup>53</sup> While Haywood's outlook was explicitly grounded in Marxism-Leninism, the core problem applies as well to non-Marxian strains of Black nationalism evident during the period. See, e.g., Pinkney 1976.

<sup>54</sup> While "responsible" scholars will undoubtedly claim that the policy was aimed at accomplishing "ethnocide, not genocide," it should be noted that the same individual, Raphaël Lemkin, coined both words in 1944, observing when doing so that they are synonyms. The term "ethnocide" is nonetheless used by those who would segregate what Lemkin termed "cultural genocide" from what they insist is the only "true" form of genocide, i.e., mass killing/physical extermination. In coining the term, however, Lemkin made it quite clear that while genocide *can* be accomplished by killing, the cultural mode has been far more frequently employed to bring about the dissolution/disappearance of targeted groups, as such. In other words, physical genocide is the exception, cultural genocide the norm. Denying that reality is to deny genocide itself. For further explication, see Lemkin 1944: 79-80. Also see Shaw 2015: 13-35.

<sup>55</sup> For a useful, though by no means exhaustive, survey of assimilation policy, see Hoxie 1984.

<sup>56</sup> See Adams 1995.

<sup>57</sup> See Churchill 2004. It should be emphasized that "forcibly transferring children of [a national, ethnical, racial or religious] group to another group" as part of an effort to destroy the targeted group "in whole or in part" is defined as genocide under Article II(e) of the 1948 Convention on Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.

earlier-mentioned series of ratified treaties.<sup>58</sup> Moreover, especially in the “Great American Desert” of the West, most retained clearly-demarcated landbases, albeit in many instances greatly reduced from their treaty-specified extents, and all of them “administered in trust” by the BIA under the “plenary power over Indian affairs” unilaterally asserted by the federal government in 1903.<sup>59</sup> No less significantly, while it would be decades before the full scope of such assets was realized, by the 1920s it had become increasingly apparent that the many of the supposedly “useless” areas still held by indigenous nations were extraordinarily rich in minerals.<sup>60</sup>

The latter circumstance prompted a fundamental shift in federal policy, with the headlong drive to complete the demographic and territorial liquidation curtailed in favor of installing BIA-designed and sustained “tribal councils” under the 1934 Indian Reorganization Act (IRA).<sup>61</sup> Thereafter, a number of reservations were maintained as resource colonies from which massive quantities of oil, coal, natural gas, copper, molybdenum, phosphate, sulfur, silica, and an array of other commercially/strategically essential minerals—notably uranium, by the 1950s—were extracted by federally selected corporations at deeply discounted rates set by the BIA and rubber-stamped by its IRA puppet régimes.<sup>62</sup> In other instances, much the same procedure was applied with regard to “renewables” like timber, grazing land, and the water necessary to establish/expand

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<sup>58</sup> Article 1§10 of the U.S. Constitution provides that treaty-making is a prerogative vested exclusively in the federal government while restricting the government to entering into treaties *only* with sovereign peers (i.e., other nations). Hence, each treaty negotiated with an indigenous people or peoples by the federal executive and ratified by the Senate conveyed formal recognition of the other parties as nations, separate and distinct from rather than subparts of the United States. As Potawatomi legal scholar Tim Coulter has observed, it is a longstanding principle of international law that no nation, having thus recognized the sovereignty of another, can then unilaterally “unrecognize” it. Coulter, 1982. On ratified treaties with Indians, see note 8, above.

<sup>59</sup> U.S. plenary power—i.e., full and unchallengeable authority—over Indians, our affairs, and our assets, was “legitimated” in the Supreme Court’s 1903 opinion in *Lone Wolf v. Hitchcock* (187 U.S. 553). As legal scholar Natsu Taylor Saito has shown, the concept has mainly been invoked to rationalize the U.S. relationship to its colonies, i.e., American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, the Philippines (until 1946), Hawai’i (until 1959), the Marshall Islands (until 1979), and the indigenous nations of North America. Saito, 2006. For detailed analysis of the case itself, see Clark 1994.

<sup>60</sup> See, e.g., Miller 1976; Senate Committee on Indian Affairs 1926.

<sup>61</sup> The IRA, often described as “the Indian New Deal,” was in effect a classic colonial subterfuge, i.e., it formalized the mechanism(s) through which the reservations could be administered as internal colonies, cultivating a structurally subordinated comprador élite among the colonized in each locale to carry out the task and perpetually pretending that this was preparing them to become genuinely self-governing. While the “reorganization” of each people ostensibly occurred only after a referendum expressing their consent, all manner of manipulation, fraud, and coercion was employed to obtain the desired result—or its appearance—often in the face of fierce opposition. On the methods used in obtaining “consent,” see Deloria and Lytle 1983: 141, 164-72; and Barsh 1982.

<sup>62</sup> Overall, see Ambler, 1990, 44-46. As concerns uranium in particular, it has been credibly estimated that two-thirds of U.S. “domestic” reserves are situated inside reservation boundaries. During the Atomic Energy Commission’s ore-buying program underpinning the great “uranium boom” of 1952-82, more than 90% of the uranium acquired was mined and milled on Indian land. Since the already-discounted leases issued by the BIA in most cases required no clean-up, the highly radioactive waste by-products were largely left *in situ* as a cost-cutting measure, further enhancing corporate profits while seriously—and permanently—contaminating reservation environments. See Jorgenson 1984; Grinde and Johansen 1998; and Churchill 2003.

dry-land agriculture.<sup>63</sup> Even such pittance as ostensibly accrued to indigenous people in rent and royalties were typically placed in BIA “trust accounts” wherein they were mysteriously “lost” (i.e., expended for purposes other than compensating Indians for the use or loss of their property).<sup>64</sup>

While the massive exploitation of indigenous resources under such circumstances provided a tremendous boost to the U.S. economy,<sup>65</sup> and with it the settlers’ overall standard of living, indigenous people were rendered increasingly destitute by the process; while the median income of a “white” family in the United States—defined at the time as including “Hispanics”—had risen to about \$3,445 by 1950, that of an indigenous family was \$870, less than half the \$1,869 figure for black families (55 percent of whose incomes fell below the official poverty line).<sup>66</sup> Not coincidentally, the average life expectancy of American Indians was 42 years, all but identical to that prevailing throughout the Third World,<sup>67</sup> and nearly a quarter-century less than the 69-year life expectancy of the U.S. settler population.<sup>68</sup>

Suffice it to observe that, given the glaring realities of our colonization and the intensity of its impact(s) upon us, calls by Du Bois and others for solidarity with decolonization struggles in Africa and Asia absent indication that such an embrace might be mutual found virtually no resonance among American Indians. Since indigenous rights to decolonization/self-determination

<sup>63</sup> By the 1890s, the BIA commonly issued long-term leases on the best reservation grazing land to white ranchers at an annual rate of a dollar per acre. Meanwhile, such livestock as Indians managed to accumulate was often impounded on various pretexts, including overgrazing the drier areas left to them. Beginning in 1917, the BIA also began to issue exceeding low-cost leases on swaths of virgin forest to logging companies, with the result that reservations like Quinault (on Washington’s Olympic Peninsula) were largely clear-cut within a decade. See Hoxie 1984: 186-87; McDonnell 1991: 47-51, 62. On overgrazing, see, e.g., Boyce 1974.

<sup>64</sup> This was graphically demonstrated during the recent *Cobell* case, a class-action suit brought in behalf of several thousand Indians against the Interior Department on grounds that they were unable to obtain so much as an accounting of monies the BIA had supposedly been maintaining for them/their families in trust accounts, in some case since as early as 1887. Forensic accountants concluded that the BIA had “misplaced” some \$40 billion from these accounts over the years—with accumulated interest, the amount would exceed \$170 billion—funds that were of course used to underwrite the settler society’s “quality of life,” while Indians were often left to literally starve to death in unheated tar-paper shacks. In 2010, after nearly fifteen years of federal stonewalling, the case was settled in the amount was \$3.4 billion—less than a dime on the dollar of the missing principal, interest free—of which \$1.4 billion was allotted to compensating individual victims and finally disbursed in 2015. See Johansen 2008; Warren 2010.

<sup>65</sup> A clear indication of this is provided in note 64. Also see Barsh 1988.

<sup>66</sup> Separating the data for Hispanics from that pertaining exclusively to whites, as was done beginning in 1975, would likely have raised the median income for white families by about one-third (i.e., to around \$5,000). In any case, see National Center for Educational Statistics 1994. Data pertaining to American Indians is omitted therein, but see Sorokin 1969: 115.

<sup>67</sup> U.S. House of Representatives 1963: 21. According to the *World Development Report 1993*, “In 1950 average life expectancy in developing countries was forty years.”

<sup>68</sup> Life expectancy for Blacks in 1940, 1950, and 1960 is inexplicably omitted from the data set compiled by the National Center for Health Statistics. The next earlier year for which it is recorded is 1935; at that point, it was 51 years for men, 55 for women. By 1970, Black male life expectancy had increased to 60 years, while that of their reservation-based indigenous counterparts had risen to only 44.6 years; Black women lived 8.6 years longer than their men, Indian women about four. In the same year, the life expectancy of a white male was 68 years, white females, 75.6.



went *entirely* unacknowledged at the watershed Bandung Conference on Afro-Asian Unity in 1955—an event generally credited with giving shape to both the concept of the Third World and a strategy to liberate it—indifference turned towards hostility in some quarters.<sup>69</sup> At best, as the Shuswap leader George Manuel later recalled, “It soon became obvious that there was no more place for us in the Third World than there was in those other two.”<sup>70</sup>

## **Black Power, Red Power, and Renewed Potential**

A pronounced shift in radical consciousness began to take hold during the mid-1960s, with Malcolm X’s reframing of what Du Bois had termed the “dark world” as a “Black world,” going on to explain that, “When I say Black, I mean non-white—black, brown, *red* or yellow [emphasis added].”<sup>71</sup> Declaring that “the *real* black revolution...has already swept white supremacy out of Africa [and] Asia...is sweeping it out of Latin America...and is even now manifesting itself right here among the black masses of this country [emphasis original],”<sup>72</sup> Malcolm repeatedly emphasized that his conception of “the black masses”—and thus the basis for a “*real* black revolution” in the U.S.—included all nonwhites, “the red man” no less than others.<sup>73</sup>

While his 1965 assassination foreclosed upon anyone ever knowing how his thinking might have evolved with respect to indigenous rights, per se, Malcolm did perhaps offer a glimpse in a brief but pioneering article titled “Zionist Logic,” wherein he openly embraced the national liberation struggle of native Palestinians against the Israeli settler state.<sup>74</sup> That his view was dramatically at odds with those of leading civil rights activists at the time was starkly evident in the prominence accorded Ralph Bunche—the African American UN diplomat who was instrumental in securing

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<sup>69</sup> The omission pertained to “aboriginal peoples,” as such. On the premises of the “revolutionary Third Worldism” emerging at Bandung, see Buchanan 1963. Also see Wright 1954.

<sup>70</sup> Remarks at the University of British Columbia 1975.

<sup>71</sup> The quote is from Malcolm’s April 8, 1964 speech, “The Black Revolution” (see Breitman 1989: 64). He made the same point repeatedly, as in an interview with A.B. Spellman on March 19, 1964 (republished online by *Monthly Review* in 2005).

<sup>72</sup> Quoted from Malcolm’s December 3, 1963 speech, “God’s Judgment on White America.” (see Goodman 1971: 130, 138-9).

<sup>73</sup> Although Malcolm employed the term “red man” on many occasions, the reference here is to his speech, “The Ballot or the Bullet,” delivered on April 3, 1964 (see Breitman 1989: 50).

<sup>74</sup> It has been argued by Matthew Quest, among others, that because he offered the anti-British operations not only of Kenya’s Mau Mau, but also the Zionist Lehi group, a terrorist cell commonly known as the “Stern Gang,” as models for how Blacks in the U.S. might engage the Klan and Jim Crow more generally, Malcolm’s thinking on Israel was contradictory. Actually, it wasn’t. However unfortunate his invocation of the pro-fascist Stern Gang may have been, in the same paragraph where he mentions it in his posthumously published 1965 autobiography, he also stated unequivocally that “the Arabs” were “the rightful owners” of Palestine. Malcolm X with Haley, 1992: 303.

Israel's 1949 seizure of territory beyond its original borders<sup>75</sup>—during the 1963 March on Washington, while Rabbi Joachim Prinz, a major Zionist leader and one-time Nazi collaborator,<sup>76</sup> was slated to speak immediately before Martin Luther King, Jr. delivered his fabled “I Have a Dream” speech.<sup>77</sup>

That Malcolm's lonely endorsement of the Palestinian liberation struggle precipitated a sea change in the thinking of black radicals was due in no small part to the efforts of Ethel Minor, a member of his Organization of Afro-American Unity (OAAU) who became communications director for the militant Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) after his assassination in February 1965.<sup>78</sup> From the outset, she coordinated a SNCC reading group studying not only the record of Israeli settler colonialism in Palestine, but the Zionist state's close political/military/economic alliances with the virulently racist settler régime in South Africa. The issue was brought to a head in June 1967 by Israel's “preemptive attack” on Egypt and territorial expansion during the ensuing Six Day War, prompting immediate publication of “The Palestine Problem,” an unsigned discussion paper drafted by Minor, in the *SNCC Newsletter*.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Bunche was something of a Zionist celebrity, awarded a Nobel Peace Prize in 1950 for his role before and during the 1949 Lausanne Conference in convincing the Arab states to enter into an armistice without resolving the issues of whether Israel would return territories seized from Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and Egypt during the 1948 Arab-Israeli war, and its willingness to repatriate roughly 700,000 Palestinians expelled during the fighting from those areas as well as that demarcated by the UN in 1947 as its “own” land base. Needless to say, Israel has never returned the land, all of which falls within its so-called 1967 borders. Nor has it ever accepted the Palestinian right of return. See, e.g., Elad Ben-Dror 2008.

<sup>76</sup> This isn't mere name-calling. In his 1934 book, *Wir Juden*, Prinz, already a Zionist leader in Germany, stated the he/his movement were unabashedly pursuing a policy of “collaboration”—his term—with the Nazi government as a means of achieving “its practical aims,” i.e., to establish a Jewish racial state similar to the Third Reich in Palestine. Quoted in Glaser 1978.

<sup>77</sup> King, it should be noted, never deviated from his embrace of Zionism. On March 25, 1968—only ten days before his assassination—while addressing the annual convention of the Rabbinical Assembly in New York, he extolled Israel as “one of the great outposts of democracy in the world, and a marvelous example of what can be done, how a desert land can almost be transformed into an oasis of brotherhood and democracy.” This, at a moment when several hundred thousand Palestinians displaced by the creation/expansion of Israel in 1948 were still living in refugee camps in Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon, and Israel had recently seized Gaza and the West Bank, home to a million more. Plainly, Palestinian sentiments—and rights—were entirely excluded from King's glowing assessment of the Zionist state, as, for that matter, were the staunchly anti-Zionist views expressed by the Central Rabbinical Council of the United States and Canada, the rabbis belonging to Edah HaChareidis in Israel itself, and other Judaic groups. King is quoted in Applebaum 2017.

<sup>78</sup> Minor was a member of the OAAU's 7-member core staff. See Felber 2016.

<sup>79</sup> SNCC Staff 1967a: 4-5; Carson 1981: 267-68; and Carmichael with Thelwell 2003: 558-61.

Backlash from the Zionist establishment was tremendous,<sup>80</sup> adding to an already pronounced reaction against SNCC chair Stokely Carmichael's highly publicized speech a year earlier demanding Black Power rather than token adjustments of the existing system.<sup>81</sup> The vicious nature of the attacks had the perhaps unanticipated effect of convincing SNCC, which had long since transcended its liberal roots by taking a cutting edge position at the forefront of resistance to the rapidly intensifying U.S. war in Indochina and otherwise assuming an explicitly anti-imperialist stance,<sup>82</sup> that it was correct in its analysis and thus to double down. Among its first responses was to shed its identity as a "civil rights group" altogether, declaring itself to be "a *human* rights organization," dedicated to "the liberation not only of Black people in the United States but *all* oppressed people." Soon thereafter, it renamed itself the Student *National* Coordinating Committee, thereby repealing its commitment to engaging exclusively in nonviolent forms of struggle.<sup>83</sup>

From that point on, Carmichael, a galvanic public speaker, also made denunciation of Zionist settler-colonial aggression in Palestine an integral component of his delivery, catalyzing the

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<sup>80</sup> This came not only in the form of public denunciations by Jewish liberals like Theodore Bikel—who trumpeted his "resignation" from SNCC, although he'd never been a member—and the wholesale withdrawal of funding from such circles, but from Black civil rights leaders like King, who quickly affixed his name to a paid ad in the *New York Times* calling upon President Lyndon Johnson to "honor American commitments to ensure Israel's security." A. Philip Randolph and Bayard Rustin went further, forming what they dubbed the Black Americans in Support of Israel Committee (BASIC), which then published an "Appeal by Black Americans for United States Support to Israel" in the *Times*. NAACP executive director Roy Wilkins, a signatory to the BASIC appeal, followed up with a speech before the Jewish Labor Congress in which "he compared the alleged anti-Semitism of SNCC to that of George Lincoln Rockwell, the leader of the American Nazi Party." See Lubin 2014: 118; SNCC Staff 1967b: 5; Forman 1972: 496-97; and Sellers with Terrell 1973: 202-3.

<sup>81</sup> While the phrase was already in use, it was Carmichael's "Black Power Speech" in Greenwood, Mississippi, on the evening of June 16, 1966 (see note 88), that made headlines. His publication of "What We Want," a well-reasoned explanation of what was actually meant by the term appearing in the September 22, 1967 issue of the *New York Review of Books*, did little to curb the torrent of wildly inaccurate "interpretations" advanced in the mainstream media. Not only did the usual cast of "responsible" civil rights leaders publicly repudiate the term, but SNCC was (re)defined as a "racist organization with black supremacy ideals and an expressed hatred for whites" by army intelligence and, in August 1967, designated for "neutralization" by the FBI in a COINTELPRO (domestic counterintelligence operation) aimed at what the bureau described as "Black Nationalist—Hate Groups." Ironically, King (personally) and his Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) were identified as such and listed as a "primary targets" right along with Carmichael and SNCC. See the Airtel to 40 FBI field offices reproduced in Churchill and Vander Wall 2002b: 108-11.

<sup>82</sup> While the mostly white Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) organized the first major demonstration against the war in April 1965, SNCC's January 1966 statement of organizational opposition was the first of its kind; in August, it was the first to physically disrupt a draft board (in Atlanta), and it coined the universally adopted slogan of the draft resistance, "Hell no, we won't go!" Of no less importance, Carmichael's was by far the most potent voice raised in radical opposition to U.S. policy in Indochina, his October 29, 1966 speech during an SDS-organized conference at U/Cal Berkeley marking a genuine pivot point in the direction taken by the growing antiwar movement. See Carmichael 1971: 45-60; Joseph 2014: 94-95, 173.

<sup>83</sup> The organizational name change was publicly announced by H. Rap Brown during a press conference on July 22, 1969. The policy shift it signaled had, however, begun to emerge at least at least three years earlier. See Carson 1981: 295-96.

rise of a conscious anti-zionism across a broad swath of the new left by the end of the decade.<sup>84</sup> Concomitantly, and again following Malcolm's lead, both Carmichael and his successor as SNCC chair, H. Rap Brown, increasingly defined the liberation struggle in the U.S. not only in terms of blacks but also, to quote Brown, "the Mexican-American, the Puerto Rican, the American Indian, the Japanese-American [and even] poor whites."<sup>85</sup> Symbolic of this multinational impetus, in October 1967, a six-member SNCC delegation headed by Ralph Featherstone and Ethel Minor participated along with Hopi leaders David Monongye and Thomas Banyacya in a land rights conference in Albuquerque organized by Reies Lopez Tijerina, founder of the *Alianza Federal de Pueblos Libres*,<sup>86</sup> which concluded with the signing of a red-black-brown treaty of unity.<sup>87</sup>

The younger generation of indigenous activists had been tracking these developments as they occurred. Indeed, Clyde Warrior, a then-twenty-one-year-old Ponca and self-described "academic aborigine" who cofounded the National Indian Youth Council (NIYC) in 1961—a year after SNCC was formed—gained his initial experience as an organizer during SNCC's first voter registration drive in Mississippi, while Karen Rickard (Seneca) and other NIYC members participated in the 1963 March on Washington. At its third annual meeting, convened shortly after the march, the Council debated whether it should officially "join the civil rights movement."<sup>88</sup> In the end, it was decided that because "Indians had no desire to integrate with white society" and were instead committed to asserting our treaty rights and corresponding national sovereignty, such a move would be confusing and thus counterproductive for all concerned.

Commonalities were nonetheless acknowledged and played upon, although sometimes facetiously. Recognizing superficial resemblances between their brand of "separatism" and that attributed to the Nation of Islam (NoI), or "Black Muslims" as they were routinely described in

<sup>84</sup> See, e.g., Stork 1972. For greater detail, see Pennock 2017: 87-102 (Carmichael's instrumental role at 89).

<sup>85</sup> Brown 1969: 143. Brown went onto observe that "it is doubtful that poor whites can overcome [their] racism" to the extent necessary to allow them to make common cause with the rest. Carmichael, meanwhile, was asserting in his "Declaration of War" before an overwhelmingly black audience in Oakland on February 17, 1968, that, "[W]e have to ally with Mexican-Americans, Puerto Ricans, and the dispossessed people of the earth [i.e., American Indians]."

<sup>86</sup> The *Alianza* was dedicated to recovering Mexican American rights to land grants issued by Spain and Mexico and guaranteed by the U.S. in the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. To this end, it pursued both a "legal offensive" through the courts and armed struggle when "judicial remedies" proved unavailing. See generally, Nabokov 1970.

<sup>87</sup> Featherstone and Minor signed for SNCC, Tijerina for the *Alianza*, and Banyacya in behalf of the Hopi *Kikmongwi* (traditional government). Other signatories were Corky Gonzales for the Denver-based Crusade for Justice, José Angel Gutiérrez of the Mexican American Youth Organization (MAYO), Bert Corona of the Mexican American Political Association (MAPA), James Dennis of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), Ron Karenga of US, and Anthony Babu of the Black Panther Party and Black Student Union (BSU). Other members of the SNCC delegation were Maria Varela, Willie Ricks, Muriel Tillinghast, and Freddy Greene. See Carson 1981: 278; Nabokov 1970: 222-25; and Mantler 2008: 74-79. It should be noted that in his history of Karenga's organization, Scot Brown describes the event as if it were a black power conference, mentioning Tijerina—who organized and hosted it—only as having "also attended," other Mexicano/Chicano and American Indian participation not at all. Brown 2003: 84-85.

<sup>88</sup> Of particular concern, was that the discrimination suffered by the mostly red-black peoples of the Deep South was essentially the same as that suffered by African Americans. While this provided a certain basis for NIYC making "common cause" with SNCC and related organizations in that region, it was determined that the solutions desired by Indians were fundamentally different from those sought at the time by blacks. See Shreve 2014: 113.

the mainstream media, NIYC members gave a wink to Malcolm's lengthy stint as the NoI's most visible spokesperson by billing themselves as "Red Muslims." Similarly, by mid-decade, Warrior, the Council's most uncompromising spokesperson, and probably its most effective, was often characterized as "the Indian Stokely Carmichael."<sup>89</sup> While the comparison was in many respects unfair to both men, it was seemingly concretized when, shortly after Carmichael's June 1966 "Black Power" speech, Warrior, together with NIYC cofounder Mel Thom (Paiute), forced their way into a Fourth of July parade in Oklahoma City, driving a car emblazoned with the slogan "Red Power!"<sup>90</sup>

Far more substantively, in early 1964 the NIYC—Hank Adams (Assiniboine-Sioux) and Bruce Wilkie (Makah) in particular—consciously adapted SNCC's direct action tactics to the indigenous context by organizing "fish-ins" to assert the treaty-guaranteed rights of Salish-speaking Puyallup, Nisqually, and Muckleshoot peoples on Puget Sound to garner their shares of the annual "harvest" of fish in their respective locales.<sup>91</sup> While the fish-ins quickly took hold among the three peoples, spread to others, were sustained long after NIYC's active involvement, and were a key factor in the 1974 *Boldt* decision affirming American Indian fishing rights in Washington state,<sup>92</sup> the area's civil rights establishment was less than supportive.

From the outset, NIYC activist Shirley Hill Witt (Mohawk) later recalled, "The local NAACP representatives had problems with the Indian action, insisting that the Black political movement

<sup>89</sup> The trend was summed up quite ably by the Chickasaw poet Kenneth Kale in his 1972 "Sorry About That": "... BIA Zombies chose to pout/when it is evident we know all about/our red-skinned counterpart of Martin, Gregory, and Stokely rolled into one/Like an angry 'Red Muslim' with work to be done..."

<sup>90</sup> As was mentioned in note 81, Carmichael was hardly the first to employ the term "Black Power." Richard Wright, for example, had used it as a book title in 1954, and Harlem's congressional representative Adam Clayton Powell had demanded during a May 1965 rally speech in Chicago, and a year later in his commencement address at Howard. By then, "Black Power for Black People" had already become the slogan of the SNCC-organized Lowndes County Freedom Organization in Alabama. Even when Carmichael *did* issue his famous call for Black Power during his highly-publicized Greenwood speech—thereby propelling the concept itself to lasting prominence—he did so at the urging of fellow SNCC member Willie Ricks (Mukasa Dada), who had been using the term to good effect in rally speeches for nearly a month. See Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 507; Jeffries 2009: 181; and Goudsouzian 2014: 142-43.

<sup>91</sup> At issue were/are the 1854 Treaty of Medicine Creek and 1855 Treaty of Point Elliott, guaranteeing perpetual rights of the peoples indigenous to Puget Sound to fish at their "usual and accustomed places," "in common" with settlers, in exchange for ceding the vast bulk of their land. By the mid-50s, however, Washington State had restricted Indian fishing to the point that it no longer provides a viable basis for subsistence, much less commercial endeavors. While the NIYC effort was transient, Adams, together with regional activists Ramona Bennett (Puyallup), Janet McCloud (Tulalip), and Sid Mills (Yakama/Umatilla), used it to establish a local offshoot called the Survival of American Indians (SAIA) which remained at the forefront of the struggle. See Shreve 2014: 133-38; and Deloria 1977: 161-64.

<sup>92</sup> By the time Judge George Boldt rendered his decision, Indian fishing rights under not only the Puget Sound treaties were at issue, but also those secured by the 1855 Treaties of Neah Bay and Point No Point, covering the rest of the Olympic Peninsula and the Kitsap Peninsula. Hence, the peoples effected included not only the Muckleshoot, Puyallup, and Nisqually, but also the Hoh, Lummi, Makah, Quileute, Quinault, Sault-Suiattle, Skokomish, Squaxon Island, Stillaquamish, Upper Skagit, and Yakama. The decision, repeatedly upheld on appeal, specified that Indians are entitled to half the annual fish harvested in the Sound—about one-fifth of all fish taken in Washington state—and required the state to manage the "resource" jointly with the indigenous governments involved. Overall, see American Friends Service Committee 1970. For legal framing, see the material collected in Wilkins 2011: 19-87.

‘would take care of Indian problems,’ with the implication that the Indians [should] quiet down and let them handle Indian grievances.”<sup>93</sup> Council president Mel Thom took particular exception to the arguments advanced by NAACP attorney Jack Tanner, whom he accused of “meddling [in] Indian business” by trying “to bring his group into it” as a figurative senior partner. What Tanner seemed unable to grasp, Thom continued, was that, “This is an Indian treaty issue, *not* a civil rights issue.”<sup>94</sup>

Such tensions noticeably deepened after celebrated black activist-comedian Dick Gregory, in a perhaps well-intentioned but deeply confused effort to draw national attention to the Indians’ “plight,” joined the fish-ins in February 1966. Using his participation—and a resulting jail sentence during which he engaged in a well-publicized hunger strike—as a podium, he explained that while supporting their campaign to secure their treaty rights, he hoped that Indians would soon “raise the level” of their demands to that of securing “the full range of constitutional rights.” Moving from bad to worse, he then opined that it was “about time *the civil rights front* shifted to this part of the country [emphasis added].”<sup>95</sup>

Such high-profile muddling of the issues underlying the fishing rights struggle drew a sharp public response in the *Seattle Times* from Nisqually tribal chair Elmer Kalama, who denounced Gregory’s attempt “to turn this into a civil rights issue,” concluding that, far from helping, it was “hurting our cause.” Although blunter than most, Kalama’s outlook was hardly unique. Even younger activists like Janet McCloud (Tulalip), who’d initially welcomed Gregory’s involvement, were soon expressing concern that “the treaty issue was getting lost in the mix” as “press coverage turned away from Indian fishing rights and toward Gregory and African American issues,” or, perhaps more accurately, the “kaleidoscope of issues,” he had elected to raise.<sup>96</sup> By the time he finally left the Pacific Northwest in July 1968 to begin a “world fact-finding tour,” both the NIYC and local Indian activists welcomed his departure.

Gregory had nonetheless managed to bridge at least *one* of the chasms separating the Indians from organizations like the NAACP in that rather than making a fetish of nonviolence, he willingly accepted the proposition that the fishing rights activists had not only the right but the *need* to engage in armed self-defense against the Klan-style violence of what were described in the press as “white vigilantes.” The point was repeatedly punctuated, as when the Puyallup leader Ramona Bennett, seven months pregnant at the time, was shot in the abdomen by a pair of ambushers; organizer Hank Adams thereafter suffered a similar wound, and fire-bombings became routine. Under such conditions, Gregory could only hope it would be unnecessary for the Indians “to become as militant and violent as black people” before obtaining justice.<sup>97</sup>

While the armed security provided by the Skagits, Yakamas, and other indigenous peoples to protect those engaged in fishing was based firmly in their own traditions, they were perhaps influenced as well by the earlier-mentioned example set by the Lumbees in 1957 and the similar

<sup>93</sup> Quoted in Shreve 2014: 129.

<sup>94</sup> Quoted in Shreve 2014: 127. For his part, Tanner pronounced the very idea of mounting protests over anything so “trivial” as fishing rights to be “ridiculous.” Quoted in Mantler 2008: 243.

<sup>95</sup> Gregory’s remarks appeared in the *New York Times* on February 15, 16, and 18, 1966. For his own version of his role in and views on the fish-ins, see Gregory 1976.

<sup>96</sup> Smith 2012: 24.

<sup>97</sup> Quoted in Smith 2012: 24.

action taken by Robert F. Williams' "renegade" NAACP chapter in Monroe, North Carolina, about a month earlier. In any case, the Indians' position displayed much commonality with those adopted by the Deacons for Defense and Justice in Bogalusa, Louisiana, in 1964, and both the Congress for Racial Equality (CORE) and SNCC the following year.<sup>98</sup> It also accorded quite well with that of the Oakland-based Black Panther Party (BPP), the Seattle chapter of which was by 1968 quietly augmenting the Indians' security teams with its own personnel.<sup>99</sup>

Such concrete expressions of solidarity resonated deeply and immediately with indigenous activists across the U.S. Hence, despite the Panthers having never established a branch in the so-called Twin Cities of Minneapolis-St. Paul, when a small group of urbanized Chippewas (*Anishinaabeg*) including Dennis Banks, Mary Jane Wilson, George Mitchell, and Clyde Bellecourt founded the American Indian Movement there in July 1968, it consciously adopted the approach pioneered by the Party in 1966, organizing street patrols to "police the police" and thereby curtail the cops' rampant infliction of gratuitous violence and bogus arrests upon residents of the local "Indian ghetto" spawned by the federal relocation program of the 1950s and early '60s.<sup>100</sup> Since such relocation-induced ghettos had emerged in most major metropolitan areas, AIM's initiative in Minneapolis-St. Paul was widely applauded and, as with that of the Panthers before it, resulted

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<sup>98</sup> On the deep roots of armed self-defense in the African American communities of rural Mississippi and elsewhere in the South, see Umoja 2013; and Cobb 2014. On Williams, see Williams 1962; Tyson 1999. On the Deacons, see Hill 2004. On the evolution of CORE's position, see Meier and Rudwick 1973: 297-300, 397-401, 414-15. On SNCC's, see Carson 1981: 164, 253-55.

<sup>99</sup> Such augmentation was essentially symbolic, but nonetheless important, not least because the Panthers—in contrast to Gregory—made a point of *not* allowing their gesture of solidarity to become the center of attention. Janet McCloud, for one, later emphasized the significance of their posture in personal conversations with the author. The Seattle Panthers again demonstrated their solidarity with indigenous militants in May 1970, this time quite publicly, by donning the Party's "uniform" of black leather jackets and berets while "trespassing" at abandoned military facilities at Fort Lawton, Washington. The action was taken in support of United Indians of All Tribes, which had claimed the site for use as a cultural center. Surprisingly, none of this is mentioned in the 2012 memoir of Seattle Panther defense captain Aaron Dixon, but see Santos and Iwamoto 2015.

<sup>100</sup> As a result of the General Allotment Act (see note 26), the reservation land base had been reduced to the point that it could accommodate no significant rebound in the size of the resident population. When, instead of their simply disappearing by the mid-twentieth century—as was officially anticipated—the number of federally recognized Indians more than doubled, reaching 524,000 by 1960, the government, rather than restoring sufficient land and other resources to accommodate them, set out as early as 1945 to "solve the problem once and for all" by offering to underwrite expenses and provide a small one-time subsidy to any Indian willing to move from their reservation to a city, provided they sign a contract agreeing to never move back. During the '50s, the program was increasingly "incentivized" through cuts in the funds allocated to support the reservation-based populations—federal recognition of/relations with 108 mostly smaller nations was terminated altogether—leaving already impoverished reservation residents even more destitute. The result was that while upwards of 90% of all federally recognized Indians were reservation-based in 1930, the proportion had declined to 60% by 1970. Hence, the ghettos. Overall, see Fixico 1986.

in a rapid proliferation of chapters in a number of cities.<sup>101</sup>

Perhaps ironically, “AIM patrols” never really took hold in most locales, although in some instances they were attempted. The Panthers’ influence on AIM extended much further than policing the police, however, and within a year, the original Twin Cities chapter and others were emulating the Party’s various “serve the people programs” by establishing “survival schools” to provide indigenous youngsters with culturally appropriate alternatives to the racist indoctrination to which they were subjected both in the public school system and in church-sponsored institutions.<sup>102</sup> This was followed by clinics,<sup>103</sup> legal aid offices,<sup>104</sup> affordable housing,<sup>105</sup> job training and placement centers,<sup>106</sup> the organization of food co-ops and nutritional assistance, alternative media,<sup>107</sup> and a range of similar enterprises, all of them geared to attaining a greater degree of community self-sufficiency and -control.

In Chicago, the AIM chapter’s aspirational enthusiasm for the community service model

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<sup>101</sup> The number of AIM chapters and members has always been ambiguous at best, especially after chapters began springing up on reservations. According to Josh Clough’s entry in the *Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History*, “as many as a dozen AIM chapters have existed” in that state alone. At the peak, *circa* 1972-74, there may well have been upwards of 50 chapters with, by FBI estimates, some 4,500 active members in the U.S. and Canada. See Satchel 1972.

<sup>102</sup> All told, there were 16 AIM survival schools. The most successful and sustained were the Heart of the Earth (*Oh Day Aki*) Survival School founded by Patricia Bellanger (Anishinaabe) in Minneapolis in 1972 and the Red School House founded by Eddie Benton-Benai (Anishinaabe) in St. Paul later the same year. Probably the most radical was the We Will Remember Survival School, established by Madonna Thunder Hawk (Yankton Nakota) and Lorelei DeCora (Winnebago) on the Pine Ridge Reservation (South Dakota) in 1973, mainly to address the needs of the children of facing federal charges as a result of AIM’s 71-day armed self-defense of the reservation hamlet of Wounded Knee, beginning in late February 1973. We Will Remember closed after a decade, the Red School House in 1996, *Oh Day Aki* in 2008. See generally, Davis 2013.

<sup>103</sup> Although there were others, the most successful has been the Porcupine Health Clinic on Pine Ridge, established in 1992 after a decade-long effort by Ted and Lorelei (DeCora) Means, along with other Dakota AIM members. The clinic not only remains open at present but has steadily expanded its service capacity and operational scope. See Means with Wolf 1995: 398-99.

<sup>104</sup> This occurred in a number of locales, both urban and rural, although the most formal and long-lasting effort was the Legal Rights Center, opened at AIM’s instigation in Minneapolis in 1970. See Legal Rights Center, “Our History” (available at <http://www.legalrightscenter.org/our-history.html>); Treuer 2012: 110.

<sup>105</sup> The most prominent has been the HUD-funded Little Earth of United Tribes housing project in Minneapolis, established in 1975. Little Earth is ongoing, although it’s connection to AIM declined significantly after 1985, when local movement personality Clyde Bellecourt (Chippewa) entered a guilty plea in a case involving the of peddling drugs to teenage residents. See note 249.

<sup>106</sup> Of these, the corporately funded American Indian Opportunities Industrialization Center in Minneapolis, opened in 1979, has been the most expansive and sustained. See Treuer 2012: 110.

<sup>107</sup> By and large, this consisted of newsprint publications like the AIM newsletter in Minneapolis-St. Paul and Dakota AIM’s *Oyate Wicaho*, as well as local radio programming like “Living on Indian Time,” Dennis Jennings’ weekly slot on Pacifica station KPFA (Berkeley). Undoubtedly the most ambitious—and successfully sustained—effort was that undertaken on Pine Ridge by Chis Little and Dale “Dace” Means (both Oglala Lakota) and other members of Dakota AIM to establish radio station KILI, which became operational in 1983 and remains so today. On KILI, see Means with Wolf 1995: 399.



developed by the BPP in that city led to its seldom remembered participation in the Rainbow Coalition organized by Panthers Bob Lee, Henry “Poison” Gaddis, Ruby Smith, and the Party’s Illinois state chairman Fred Hampton during the spring of 1969.<sup>108</sup> While, together with the Party, the Puerto Rican Young Lords Organization and a pair of white radical groups, the Young Patriots and Rising Up Angry, are invariably acknowledged as comprising the original coalition, AIM—and American Indians more generally—are conspicuously absent from the narrative.<sup>109</sup> The same holds true with regard to the Panthers’ subsequent employment of Chicago’s coalition-building approach in other cities, although the Brown Berets and other Chicano organizations, as well as Asian American groups like I Wor Kuen, are mentioned as a matter of course.

Nonetheless, AIM was integral to such efforts in a number of cities. In Denver, for instance, a loose coalition of Lauren Watson’s branch of the BPP, the AIM chapter headed by Joe Locust (Cherokee) and Rod Skenadore (Blackfeet/Oneida), and Rodolfo “Corky” Gonzales’ Crusade for Justice prevailed until, in 1970, the local Panthers succumbed to a combination of police repression and the beginning of a nationwide purge ordered by the Party’s central committee in Oakland.<sup>110</sup> In Des Moines, to offer another example, the BPP branch formed by Mary Rhem and Charles Knox made common cause with Anishinaabe activist Harvey Major’s AIM chapter and white radicals in the SDS chapter at Drake University until the branch dissolved in 1970, after its leadership was

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<sup>108</sup> AIM’s participation in the coalition was agreed upon during a May 1969 meeting between Charles Deegan Sr., principal organizer of the Twin Cities street patrols, and the Panthers’ Bob Lee, the Young Lords’ Jose “Cha-Cha” Jimenez, the Young Patriots’ William “Preacherman” Fesperman, and others. An actual AIM chapter never really jelled in Chicago, however, largely because the Native American Committee (NAC), a recently formed local group, was already pursuing many of the same goals. In 1970, a NAC offshoot headed by Anishinaabe activist Mike Chosa began a protracted series of occupations—supported by the Coalition—intended to force the city to make adequate housing available to Indian relocatees. See LeGrand 2002: 228-46.

<sup>109</sup> A prime example will be found in a recent and purportedly definitive study of the “Illinois Chapter of the Black Panther Party and Racial Coalition Politics in Chicago.” While the Young Lords, Young Patriots, and Rising Up Angry are each described in some detail—even the various black street gangs Hampton sought to recruit are summarized, and a section is devoted to explaining why SDS, another white radical organization, was *not* accepted into the coalition—“Native Americans” are mentioned only once, and even then as being part of a new coalition formed in June 1974. See Williams 2013: 195. Among the very few articles acknowledging that “members of the American Indian Movement” participated in the original coalition is Brooks 2016. Davarian L. Baldwin also lists AIM as being among the organizations participating in what he calls “provisional coalitions” with the BPP. See Baldwin 2006: 299.

<sup>110</sup> See Mantler 2008: 198. Clyde Bellecourt’s older brother, Vernon, was among the original members of the Denver AIM chapter and ostensibly one of its early leaders. A substantial proportion of his time was spent at the national office in Minneapolis, however, seeking a place in AIM’s upper tier. Practical leadership of the Denver chapter was thus left to Locust, Skenadore (Skenandore), and several others consistently present on the local scene. As Watson later recalled, the Party’s entire Denver branch was expelled in 1971 for “not being militant enough.” Although the Crusade’s influence had diminished considerably by the early ’80s, its relationship with what was by then Colorado AIM lasted until Gonzales’ death in 2005.

jailed for several months on contempt charges.<sup>111</sup> Similar alliances were evident in Milwaukee,<sup>112</sup> Omaha,<sup>113</sup> Cleveland,<sup>114</sup> Seattle,<sup>115</sup> ...

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<sup>111</sup> The Des Moines branch of the BPP, established during the summer of 1968, suffered heavy police repression, its office having been stormed by a hundred cops in late January 1969, stormed again in mid-April, and then gutted by a firebomb towards the end of the same month. Rhem, Knox, and other leaders were accused of retaliating with bombings of the Des Moines police station and the Chamber of Commerce building, but charges were eventually dropped. For its part, the local AIM chapter was infiltrated in 1973 by the notorious FBI *provocateur* Douglass Durham, who used his connections therein to gain entrée with national AIM leader Dennis Banks. The chapter dissolved in 1974, following Major's death in a single car accident caused by tampered brake lines. On the Des Moines AIM chapter, see Churchill and Vander Wall 2002a: 223-24; on the BPP chapter, see Anderson 2005.

<sup>112</sup> In Milwaukee, a short-lived branch of the Panthers had entered into tentative working relationships with SDS and other white radical groups, but had only begun to explore the prospect of allying with the AIM chapter being organized by Herb Powless (Oneida) with the assistance of Leonard Peltier (Anishnaabe/Dakota) when it was disbanded by the Party's central committee in November 1969. In 1972, however, the branch was reestablished under authority of the national office by local Panthers Ronald Starks and Michael McGee, and the resulting AIM-Panther alliance lasted until both faded from the local scene, *circa* 1977. Although both follow the usual pattern of neglecting to mention its relations with AIM, otherwise useful overviews of the Milwaukee BPP are provided in Witt 2007.

<sup>113</sup> In Omaha, Santee Dakota activist Owen Young's AIM chapter, along with an SDS chapter on the city's University of Nebraska satellite campus, participated in the United Front Against Fascism—a subpart of the Party-sponsored National Committee to Combat Fascism (NCCF)—organized by local Panther leaders David Rice (Mondo we Langa) and Ed Poindexter. The arrangement lasted until August 1970, when Rice and Poindexter were arrested for allegedly killing a cop; they were convicted a year later on the basis of demonstrably falsified evidence and sentenced to life imprisonment. The Panthers' presence in Omaha quickly evaporated in the aftermath, as did that of SDS, while the local AIM chapter persisted until the winter of 1978. For background on AIM in Nebraska, see Mason, 1984. On the Rice/Poindexter case and demise of the local BPP chapter, see Williams 2009, 16-23.

<sup>114</sup> As with the AIM chapter in Omaha, the Cleveland chapter, dubbed "CLAIM" and organized by Russell Means in early 1969, was represented in the NCCF's Cleveland Committee to Combat Fascism, headed by local Panther leader Paula Robbins. This remained the case until the BPP's Cleveland branch, having suffered the usual severe dose of repression, was dissolved in 1972. The local AIM chapter nonetheless continued, despite Means' departure in late 1970 to meet the obligations arising from his election as the Movement's national coordinator. On the founding of CLAIM, see Means with Wolf 1995, 155-61; on the Cleveland branch of the BPP, see Nissim-Sabat 2007.

<sup>115</sup> In Seattle, the earlier-mentioned Indian-Panther connection evolved into the participation of both, along with a range of Asian American, Chicano, and white radical groups, in what was called the Third World Coalition. The Black Student Union as well as Panthers were part of the Seattle coalition, and the never quite congealed AIM chapter there was by no means the sole—nor even the main—organization representing indigenous people. In March 1973, rather than following the usual pattern of organizing urban-based chapters, Yakama activists Sid Mills and Robert Free took the lead in forming the more broadly defined entity known as Northwest AIM (of which Roberto Maestas, Roque Duenas, and a number of other Chicanos were members).

...Los Angeles,<sup>116</sup> and elsewhere.

There might well have been more, had the BPP not commenced a process of rapid implosion in 1970-71 in a wave of bitter infighting often provoked and invariably exacerbated by *provocateurs* and other personnel assigned to the FBI's COINTELPRO operations, which also figured heavily in the coordination of a lethal wave of repression unleashed by police against Panthers in cities across the country. By late 1972, the Bureau's objective of "neutralizing" the Party had been largely attained, as all but three of its sixty-eight local chapters and branches had been expelled or disbanded of their own volition.<sup>117</sup> Needless to say, even as AIM underwent a rapid growth spurt during the early '70s, the disappearance of the BPP as a viable entity in virtually every locale in which an AIM chapter was active nullified any prospect that the collaboration both had been exploring might have fulfilled its obvious potential.

### Conceptual Distinctions

In any case, even had the Panthers had been able to sustain and further develop the urban coalitions they'd engineered, it's likely that the Party's priorities and agenda would have increasingly diverged from those pursued by AIM from 1970 onward. At base, this arose from fundamental differences in the two organizations' analyses of colonialism and how decolonization might be realized in the United States, although, ironically enough, the point of departure for both seems to have been the same. As the Yankton Nakota activist-scholar Vine Deloria Jr. put it in his acclaimed 1969 book, *Custer Died for Your Sins*,

[F]or many people, particularly those Indians who had supported self-determination a decade earlier, Stokely Carmichael was the first Black who said anything significant.... [A] communications phenomenon, he was a godsend to other groups...clarify[ing] the concepts which had kept Indians and Mexicans [*sic*] confused and allowed the concept of self-determination to become valid.... Indians understood when Carmichael talked about racial and cultural integrity.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> The LA chapter of AIM was at best a hit-or-miss entity during the late-60s and early-70s, often jokingly referred to within the Movement as "LAIM," a "black hole" into which organizers dispatched to correct the situation often seemed to vanish. Nonetheless, the Panther office at 41st and Central served as something of an AIM waystation until the building was devastated by the massive police assault of December 8, 1969. Relations between the two organizations, and both with the Brown Berets, remained strong until the Party's LA chapter was expelled *en masse* in August 1971. For a glimpse of the BPP-AIM relationship in LA, see Pulido 2006: 169.

<sup>117</sup> The BPP's Chicago chapter remained both authorized and active until late 1974, the Seattle chapter until 1977, and the branch in Winston-Salem, N.C. until 1978. Uniquely, the Milwaukee branch, which also lasted until 1977, was authorized to reopen in 1972 (see note 112). There were lingering efforts to maintain chapters in Baltimore, Washington, D.C., and several other cities after 1972, independent of the Party's official sanction, but those seem to have largely faded out over the next year. On Winston-Salem, see Friedman 2007.

<sup>118</sup> Deloria 1969: 180-82. Specifically at issue was Carmichael's 1966 explanation of Black Power in "What We Want" (see note 79), collected under the title "Power and Racism" in Carmichael 1971: 17-30.

A year later, in *We Talk, You Listen*, followed up by devoting an entire chapter to giving “Stokely Carmichael and Charles Hamilton’s *Black Power*...the careful and impartial reading it deserved,” emphasizing that the authors’ depiction of the “classic formula of colonial co-optation” afflicting blacks in the U.S. was a “process...common to the experiences of...the Indian and Mexican [*sic*] communities.”<sup>119</sup> Meanwhile, Cherokee anthropologist Robert K. Thomas had already tentatively adapted Carmichael’s framing of “domestic” colonialism to the American Indian context in a pair of essays, “Colonialism: Classic and Internal” and “Powerless Politics,” both published in *New University Thought*.<sup>120</sup> So, too, Renapé/Lenape activist-historian Jack D. Forbes,<sup>121</sup> Cherokee activist Jimmie Durham,<sup>122</sup> and others. Hence, Carmichael’s perspective imbricated that of AIM activists from the outset.

The same was true of the Panthers, of course. Their very name was, after all, adopted from the symbol of the Lowndes County Freedom Organization in Alabama, an entity Carmichael played a lead role in forming in 1965 and popularly referred to as the “Black Panther Party.” As is well known, BPP cofounders Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale were at pains to secure his approval before announcing the name of *their* new party a year later. During its formative phase, the Party also followed Carmichael’s lead by making the thought of Third World revolutionary theorist Frantz Fanon central to its own outlook<sup>123</sup> and, in February 1968, “drafted” him to serve as the BPP’s “honorary prime minister.”<sup>124</sup> In that rather ambiguous capacity, he played a pivotal role in

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<sup>119</sup> Deloria 1970: 100-13; quotes at 100-01. Carmichael’s and Hamilton’s elaboration was hardly the first to characterize Afroamerica as an internal colony, of course. Most immediately, by 1962, Harold Cruse had advanced a similar analysis of “domestic colonialism.” See Cruse 1962a; and Cruse 1962b. As well, the Revolutionary Action Movement (RAM) had been explicitly pursuing liberation of the “black colony in the U.S.” for several years by the time *Black Power* was published. There are also lines of analysis tracing back to Du Bois, 1935 and Haywood, 1948. It is unlikely that any of this was known to Deloria and other Indians—or most Blacks, for that matter—when they seized upon *Black Power*. On RAM, see Stanford 1986.

<sup>120</sup> Thomas 1966-7a and 1966-67b.

<sup>121</sup> See, as examples, Forbes 1969; Forbes 1970; Forbes 1978.

<sup>122</sup> See, e.g., Durham’s 1974 position paper “American Indian Culture,” collected in Durham 1993: 1-22.

<sup>123</sup> Carmichael had begun incorporating references to Fanon’s *Wretched of the Earth* into his speeches from almost the moment the English translation of the book was released in in early 1966, and did so in “galvanic” fashion during a highly-publicized speech in Berkeley on October 29 of that year (see note 80, above), i.e., the same month the BPP was founded. This may well have catalyzed the Party’s elaboration of Fanonist principles during its initial phase. For characterization, see Joseph 2014: 157-61. Also see Stewart 1971.

<sup>124</sup> H. Rap Brown was simultaneously—and publicly—drafted as BPP “minister of justice” and James Forman as its “foreign minister.” This was consistent with a Panther/SNCC merger then under discussion but prematurely announced by the Party along with their conscriptions. Neither Brown nor Forman ever really accepted their “appointments,” as both made abundantly clear when, in July 1968, the proposed merger, never consummated, dissolved into mutual hostility. Carmichael, who was in fact conducting himself as a Panther, was formally expelled from SNCC a month later. See Carson 1981: 280-85, 292.

the Party's explosive growth over the next eighteen months.<sup>125</sup>

By the time Carmichael resigned from the BPP on July 3, 1969, his relations with the Panther leadership had nonetheless become truly venomous, his ideological influence within the Party virtually nil. There were a number of reasons for this, of which his oft-stated position that white radical organizations like SDS—which he viewed as inherently coöptive—should have no place in the Panthers' coalition politics is the best known (and perhaps least important).<sup>126</sup> As is also well known, he'd been personally targeted for COINTELPRO neutralization, both through the systematic dissemination of disinformation to discredit him through the media, the use of infiltrators to mount a whispering campaign to undermine his credibility among activists,<sup>127</sup> and a "badjacketing" operation in which fabricated evidence was planted as a means of convincing the Panthers that he was a clandestine CIA operative.<sup>128</sup>

Much less considered, but of at least equal significance, was a pronounced and rapidly growing divergence from Carmichael's thinking of Huey Newton, ostensibly the Party's defining theorist, as well as that of BPP minister of information Eldridge Cleaver, and others. The point of departure in this regard was by all accounts a joint Panther/SNCC event in Oakland on February

<sup>125</sup> While a confluence of factors was involved—notably, mounting outrage at California's pursuit of the death penalty against Huey Newton on a dubious charge of killing a cop, and, even more, the fury unleashed by the assassination of Martin Luther King on April 4, 1968—Carmichael brought a contingent of veteran SNCC organizers with him when he came into the Party, thereby filling a considerable void in its existing skill set and enabling it to constructively engage such sentiments. Carver "Chico" Neblett and Donald "DC" Cox were designated "field marshals," and respectively assigned responsibility for party-building in the Western and Eastern halves of the country, while Bob Brown was assigned to establish an Illinois chapter. From a single chapter in Oakland and a second being organized in LA as of February 1968, the Party resultantly mushroomed to twenty chapters and an additional thirty or more branch offices by early 1969. See Carson 1981: 283; and Seale 1978: 233.

<sup>126</sup> The position arose from considerable experience. SNCC had coalesced with SDS as well as other white radical organizations from its inception in 1960, and, despite the expulsion of whites from SNCC in 1967, Carmichael sustained its organizational relationship with SDS during his stint as chair, even expelling the entire Atlanta Project staff—SNCC's most vociferously separatist faction—to do so. See Carson 1981: 238-42.

<sup>127</sup> As was explained in a teletype captioned "Stokely Carmichael – Counterintelligence Program," sent by FBI assistant director William Sullivan to the agents in charge at all field offices on July 9, 1968, the purpose of the "whispering campaign" [was to reinforce the misimpression conveyed through the media] that Carmichael is being rewarded greatly by the government for his efforts, which permits him to buy a mansion-type house, live lavishly, avoid military service, avoid prosecution for his activities and enjoy a regal life with women, important officials, and diplomats." Apart from Carmichael's association with a number of prominent Third World officials and diplomats, and more than a few celebrated writers, actors, artists, and musicians (including his then-wife, Miriam Makeba), none of it was true.

<sup>128</sup> For an example of this tactic being employed, see Churchill and Vander Wall 2002b: 126. One result was that Huey Newton repeatedly branded both Carmichael and his wife as "CIA agents" in the pages of the Party's mass-circulation newspaper and during press conferences intended to disseminate the smear more broadly still. For an example of the latter, see "On the Middle East," a statement Newton distributed to the dissident press on September 5, 1970, included in Newton 1972: 191-93. Carmichael directly confronted Newton on this in 1972, emphasizing the potentially lethal consequences of such accusations. See Carmichael with Thelwell 2003: 698-99.

17, 1968, during which Carmichael both accepted his induction as the Party's prime ministerial honorific and delivered a fiery speech in which he flatly rejected Marxism's Eurocentric catechism while echoing and expanding upon the declaration that "liberation will come from a black thing"—not least, the reassertion of autochthonous African traditions—made by his SNCC colleague, James Forman, in November 1967.<sup>129</sup>

While several Party leaders later professed to have been "blindsided" by Carmichael's forceful expression of such views, since he'd generated a considerable stir internationally by making essentially the same argument in a lecture at Tanzania's University College in Dar es Salaam only a few months earlier,<sup>130</sup> it should have come as no surprise. His position was nonetheless decidedly at odds with the Party's image as a "Maoist organization,"<sup>131</sup> to say nothing of Newton's insistence, enthusiastically propagated by Cleaver, that to be properly understood, the BPP should be seen not only as "a Marxist-Leninist Party,"<sup>132</sup> but as "the revolutionary vanguard."<sup>133</sup> Under such circumstances, Carmichael's break with the Panthers would've been inevitable even without the FBI's badjacketing campaign.

Ironically, the split with Carmichael having been precipitated largely by Newton's embrace of an explicitly Marxist-Leninist version of "revolutionary nationalism," by early 1971 Newton had himself to all intents and purposes openly disavowed the doctrine in favor of "revolutionary intercommunalism," a thoroughly jumbled theoretical concoction of his own.<sup>134</sup> Increasingly, Panthers unwilling to follow suit, abandoning their commitment to what had previously been cast as a national liberation struggle, were expelled. Many others, disenchanted with this turn of events,

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<sup>129</sup> A verbatim transcription of Carmichael's speech was published under the title "A Declaration of War" in the *San Francisco Express Times* on February 22, 1968, and subsequently collected in Mitchell Goodman, 1970, 180-4. A rather toned-down version was also included in Carmichael, 1971, 111-30. Forman's speech was delivered at the Western Regional Black Youth Conference in Los Angeles on November 23, 1967 and published by SDS in pamphlet form in early 1968.

<sup>130</sup> The University College lecture, delivered on November 2, 1967, and immediately denounced by the ANC, FRELIMO, and other leading Marxist-Leninist organizations in Africa, seriously impaired Carmichael's previously cordial relations with Cuba and prompted the Soviet KGB—like the FBI—to plant rumors that he was a "CIA agent." There is apparently no transcript of the lecture, but see Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 632-34.

<sup>131</sup> The popular notion that the Panthers were Maoists seems to have arisen mainly from a fundraising effort in early 1967 that involved their acquiring discount copies of Mao's *Little Red Book* and peddling them on Berkeley street corners at a hefty mark-up. See, e.g., Bloom and Martin, 2013, 48. It's true that Bobby Seale was briefly a member of the Maoist Revolutionary Action Movement prior to cofounding the BPP, but as former Panther Mumia Abu-Jamal has observed, most Panthers were much better acquainted with the speeches of Malcolm X than the *Red Book*; Abu-Jamal 2004, 65. For deeper analyses, see Kelley and Esch 1999: 21-26; and Kelley 2002: 93-99.

<sup>132</sup> Much rhetoric was expended in this regard, *circa* 1968-70, most of it rather jumbled. For one of the more coherent elaborations of what was actually meant by the term when it was used in Party circles, see Cleaver's 1969 pamphlet *On the Ideology of the Black Panther Party*, Part I of which was posthumously collected in Cleaver, 2006, 171-81. Strikingly, Cleaver's—and Newton's—emphasis upon "the lumpen" was in many respects antithetical to Leninism, bearing a much closer resemblance to the views of Malcolm X and Fanon.

<sup>133</sup> See, e.g., Newton 1973: 4.

<sup>134</sup> See "Intercommunalism: February 1971," in Hillard and Weiss 2002: 181-99. For a valiant effort to make sense of Newton's theory, Jeffries 2002: 78-82.

simply quit the Party—not infrequently abandoning radical activism altogether—before they, too, could be purged.<sup>135</sup>

Together with the earlier-mentioned intensification of police repression and disinformational COINTELPRO operations designed to foster increasing interpersonal/ideological antagonisms and “paranoia” within the Party’s leadership,<sup>136</sup> such negative dynamics shortly culminated in a bitter split between what might be loosely defined as a “Newton faction” and another aligned with Eldridge Cleaver.<sup>137</sup> While the latter opted to reorganize itself as a clandestine armed formation known as the Black Guerrilla Army (BLA),<sup>138</sup> Newton’s Oakland hierarchy—which retained both the Party name and an armed component—retreated into the liberal reformism of electoral politics. As hostility between the factions reached fratricidal levels, some forty percent of all remaining members fled the organization(s).<sup>139</sup>

None of this offered the least prospect of furthering the coalition-building efforts that had originally attracted AIM to the Panthers, especially after Newton ordered the dismantling of virtually every local chapter and branch office of the BPP in 1972, and that core organizers from each locale immediately relocated to Oakland to bolster a campaign to win upcoming municipal

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<sup>135</sup> Although he has more often put the number at 5,000, BPP chairman Bobby Seale has also estimated that by January 1969, at which point the BPP stopped accepting new applicants, the Party’s membership had reached 10,000. Seale 1978: 233. Between the purge and Panthers who quit of their own volition, the number had declined by at least half over the next two years (by some estimates, membership had been reduced to less than 3,000). Seale has attributed this to the ejection of “over a thousand” police infiltrators and other “jackanapes... from around the country.” Seale 1970: 370-71, 389-90.

<sup>136</sup> The FBI claimed success in this regard, as is indicated in a January 28, 1971 memo from J. Edgar Hoover to the Boston SAC: “Huey P. Newton has recently exhibited paranoid-like reactions to anyone who questions his orders, policies, actions or otherwise displeases him. His Hitler-like hysterical reaction, which was likely aggravated by our recent counterintelligence activity, has led to his suspension of loyal BPP workers. It appears that Newton is on the brink of mental collapse, and we must intensify our counterintelligence.” Quoted in Gentry, 1991, 620. Also see the February 2, 1971 Airtel from Hoover to the SACs of 29 FBI field offices reproduced in Churchill and Vander Wall 2002b: 160-61.

<sup>137</sup> Cleaver’s politics were eclectic, to say the least. While he generally characterized himself as a Marxist-Leninist—most heavily influenced, perhaps, by Castro and Che Guevara—he also described Bakunin’s and Nechaev’s anarchist tract *Catechism of the Revolutionist* as his “bible.” Cleaver, 1968, 12. He engineered publication of excerpts of *Catechism* under auspices of the BPP in 1968, and later reiterated its significance in shaping his outlook during an interview in Algiers. See Lockwood 1970: 37. It is thus likely no coincidence that several of the Panthers aligned with him in the split—notably Kuwasi Balagoon, Ojore Lutalo, and Ashanti Alston—subsequently identified as anarchists. See Williams 2015.

<sup>138</sup> For what should be obvious reasons, participant information on the BLA is scanty, but see Muntaqim 2002: esp. 29-42; Balagoon 2001; Washington 2002: esp. 38-41; Bukhari 2010: esp. 119-33; Shoats 2001, and, to a lesser extent, Shakur 1987.

<sup>139</sup> Bobby Seale, quoted in Johnson 1998: 402.

elections in that city.<sup>140</sup> In effect, by 1973, there were few Panthers left for AIM to coalesce *with* anywhere outside of Oakland, and even that possibility rapidly eroded as Newton converted much of the Party's residue into an outright criminal enterprise.<sup>141</sup> By 1982, when the last vestige of the once inspiring BPP was formally dissolved, it had reputedly dwindled to fewer than thirty members.

Still more to the point, Newton's, and consequently the Party's, 1971 abandonment of its stance as the purported vanguard of a movement to physically dismantle the U.S. internal colonial empire, as such and "by any means necessary,"<sup>142</sup> flew directly in the face of the rapidly increasing weight AIM was by then placing on decolonizing—i.e., restoring a self-determining existence to—indigenous "nations within" the settler state.<sup>143</sup> Less promising still, from an indigenist perspective, were the Marxist-Leninist League of Revolutionary Black Workers (LRBG)<sup>144</sup>—in which SNCC's James Forman secured a niche until its 1971 merger with Nelson and Sue Ying Peery's bluntly Stalinist Communist League (CL, renamed the Communist Workers Party [CWP] three years later)<sup>145</sup>—and a welter of equally sectarian "new communist" organizations formed or joined by black radicals during the period.<sup>146</sup>

Given the well understood link joining attainment/exercise of genuine self-determination

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<sup>140</sup> About a thousand Panthers from around the country were brought in to join the several hundred local Party members in doing the leg-work Newton believed would propel Bobby Seale into the Oakland mayor's office in 1973, and BPP central committee member Elaine Brown into a seat on the city council. When both lost at the polls, yet another exodus commenced, resulting in a decline in the Party's total membership to barely 500 (i.e., 10 percent of its peak in early 1969). Seale left the BPP in 1974. After making a second unsuccessful bid for a seat on the city council in 1975 and serving as nominal head of the Party for three years while Newton resided in Cuba to avoid a murder prosecution, Brown fled in 1977. See Johnson 1998: 404-8. For first-hand accounts, see Seale 1978: 229-38; Brown 1992: 437-50.

<sup>141</sup> Much of this activity involved the extortion of "tithes" from local pimps and drug dealers, as well embezzlement of monies intended to underwrite the BPP's various community service programs. Details have recently been provided by Panthers who remained in the Party until late in the game, including some who served among Newton's "Buddha Samurai" (i.e., his select group of bodyguards and enforcers). See, e.g., Dixon, 2012; Forbes, 2006.

<sup>142</sup> The phrase quoted, which from the outset appeared in the masthead of the Party's mass circulation newspaper, *The Black Panther*, was famously and repeatedly employed by Malcolm X during his address the founding rally of the OAAU, on June 28, 1964, to explain how the organization intended to achieve its objectives. See Breitman 1970: 35-67 (the phrase appears at 37, 49, 54, 56, and 66).

<sup>143</sup> The term in quotes is taken from the title of Deloria's and Lytle's 1984 study of the IRA.

<sup>144</sup> For the most comprehensive study of the League, see Geschwender 1977.

<sup>145</sup> Forman is erroneously listed as having been among the League's founders in Lipari, 2007. Actually, his involvement began in April 1969, a year after the founding, and ended when the League merged with CL, at which point Forman left to co-found the Black Workers Congress (from which he was expelled in 1973). On this, and the CL *cum* CLP, see Elbaum, 2002, 102-5, 197, 246; Kelley, 2002, 100-2

<sup>146</sup> For a useful survey, including links to numerous primary documents, see "The New Communist Movement: The Early Groups, 1969-1974," *Encyclopedia of Revisionism On-Line* (available at <https://www.marxists.org/history/erol/ncm-1/index.htm>).



to control over a defined or at least definable territory,<sup>147</sup> this wholesale shift by “black power militants” from the paradigm of (ethno)national liberation to that of class struggle all but quashed any chance that the red-Black unity tentatively manifested during the mid-to-late ’60s might soon crystalize into something resembling that evident during the Seminole wars. As if it wasn’t already clear enough from the Soviet Union’s and Chinese People’s Republic’s consolidation of themselves as unitary states, by denying self-determining rights to “nationalities” within their borders, that “Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong thought” held no liberatory potential for indigenous peoples,<sup>148</sup> new communist groups in the U.S. underscored the point, arguing, for example, that “regional autonomy” rather than sovereignty should suffice to resolve the “national question” for American Indians (and Chicanos, for that matter).<sup>149</sup>

There were, of course, a handful of black radical organizations that retained an explicitly non-Marxian posture of “revolutionary cultural nationalism” during the early ’70s. Of these, Amiri Baraka’s Congress of Afrikan People (CAP), in its adamant refusal to accept “class solidarity” as grounds for either circumscribing or diluting the right of self-determination inhering in the Afroamerican “nation within a nation,”<sup>150</sup> displayed by far the greatest facial commonality with AIM and other indigenous sovereigntists at a conceptual level. Whatever potential this might have offered for the cultivation of a mutually reinforcing red-Black alliance remained unfulfilled, however, mainly because the intensity of Baraka’s/CAP’s focus on “blackness” left them indifferent to such possibilities.<sup>151</sup>

Baraka, moreover, had already begun to separate the issue of self-determination from that of territoriality by arguing, for reasons uncomfortably similar to those posited by new communist organizations like the Radical Union (RU), that blacks in the U.S. comprised “a nation of a new

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<sup>147</sup> The right of self-determination, as defined in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (UNGA Res. 2200 [XXI], 1967), is that of “all peoples” to “freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development...and freely dispose of their natural wealth and resources.” The latter obviously requires their possession of a land base. Where the territory of a people has been involuntarily/forcibly incorporated into that of a colonizing state, the right to secede must therefore be construed as inherent. This, in turn, implies sovereignty, “a legal attribute of a territorially bounded political community enjoying full membership in the international community.” Roth 2014: 1023.

<sup>148</sup> For a thoroughly documented and objective study, see Connor 1984. Also see Munck 1986.

<sup>149</sup> See Communist League, 1974a: esp. 56-59; and Communist League 1974b. That the CL formulation abridges the fundamental rights of both indigenous nations and Chicanos is unmistakable in that independent “statehood”—i.e., *full* sovereignty—“is conceptualized as consummating the self-determination of a ‘people’.... One could go so far as to say that sovereignty, as the consummation of the self-determination of peoples, is not only a human right, but indeed the first human right.” Roth 2014: 1023-24.

<sup>150</sup> On CAP, see Woodard 1999: 160-72, 219-24; and Frazier 2006.

<sup>151</sup> Actually, it was much worse than that. Grossly distorting Malcolm’s definition of the “black world” as encompassing red, yellow, and brown peoples, Baraka turned the flagrantly racist “one-drop rule” to his own purposes, arguing, among other things, that even “an Eskimo [*sic*] in Alaska” with *any* trace of African ancestry, should be considered black. While intended by Baraka to underscore the scale of the African diaspora resulting from the slave trade, such assertions could only be received by red-Black people as reinforcing white supremacists’ ubiquitous and ongoing denial of their indigenous identity.

type.”<sup>152</sup> It thus came as less than a surprise, at least to indigenists, when he abruptly announced his “conversion” to Marxism-Leninism in 1974,<sup>153</sup> recasting CAP as the Revolutionary Communist League (RCL) two years later, and merging it with the Maoist League of Revolutionary Struggle (LRS) in 1979.<sup>154</sup> By then, the organization had become little more than a dogmatic sect which was, notwithstanding Baraka’s well-deserved stature as a major poet, void of relevance to the liberatory aspirations of most anyone, Red *or* Black.

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<sup>152</sup> See Baraka 1970. For comparison of the points at issue, see Revolutionary Union 1972.

<sup>153</sup> See Baraka 1975.

<sup>154</sup> LRS was created during the summer of 1978 by merging two small and rapidly shrinking entities, the Chicano August 29th Movement (which had split off from the La Raza Unida Party in Los Angeles in 1974), and the Asian American I Wor Kuen. A year later, the RCL joined the League, with Carmen Chang and Baraka jointly presiding until Baraka quit the group in 1988. Shortly thereafter, the LRS dissolved in a bitter ideological dispute. See Elbaum 2002: 235, 299-300; Kelley 2002: 106-7.