RACE TRAITOR

Treason to whiteness is loyalty to humanity

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EDITORIAL: AUX ARMES! FORMEZ VOS BATAILLONS!

Time was one might have expected opponents of official society to welcome a grassroots movement arming to defend individual liberties against federal encroachment. Contrary to such expectations, many who are pleased to locate themselves on the "left" have raised a cry of alarm at the militia movement surpassing even that from government circles.

A flyer published by an Oregon group calling itself "Communities Against Hate" seeks to warn the public about the militia movement. "Blood will be spilled in the streets of America," it quotes one militia leader saying.

People join militias for various reasons, explains the flyer: "They see the violence at Waco, Texas or the incident between white supremacist Randy Weaver and federal officials and believe they too will be attacked; others see the ban on assault weapons in 1994 as a sure sign that the Federal Government is out to subvert the Constitution."

"The Government did make mistakes at Waco and with Randy Weaver," admits the flyer. So the incineration of eighty people and the assassination of a woman and child by federal officials are "mistakes," when they happen to people these opponents of "hate" disagree with.

But the militias are paranoid, we are told. "They believe that there will be an armed confrontation with the Federal Government sooner or later. Militias say that our [our?] government and the United Nations are going to create the New World Order, where Americans will be slaves to international bankers and if you resist, militia leaders claim,

you'll be hauled away to a concentration camp."

If the authors of the flyer expect these views to turn us against the militias, they will be disappointed. So far we have agreed with the opinions cited above.

But the militia movement was initiated by militant white supremacists, insists the flyer. We do not doubt it; certainly, white supremacist groups exercise considerable influence within it. Why should anyone be surprised? White supremacy is rampant in this society, and militant white supremacists seek to establish their hegemony within popular movements. But we note that Michigan, home of reputedly the strongest militia in the country, was the scene of one of Jesse Jackson's greatest electoral triumphs, and we bet that many militia members voted for him in 1984. One thing for sure: the law-and-order stance of the so-called anti-racists can only reinforce white supremacist influence.

The flyer advises us, "The key to protecting the rights and civil liberties of all Americans does not lie in forming armed paramilitary groups who want to take the law into their own hands."

We can think of no better way.

The conventional "left," however, seeks protection elsewhere. Consider a recent fundraising letter from the Southern Poverty Law Center, which claims to have "the most extensive computerized files on militias and hate groups in existence," including over 11,000 photographs, reports on 14,000 individuals, and intelligence on over 3,200 groups. The SPLC boasts of having written to Attorney General Janet Reno in October 1994, before the Oklahoma City bombing, warning her of impending illegal, violent activity by white supremacist groups. It publishes *Intelligence Report,* which goes out regularly to over 6,000 law enforcement agencies.

Does this snooping and snitching foreshadow the brave new world they seek to build?

The SPLC says it has no interest in stopping groups with unpopular views, or interfering with "legitimate" shooting clubs. It merely seeks to stop "unauthorized" militias. But

if "unauthorized" militias are repressed, the only armed groups remaining will be the "authorized" ones.

We think it was Dwight Macdonald who said that what gave him hope for the future of this country was the deeply ingrained tradition of lawlessness. Of course the militia movement carries danger as well as promise. But it has done more to shatter the image of government invulnerability than any other development of recent times. Like the Los Angeles Rebellion and the "wigger" phenomenon, it represents a rebellion against the massive, faceless, soul-destroying system that is sucking the life out of ordinary people in this country and around the world.

From its first issue, *Race Traitor* has insisted that only the vision of a new world can compete with the fascists for the loyalty of those angry whites who think that nothing less than a total change is worth fighting for. Abolitionists must draw a line between themselves and the "loyal opposition." If they fail to do so, they will not be heard.

UNTIL IT HURTS

The goals of the new abolitionist project were anticipated by the more radical of the 19th Century abolitionists. They sought not only to end slavery but also to secure "equal rights for the Negro and the ending of racial prejudice." For them, "Chattel slavery was simply the worst form of the sin they wished to eradicate."

Lydia Maria Child warned of the consequences if slavery were ended but race prejudice remained: "Great political changes may be forced by the pressure of external circumstances, without a corresponding change in the moral sentiment of the nation; but in all such cases, the change is worse than useless; the evil reappears, and usually in a more exaggerated form."

Affirmative action was introduced as one of the last policy measures of an almost thirty-year long effort by the federal government, responding to external and internal pressures, to improve the image of the United States on race matters -- beginning with Truman's order to desegregate the armed forces, and including the 1954 Supreme Court decision, the sending of troops to Little Rock, and the Civil Rights and Voting Rights acts.

International circumstances have changed, and the nation's moral sentiment has regressed. Anti-affirmative action activists scour the landscape to uncover instances of worthy individuals denied opportunity because of what they like to call "reverse discrimination." Not surprisingly, they omit all mention of the ways in which preferential treatment of whites continues to shape everyday life. Many remind us of Huck Finn's father, who complained about the fancy clothes worn by a black professor in Ohio:

> And that ain't the wust. They said he could vote when he was at home. Well, that let me out. Thinks I, what is the country a-coming to? It was 'lection day, and I was just about to go and vote myself if I warn't too drunk to get there; but when they told me there was a state in this country where they'd let that nigger vote, I drawed out. I says I'll never vote ag'in.... And to see the cool ways of that nigger -- why, he wouldn't 'a' give me the road if I hadn't shoved him out of the way.

Pap's descendants are once again trying to push black folks out of the way. They are joined by some who argue against affirmative action from what they call a position of colorblindness. Their arguments have been answered elsewhere, and we have little to add; we consider affirmative action necessary to correct not past injustice but continuing discrimination, which is no less effective than in the past merely because it is less open.

But we note that such arguments sway fewer people each year, and that the opponents of affirmative action seem to be gaining the day. Faced with growing opposition, many of the backers of affirmative action seek to implement it quietly and unobtrusively, or to recast it so that it will not offend whites, thereby making it ineffective. That is a mistake: affirmative action can only be defended by acknowledging that it hurts individual whites, and by stating frankly that the pain is a necessary accompaniment to the birth of a new world.

We rarely quote Lincoln in these pages, considering him one of those who needed to be pushed rather than one of those who did the pushing. But there was one remark of his we think especially appropriate to the affirmative action controversy. In his Second Inaugural Address, he declared:

> Fondly do we hope, fervently do we pray, that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled up by the bondsman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn by the lash shall be paid by another drawn by the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, "The judgements of the Lord are true and righteous altogether."

If Lincoln, the man of moderation, could reach this conclusion, then surely we can appreciate the power of extremism to shape popular opinion.

BEYOND HISTORY

Kate Shepherd Power

Not too long ago, I sat at a table with a group of black women in a literacy program and told them that my ancestors had been slave traders. I am 32 years old and had been spending time with these women for close to a year as a tutor and women's group participant. Yet this was the first time I mentioned this fact about me to them. It took me a full week to gather the nerve and when I spoke my stomach heaved and my voice shook. How did I come to be here? What events led up to this exchange? What happened next? What does it mean? This is the story I will tell here.

I am a doctoral student specializing in adult literacy at a university in Chicago. When I became a full time student two years ago, I was looking for a place to make myself useful. I approached a friend of mine, Ophelia Rogers, who was the teacher at a local literacy program. I had always been impressed with Ophelia's spirit and her interest in addressing the social and political context of literacy. All of the students who attended the program were women, all African-American, all residents of public housing. Ophelia believed that these students had unique needs and capabilities. She tried to tailor the learning environment to them rather than forcing them to fit into someone else's plan.

I was especially intrigued by a weekly consciousness-raising group called the Women Empowerment Hour that Ophelia had started for the women. When I asked her about the evolution of the group she explained that she had set aside time for the weekly meeting because her students had told her there were not a lot of places where black women could talk about issues that were important to them. "Sometimes," she told me, "if no one gives you a space, you

got to take it." She gave me permission to attend the group and arranged for me to tutor a couple of the women.

In the fall of 1994, I began to talk to Ophelia about the possibility of co-teaching a women's studies mini-course for the women at the literacy program. We were inspired by the commitment that the consciousness-raising group seemed to excite in the women and wanted to expand the women-centered learning opportunities. As a graduate student, I was also hoping to make some progress in sorting out some theoretical issues in teaching. In particular, I was trying to reconcile my idealized notions of the liberatory potential of literacy for oppressed groups (Freire, 1972, Weiler, 1991) with the critiques of progressive African-American educators. Specifically, scholars like Delpit (1988) and Walker (1992) argue that many liberal or radical white teachers abdicate their responsibility to teach poor and minority students the rules of the "culture of power" necessary for success in American society. I proposed to Ophelia a curriculum that attempted to integrate these two strains (on paper at least) through a course that would convene for two hours weekly over a span of seven weeks. Ophelia agreed to support my efforts, to help lead activities in the group and to keep a written journal on how the class was going. We planned to meet once a week to share notes and reflect on any tensions or themes we saw emerging in the group.

Despite my professed interest in examining the political dimensions of literacy and classroom relations, my ruminations on these topics had always been to a certain degree strictly academic. Though I had always noticed the distrust that my whiteness engendered in folks who were darker and poorer than me, I preferred to look at this as their problem given that I thought I had such obvious good intentions. Besides, I had been spending time with these women for almost a year. I was convinced that I had built up the trust necessary to move beyond those issues in this particular context.

The curriculum that I developed was carefully considered: Afrocentric, women-centered and with a specific plan

for teaching the rules of the language of power. The core activity was reading the book *Gather Together in My Name* by Maya Angelou, the second in her autobiographical series. As our group of seven women worked through the book, I assigned writing activities designed to bring out certain themes that I hoped would inspire the women. One of the strong themes in Angelou's book is the cruelty that exists between women, both within and across races. Curiously enough, this tension was something that Ophelia and I were seeing played out within the group itself. Specifically, there had been some persistent verbal clashes between two of the women. I had noticed this conflict before the class had started and found it interesting. At that time, Ophelia and I had speculated about what could possibly be the causes behind this specific animosity, but we had come to no hard conclusions.

Once the conflict spilled over into the seven-week class, my immediate reaction was avoidance and denial. It made me uncomfortable. I wanted to sweep their anger under the rug so we could move forward with what I thought was the real work of the class. It was after a particularly contentious class session that Ophelia gave me her journal entries with this warning: "I don't want to hurt your feelings, but I think you want me to be honest with you...." In her entries she zeroed in on the impact that my whiteness could be having on the women. She suggested that their hostility towards each other might be deflected anger. She wrote, "My neighbor is blinding me to the real problem: Kate and the other white women who I'd really like to zip my lips to and lash out at. I wonder if (they) are angry, like Maya, at white women, but not bold enough to challenge it or mention it." Continuing, Ophelia urged me to abandon my distance and my denial: "Seize the buried points of contact... Let's take it a step further. Strong women get angry at white women who are blessed just because they are born white. Strong women stand up and boldly speak about their pain."

I first read her journal entries with mixed emotions. I began to see more clearly how I was neutralizing the hidden

content of the course. I was avoiding the chance to confront the theme that I had written down on a piece of paper, but was blind to in the embodied interactions of the women in the class. It was not that I had never considered the power relationships that I represent in the context of the literacy program or as the teacher of this particular class. It was not that I did not know that the liberatory teacher is supposed to use the themes generated by the students to shape the curriculum. It was just that I had always managed in some bizarre way to keep myself detached from this particular issue, to intellectualize.

I mulled over Ophelia's points in the week between classes, but arrived the following week with no clear idea of how to bring whiteness and blackness into the dialogue in a meaningful way. That day, I convened our usual activity called 'author's chair.' During the author's chair each of the participants in the class would read from pieces based on the assignments I had developed around the themes from *Gather Together in My Name.* The topic for that day was 'names.' As the women shared their pieces I discovered that they often reflected on the legacy that their names represented. One student with an old time Southern-sounding name of Celia wrote that, "When I hear the popular names my name sounds like a slave name. Sometimes when someone calls me Celia it sounds like a voice is calling me from the past. At other times when someone calls my name, I pretend I don't hear them."

More than one student spoke of her ambivalence about last names that had been imposed by white slave owners. I was feeling excited about this author's chair because we were finally addressing some of the deeper issues that Ophelia had been pushing. I was about to bring the discussion to a close when Ophelia tapped me on the shoulder and whispered that a student who was visiting the class that day had asked for the opportunity to talk about her name as well. The student, Nancy Shepherd, sat down in the author's chair and also began to reflect on her feelings of anger and loss that she did

not know her real name.

As Nancy spoke it dawned on me slowly. My heart filled with blood and thudded sickly in my chest. Nancy's last name -- Shepherd -- was the same as my ancestral name, one that my mother had selected for me as a middle name. She did so against the wishes of her own grandmother who had also carried that name. The Shepherd family, you see, were slave traders. I am not sure about the exact objections to my being named after the Shepherd clan. My impression had always been that for white women of my great-grandmother's generation this particular line of business was not so much considered offensive on moral grounds, but was deemed a little declasse, disreputable.

I sat there listening and realizing once again that I was distancing myself from the kind of personal relationship I might have to the themes of the course I was trying to teach or the assignments I required of the students. The women were honoring me and each other with an honest discussion of their history and I did not reciprocate. I was overcome with a certainty that to hide this fact would be a supreme act of cowardice. Yet, at that exact moment I was frozen; I was mute. I was afraid to speak.

It took me a week to muster up the courage to bring it back to the group. This time I requested a special author's chair to tell my story. The piece I wrote to share was based on an assignment I had given all of the women, but that they were not due to complete until the following week. I read aloud a letter I had written revealing my family history and the way that fear had prevented me from talking about it the week before. I closed the letter by asking: "Is it possible for black women to trust white women? As I ask you this, I believe that this is the first time that I have shared this part of my history with black women. I am sorry that I was too scared to share it with you last week. I hope that in breaking my silence we can discuss the issue of relationships between women with more openness and honesty."

So.... how did they react? This is what most people

ask when I recount this story. As I drafted the letter, I imagined two possible responses, neither of which seemed satisfactory. One was that the women would respond with anger and would no longer wish to talk to me. The other was that they would interpret my letter as a cry for absolution and they would rally around to show their support of me. The actual response was mixed. Ophelia was excited. This was what she had had in mind. She rose immediately to embrace me and some of the women followed suit. Some of the women did feel they wanted to reassure me: "It's not your fault," a few of them cried. "You can't be held responsible for that." Ophelia said that, "For the longest time when I thought about white people, I thought about stealing. I thought about taking. I thought about exploitation. I never really trusted white people. Some people will help you out of guilt. And I was afraid at one time when people wanted to come over here to work with us that they either wanted to do this out of guilt or to exploit us. So when you see a white person who is nice, you think why? What is their motive?"

A few of the women retreated into silence. I cannot be sure what they thought. I am not comfortable making claims of causal connections between the reading of my letter and the things that followed in the class. I do know that the tensions that had existed between the two women subsided (in part because one of them stopped coming quite so often). I also know that when the women wrote their pieces about relationships between black and white women, their writing continued to be honest. One of the women who had been silent after my reading wrote that when she was around white women "I feel uncomfortable because I believe white women do not like black women. But as black women we are one." She gave me this paper privately before the class began. She said she was afraid it would make me angry. Another student wrote hopefully, "The women of the nineties are strong black and white women who pull together. We are strong women!"

Our class ended in December of 1994. At this point I started to write about this story and share it with my colleagues. Since then I have incorporated this experience into a couple of unpublished papers and have spoken about it in some of my classes and at two professional conferences. One thing that is depressing about academic life is the degree to which you are expected to dine out on the same stories until you've milked them for all of their significance and the actual experience has receded into your distant memory. Still, it has been illuminating for me to categorize the responses of other white people when I tell this tale. Usually there are two distinct responses. One is extreme excitement. "You're doing important work," people say. This is usually followed by an invitation to tell the story again, to an audience or on paper. The other reaction is distaste. I have been told that I am wallowing in white guilt, a state that many white people consider to be unseemly or a waste of time. They might agree with the reactions of some of the women. Why should I be expected to take responsibility for things that occurred long before I was ever born? And, really now, hasn't there been ample time to heal the wounds of the past? As one of my classmates gently suggested, "You know, Kate, some stories are better left untold."

Let me be clear. My understanding of this experience is that my revelations about my ancestry were not an expression of guilt but of joy, of truth. This is not to say that I don't feel ashamed of being white sometimes or I'm not embarrassed by my family history. But to me, what is more important is what I do and say today and whether I choose to live my life in denial or in a state of consciousness of my own complicity in white supremacy. We cannot be separated from our past, nor should we try to be. We live every day in relation to the people and events that have passed before us. As one of the students at the literacy program said subsequently, "You know, most white people don't want to tell the truth about what they did to us." The question is, how can we use the events of the past to help us

understand what we must do today? In my view, there is no underestimating the healing power of truth, especially when it comes from people you can usually count on to lie. This is especially important for white teachers who are exploring the liberatory potential of literacy learning. Teachers and students must co-construct a space of trust, through a continuous and unpredictable generative process.

As I have said, the reactions of my white colleagues have been easy to categorize. I have experienced different reactions when I have shared this story with black people, reactions that, like those of the students, are difficult to define. To be honest, some of my deepest relationships with black people exist through books. I have only a handful of black friends and exist, like most white people, in a white world. When I read my books I guess I feel somewhat encouraged. Writers like bell hooks (1994) urge white women to take the responsibility for addressing the issue of race in their relationships with black women and to speak honestly about their shared, but different, histories. Paule Marshall (1992) and Sherley Anne Williams (1987) both describe fictional models of white and black relationships that are possible when they are founded on honesty, love and resistance to white supremacy. But they also write about how difficult it will be to form these relationships given our common and material legacy of betrayal and hatred.

When I tell this story to groups that contain black women, I usually scan the crowd, both seeking and avoiding their reactions. When I presented a paper at a conference, the only two black women in the audience who responded to my presentation made some cautious and charitable, but undeniably corrective comments. One woman wished that I had worded some parts of my letter differently. The other wondered if my discussion about the conflicts between the two women in the class might give readers a skewed understanding of relationships between black women. I sensed there was something missing; I sensed they were holding back. I wondered if they felt as I do sometimes when I hear men,

even well-intentioned ones, try to come to grips with maleness: impatient, suspicious, immediately defensive. I know that they are weary of trying to explain things to white women who are enamored of their own oppressions.

What is troubling about the process of interrogating whiteness, or maleness, or any position of strength and dominance, is how easy it is to subvert this process and create a new class of victims. Perhaps what some people hear when I tell this story is something like, "Oh woe is me, my family were slave traders, and I am saddled with the burden of this horrible truth for the rest of my life." I recognize the dangers of allowing our stories to be transformed into myths.

Let me be clear again. My experiences of oppression are not equal to those of black women or men. All I am saying is that I believe there is some benefit to creating a space for an honest and open dialogue about the differences and similarities of experience within and across race, class and gender lines. But these kinds of suspicions are well founded. It is important to be honest about these things. What I have been somewhat disingenuous about up until this point are the exact motives for my involvement with the women in this literacy program. Yes, I am interested in attempting to overthrow oppression. I believe that literacy can be a powerful liberatory vehicle for women, for the poor and for people of color. But I am also a graduate student with a need to carve out my niche in the academic community. And any research, especially the kind based on the anthropological model, is inextricably linked to its colonial roots.

After the initial excitement following the reading of my letter died down, I attempted to open up a discussion about the degree to which white people, including myself, continue to benefit from the past. How, I wondered aloud, are privileges that I enjoy today won at the expense of others? How do I reap every day what my ancestors sowed? What I did not fully explicate for them is the way that my personal aspirations are founded simultaneously on my desire to stand

in solidarity with them and my need to use their experiences to justify my work. But my attempts were unsuccessful. The women did not pick up on my questions. They continued for the most part to reassure me that I did not have any responsibility for what my ancestors had done.

I recently read an article in the paper about some professors who organized groups of descendants of former slaves and slave owners as well as descendants of Holocaust survivors and Nazis to come together for weekend workshops. Although these situations are contrived, I think I have a glimmer of insight into how powerful this experience might be for the participants. But I wonder how they felt and what they did after the weekend was over. Did they push themselves to consider what their histories mean for them today? I have not made much progress in that area. Since the class I taught at the literacy program, my friend Ophelia has moved out of state. Most of the students have also moved on to other things. I've continued to teach a small literacy class and attend the women's group, but it is not the same.

Since that time, this story has become a fossil, an artifact, a corpse that I occasionally resuscitate for a new audience. I know that it is useful to continue to tell it. I know that it can function as a symbol and a model. I know it stands for something. I hope I never let myself lose touch with the things I have learned in the past. But the most important questions about how we reproduce these relationships in the present were never addressed. So I find myself looking at the here and now. I find myself still searching for strategies to exist in an active anti-racist position, a way to have relationships that move beyond guilt, beyond exploitation, beyond the pages of a book or a journal, beyond history.

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EXCHANGE WITH A NATIONAL SOCIALIST

The November-December 1994 issue of Utne Reader *carried an interview with Noel Ignatiev. The interview provoked a number of responses, one of which led to the following exchange:*

Dear Mr. Ignatiev,

Would you please send me a sample issue? Also, could you answer a few questions for me?

Are you against all racial identity or just white racial identity? Are you jewish? If yes, is that a racial identity? If it is a religious identity, then would you have any problem with Christian Identity?

If cultural identity is OK but racial identity not good, then what should be the cultural identity of Americans (white or black)? Should they adopt the identity of their nation of ancestry?

Would you say that you are espousing a color-blind society? If you are advocating an anti-white society, should white people feel threatened by you? How do you plan to get rid of all the whites? Is your anti-white philosophy a natural outgrowth of judaism's division of the world into "God's Chosen" and goyim?

Thanks,
Arthur Pendragon

October 24, 1994
Dear Mr. Pendragon,

Thank you for your inquiry. Can you tell what prompted you to write? I am sorry, but I cannot send you a sample copy of *Race Traitor.* We have no grants or institutional support of any kind, and depend entirely on our readers for support, so we do not send free copies to anyone

(except prisoners). You can get a single copy by sending $6 (subscription $20/four issues).

In reply to your questions: we believe that without racial oppression, the only "race" is the human. Since non-white racial identities arose largely as responses to white supremacy, we think that abolishing the white race will lead to the elimination of race as a social category.

I do not adhere to the Judaic religion, or take part in Jewish rituals, or live in a community of Jews. Therefore I do not consider myself Jewish. Perhaps you have some other definition of "Jew" that applies to me. In my view, "Jewish" is a religious identity, except where Jewish ancestry has been assigned a social value by anti-semites or zionists (see the article on Israel in *Race Traitor* #4). I have no problem with Christian identity, if what you mean is people attempting to live by Christian teachings. I do have a problem with Christian *Identity,* because I consider it a cover for white supremacy.

Culturally, all Americans are a combination of the Yankee, the Indian, and the African (with a pinch of ethnic salt) and I celebrate that mixture. If people choose to adopt the culture of their nation of ancestry, it's fine with me.

Yes, *Race Traitor* espouses the ideal of a color-blind society. We are not anti-English, or anti-German, or anti-any-other *nationality,* but we are anti-white, because whiteness is purely an expression of race privilege, and we are against all privilege of any kind. We propose to "get rid of all the whites" by abolishing the privileges of the white skin; as for the complexion or personal tastes of individuals, we don't care one way or the other. I would not presume to tell whites how they should feel. Are you white? Does a challenge to the social privileges of whiteness make you feel threatened?

Finally, I see no connection between the new abolitionism and the doctrines of Judaism. We draw our inspiration from the traditions of universality, not tribal codes.

Sincerely,
Noel Ignatiev

THE FOLLOWING LETTER ARRIVED ON THE STATIONERY OF THE NATIONAL SOCIALIST WHITE PEOPLE'S PARTY

Dear Mr. Ignatiev,

Thanks for responding so promptly and candidly. There are several challenges to your letter that reason compels me to make. You say you believe that there is only one race -- the human race. But commonsense and simple observation say that this is nonsense. Whatever kind of god we may believe in he made natural law and it constrains us both. Though we may be different, the universe we live in is the same -- we should start by looking at it objectively. There is no such thing as equality in nature.

Everything you are doing is because you know as well as I do that there are many races. Those like you who dwell on race do so because you know it does exist and you just don't like it. Therefore when you say there is one race you are talking about a goal of yours rather than observed truth. Like those who scream about obscenity in art, you people who dwell on "racism" reveal more about your own hearts than about society.

The heart of the jew dwells more on race than any other member of our society. Those who dwell least on race are "whites" -- most of whom simply wish the issue would go away. The unfortunate blacks (doomed in a multiracial society to be either a slave to the Aryan or a slave to the jew) scream about racism today only because you jews pay them to do so. They are a keen-edged weapon in your centuries-long war with your betters -- the Teutonic-Nordic race.

Now if you mean that pure race (unmixed for 100,000 years) doesn't exist -- I agree. But that's not what you mean. I agree with your objection to "white" Identity, though likely for different reasons. I believe white identity is too narrow an identity on which to build a nationality (or Peoplehood if you will). The term "Aryan" is better. It encompasses all of one's heritage -- both genetic (racial), spiritual, and the many cultures of the "white" race. Please note that since I believe the spirit to be imbued IN the race -- I don't believe jews

can be or become either Christian, western, or Aryan -- anymore than an orthodox jew would allow me to define myself as jewish without carrying the jewish racial seed passed to me matrilinearly.

When you speak of "white supremacy" you are again speaking of the world as you would like to see it rather than the world as it is (and you are speaking too parochially -- it's a big world Noel, America is only a small part of it). America is a white society and a white culture -- it is therefore natural that whites are supreme (i.e. "supreme" as most folks would define it -- political/economic/cultural power and influence). Your problem isn't that my last statement isn't true -- rather that it IS true and you just don't like it. But you and your brethren are fighting nature itself. The problems blacks face have little to do with "racism" and much to do with trying to force incompatible cultures into one society -- which, like the Tower of Babel, will fall. The efforts of the jew to build a society in which there is racial equality -- will only produce racial hostility. Besides, such efforts are hypocritical since the jew is really trying to fulfill the triumphalist doctrines of his spirit -- a division of the world into two races, jew and gentile, with the jew supreme.

Louis Farrakhan is a prophet to his people. Blacks should not be seeking equality in a white man's world -- they need to be seeking superiority in a black man's world. Only racial separatism (rather than your hopeless "color-blind" schemes) can achieve this without some kind of bloodbath. History teaches that your people have never shirked from genocidal bloodbaths as a means of accomplishing your racial/religious triumphalist doctrines (c.f. Deuteronomy ch. 6 & 7). Is that what you seek now?

You ask if your "challenge to the social privilege of whiteness makes me feel threatened?" No, it doesn't, but since my Identity is Aryan, it is clearly an attack -- but not a threat. The reason I don't feel threatened is because you are not strong enough to be dangerous. History shows that your people can become a threat -- but you aren't right now.

As you fight against white supremacy Noel -- I fight against jew supremacy. I loathe your theology of a jewish master race dominating a raceless herd of goyim. Clearly your people meant to carry this out in Russia in 1917 by their racist slaughter of the White Russians. You continued into Eastern Europe. Only the great Aryan hero Adolph Hitler stopped you with his brilliant National Socialist German Workers party. But in the end he failed because he failed to carry out God's law (Luke 19:27).

In other words Noel, we have similar theologies, but in the name of different Identities. The National Socialists lacked the fortitude to do what the Bolsheviks did. The problem with your "holocaust" is not that it didn't happen -- rather the problem is that it didn't happen but should have. Our world would then be a much better place to live. And you know that -- and it makes you afraid. That's why you people pursue your contra-nature schemes with such insane, frenetic passion.

You see Noel, I feel the same way about your people as you do about mine. Does this challenge to jewish wealth and privilege make you feel threatened Noel?
Arthur Pendragon

Nov. 18, 1994
Dear Mr. Pendragon,

Perhaps you thought your last letter, and your identification of yourself as a national socialist, would end our correspondence. If so, you were mistaken. However, for the exchange to prove useful, two things are necessary: (1) each of us must read carefully; and (2) each must accept, at least for the purpose of discussion, that the other means what he says.

Regarding the former, you include me among those who "dwell on 'racism'." If you read over the *Utne* interview (I presume that is where you came across my name), you will see that I have little use for the term or concept "racism."

As regards the second, you refer to my "theology."

Yet I wrote you that I have no theology, Jewish or any other. If you think I am simply lying to you (in the crafty fashion of my ancestors), there is no point in writing further.

It appears that you regard yourself as a member of the so-called Aryan race; yet your organization speaks of "white people." As you know, there are plenty of people called "whites" who are not "Aryan." (I put "Aryan" in quotation marks because there is hardly a more mixed stock of people today than those who like to call themselves "Aryan.") How do you reconcile your "Aryanism" with the reality that in America, the majority of "whites" are not "Aryan"? In other words, what do you intend to do with those "whites" who are not "Aryan"?

If you think the extermination of European Jewry (mistakenly referred to by Jews and others as a "holocaust") was a good idea, then why is it important to you to deny that it took place?

In my first letter I asked you if you felt threatened by an assault on white privilege. I did so only in answer to your question, should whites feel threatened by me? Since I do not consider myself white, I could not answer for how whites should feel. Now you ask, do I feel threatened by the challenge to Jewish wealth and privilege? No I do not. I welcome a challenge to the privileges of any group. In fact, the latest issue of *Race Traitor* carries an article attacking the privileges of those identified as "Jews" in Israel.

Sincerely,
Noel Ignatiev

Noel,

Well this is certainly a surprise. Yes I did expect the usual call-out-the-ADL-stormtoopers kind of response one usually gets from your people. After all, displaying the same sort of tolerance you demand so rabidly from everyone else is not consonant with a theology that separates this world into "god's chosen" and goyim.

As to your two conditions for a "useful" exchange, 1.

Each of us must read carefully -- Yes, of course, and 2. Each must accept that the other means what he says. OK but ...

To a jew (or anyone whose primary Truth is his nation) the Aryan understanding of truth (a universal, existing higher and outside of his race) is idolatry. As I would not go to a gunfight armed only with a knife, I would not constrain myself to telling the truth in a battle with someone who cares more for victory than truth. Stalin defeated Hitler because Hitler pursued an ideal while Stalin pursued only power.

Nevertheless, I am intrigued by the possibility of an exchange that would help me to understand how one could think like you. So for the purposes of our discussion, I will accept that you mean what you say -- and promise you that all I say, I will "mean."

You say that you have little use for the term or concept of "racism" -- but discrimination based on race is what you are all about. You cannot eradicate "whiteness" unless you can discriminate white from non-white -- unless of course, your intention is to work on people's hearts -- allowing them to define themselves and establishing intense negative social stigma to those who define themselves as white (this is the communist way and increasingly the amerikan way). In other words, you are an evangelical. I am Christian Identity -- therefore not evangelical. But I am tolerant of evangelicals (I'm nice to Jehovah's Witnesses too when they come to my door) -- unless they mean me harm. You mean me harm, don't you Noel? I will not allow you people to teach my children to hate their fathers. I will confront your kind everywhere I can with all the energy one man can muster.

Of course you are a racist Noel -- maybe you would be more comfortable (as are my brothers and sisters) using the term "racialist." Fine, but please be honest with me and with yourself -- as conservatives and jew-deo-Christians are terrified to admit but liberals delight in saying -- "Race Matters" -- race drives america -- racism is in everyone's heart. Your assertion "I have no theology" means that I

failed to make myself clear. Just because you don't subscribe to an officially sanctioned branch of the jew-deo-Christian spiritual establishment doesn't mean you don't have a theology. Surely you believe the universe has a meta-ethical structure. If not, then you could never use a term like "justice." Whose justice Noel? Do you think morality is universal? I don't. I'm like a jew. All that matters is my Aryan race. I spent six years in a University where the majority of students were jews and I learned well. As G. K. Chesterton (someone you've never read) said -- the most important thing about a man is what kind of universe does he think he lives in.

I share the belief of Orthodox jews that you cannot separate your spirituality from your race. Maybe you don't say the Kol Nidre Noel -- but you live it because it is in your genes.

You quibble with my use of the term "Aryan" but you use the term "white" with at least as much certainty. The purpose of language is to communicate and you know what I mean by "Aryan," therefore I communicated. I would have thought that by identifying myself as Aryan I would have gained your affection by acceding to your wish that people not identify themselves as white. You yourself say that "white" and "Aryan" are not identical -- therefore as an Aryan I don't fit your definition of white -- I'm one of your kind. But if you don't like the term, suggest to me an alternative and I will use it in our correspondence.

What you call "the extermination of European Jewry" is 90% myth based on a theology of separatism promoted by myths of persecution (it's a jewish thing). The jews of pre-WWII Europe were forbidden to make money in the way they always did -- by exploiting their host (such exploitation is justified in their Talmud but not in accord with Aryan values). They had to be identified and stopped -- and forced to work for a living and produce things of value. (Certainly america would have been better off had talmudic denizens like Ivan Boesky and Michael Milken produced things instead

of manipulating money always to favor themselves and their favorite charity -- israel). When this happened the international jewish nation declared war on Germany (long before WWII). When war broke out Hitler correctly identified jews as a fifth column (I dare you to deny that they were not a traitorous presence in Germany during WWI). He wanted them to go with the Zionists (for this purpose he and the Zionists were allies) to Palestine. Few of them did. What to do with the rest? Those who could be forced to were sent to the southern and southeastern region of the Soviet Union. Those who could not had to work in chemical and industrial concentration camps. Towards the end of the war as the allies tried to exterminate the German people things got bad. There was starvation and typhus and some atrocities borne of rage and frustration. (This is no different than what happened at Andersonville towards the end of the War Between the States). Somewhere between 400,000 and 1,500,000 jews died in concentration camps -- only a small percentage of these were murdered. There was hardly a blip in worldwide jewish population. This is small potatoes compared to the suffering and genocide visited upon the German people whose National Socialist government created a true working man's paradise the likes of which the Russian people never saw.

Of course when you have doctrines teaching you that the life of each jew is worth the lives of 3,000 nonjews then the murder of a jew becomes "genocide." How many whites and blacks die every day and never even make the newspapers? But let one jew get murdered and the headlines will scream about the holocaust. Do you think that Lemrick Nelson is being treated fairly Noel?

I will take your word that the latest issue of *Race Traitor* attacks the privileges of jews in Israel -- but it is not something I've ever seen written about outside of rightwing circles (name me one issue of *The Nation* that has ever broached the subject). But why shouldn't jews have power and privilege in Israel? -- it's a jewish state. More important is jewish power in largely nonjewish america -- here, they can

and do harm others who don't have the power to be free of their hatred and bigoted values. Shouldn't I be offended by Race Traitor?

There is a group of jews in Florida who not only share your beliefs -- they act on them. They have the courage to do what you only talk about. They have done more to eliminate whites than you will ever do. They are led by Yahweh Ben Yahweh and they call themselves the Temple of Love. You should look them up. They were convicted of randomly shooting 16 whites (a la San Francisco's Zebra killer) -- most of them were sent to prison. You are both working for the same end -- but using different tactics appropriate to your genetic predispositions.

I have a question for you. My little mid-western town is 98% white -- we have a diminishing but still strong farming base of ethnic Germans with some Poles and Italians. What I love about my town is that people have a mind-your-own business attitude. Now some local and out-of-state jews, with a few of their spiritual slaves (Quakers and liberal evangelicals), and two black members of the nearest NAACP (not from our community but from a town 12 miles away), with help from the state have formed a "Race Relations Committee" (RRC). They've gone hunting for racism and anti-semitism -- naturally they've found it. It's not hard to find an angry black to complain because somebody called him a "nigger" once, or because he was passed over for a job by a boss who had to be a "racist," or his "racist" white neighbors called the police just because he was playing his boombox loudly at 1AM. So this Race Relations Committee has declared our town has a race problem and they want to implement "multiculturalism" in our schools. Now, you know as well as I Noel, that multiculturalism means white kids must learn tolerance while blacks and jews get to learn pride. White kids learn that their history is one of racism and evil but minorities learn that theirs is a history of persecution and nobility. Whites learn to hate themselves but minorities learn to love themselves.

Question Noel. How should I handle this? What would you do? Should I "come out" as NSWPP? Should I speak at an RRC meeting? How do I handle the charge of "racist? -- embrace it? run from it? deflect it? throw it back at them?
Sincerely,
Arthur Pendragon

December 5, 1994
Arthur,

Yes, I know that the realities of the struggle could place you and me at sword's point; but that is not the case with this correspondence, and therefore there seems to me no reason why we cannot exchange views, if not dispassionately, then at least with mutual respect. I am glad you have decided to do that. I shall try to respond to what you actually say, not to what others attribute to you; and if at any point I misrepresent your point of view I hope you will correct me.

A necessary word about myself: I am, so far as I know, of Jewish descent (although my mother, who had high cheekbones and almond-shaped eyes, used to laugh that some Tartar had passed through her ancestral village in Poland), but I do not consider myself a Jew, or identify my interests with those of Jews as a group. I do not divide the world into the chosen people and the goyim, and I hate the propensity of American Jews to whine about the past sufferings of the Jews (which they mostly get wrong and in any case did not experience personally) while enjoying all the privileges of membership in the white race. My stance has led some to denounce me as an anti-Semite (even a Nazi), and others, who are aware of my ancestry, to call me a "self-hating Jew." Since I am neither an anti-Semite nor a Jew, and certainly not self-hating, I reject those labels. While my Jewish ancestry probably has something to do with who I am, how I express myself, etc. (just as my more remote australopithecine ancestry does), I challenge you to point to anything I say or do that reflects distinctively "Jewish" interests. If

you can, I will reexamine it. If you cannot, then shouldn't you stop labeling my beliefs "Jewish," and start considering them on their merits?

You may not credit my disclaimer, because it flies in the face of your insistence that Jewishness is in my genes. (I disagree with both you and the Orthodox Jews; to them Judaism remains a tribal code, without the universalist pretensions of Christianism and Islam.) But that is where we disagree: as I understand it, you view history as the conflict and interaction among groups of people whose essential character is biologically determined; I believe the explanation for the course of human affairs lies in the social relations that people establish in the course of producing the things they need to live. (I am sure you recognize my debt to Marx.)

When I speak of "race" I have in mind not the superficial biological differences among the various branches of humankind (not one of which is more than a statistical aggregate), but the social distinctions that attach to racial identification. When I say that I wish to abolish the white race, I do *not* mean that I wish to exterminate people of fair complexion, straight hair, etc. I mean *only* that I wish to abolish the social distinctions (privileges) that attach to fair skin and the other markings of the white race. Having done that, I have no further interest in race questions, and so far as I am concerned people can dance with, talk with, worship with, and have children with whomever they please.

Why do I seek to abolish race as a social category? It is not because I am part of some Jewish conspiracy to degrade humanity in order to be rich or live a life of idleness. I own nothing and want to own nothing. I worked for over twenty years in steel mills, tractor plants, and machine-tool factories, in the course of which I acquired the skills of a machinist and an electrician, so I think I have an appreciation for productive labor. What I want is a world where I, and every other man, can fish in the morning, tend cattle in the afternoon, and play the cello in the evening, without ever being angler, herdsman, or musician. And I

cannot have it so long as the system of robbery and violence known as law and industry continues to dominate the lives of everyone on the planet.

No man was born to be either master or slave. I hate all hierarchy and authority (except the natural authority that comes to him who excels in a specific activity). I oppose racial hierarchy because I think it is the underpinning for all the arbitrary and oppressive hierarchies that determine the lives of ordinary people and prevent them from realizing their full human potential. You might say I am a socialist without the national, except that I reject all the forms of "socialism" that have been tried anywhere, and the word does not adequately express my own vision. Contrary to your assertion, for me the nation is not the primary Truth; in fact, it is the primary Lie, and patriotism, as Sam Johnson said, is the last refuge of scoundrels. You are mistaken about something else: I have read G.K. Chesterton (although not as much as I should have); more important, in the remark of his you cite I find nothing to suggest that a man's universe is determined by the nation or "race" into which he was born. My country is the world, my countrymen all mankind, and compared to mine your universe is a mere province.

You said you wanted to understand how I think. I hope that my autobiography and credo help, and I shall try to reply to some specific points you made. I mean you no harm as an individual who cherishes his heritage. I do not wish to teach your children to hate their fathers. But I do wish to teach the truth, that in the past human beings of all tribes have committed horrible crimes against themselves and each other, and it is important to face that fact without apology. Am I right in assuming that you consider the slave trade a bad idea (if for no other reason than that it brought millions of Africans to the New World)? Well, I think it is important to tell the whole story, including the part played by merchants and sugar planters, sailors who worked on the ships, "poor whites" who policed the slaves -- and African rulers who sold their captives.

I chose that example because I thought you would agree. I also think it is necessary to tell the truth about the sufferings National Socialism visited on the people of Europe, in the first place on the German people. I am sure we will not agree on how to assign responsibility for those sufferings (you wrote that you consider National Socialist Germany a worker's paradise). I expect you will add that harsh measures were required to save Germany and you already said that much of what happened resulted from the war. I concede some of that. If I were to teach a course on the history of that time, it would start with the crime perpetrated on Germany at the Versailles Conference, would include the betrayals of the German working class by the Social Democrats and Communists, the cynical encouragement of Hitler by the West, the rapport between Hitler and Stalin, the Allied bombing of German cities, the Morgenthau Plan, the officially-sanctioned raping of German women by Russian soldiers, the deliberate starvation of German soldiers in U.S.-run detention camps at the end of the war, the torture of Germans carried out in post-war Poland, and finally the collaboration of the West and Russia to prevent the German people from reclaiming their country. But my point would be that these horrors are the inevitable result of a politics founded on theories of "race" and nation, and that Germany differed from its opponents only in the openness of its rulers' commitment to these outmoded theories.

You said that the Jews were traitors to Germany in World War I. I always learned that some fought bravely, others dodged the draft (in the manner of petty traders and professionals everywhere), and still others profited, as bankers, Jew or gentile, do in any war. (Hitler's promise to hang the Jewish war profiteers was a copout; why not hang *all* war profiteers? But he could not say that for fear of alienating Krupp and Farben and some of the others who backed him.) I like to think that had I been alive in 1914, I would have been a traitor too, to Germany, Britain or any of the participants in that war, not because I am a "Jew" but

because it was an imperialist war on all sides and slaughtered millions and destroyed civilization in Europe -- all for the profits of the bankers and munitions-makers. The only reason the war ended was that the soldiers on the eastern front were beginning to shoot their officers and fraternize with each other, and the sailors in the west were beginning to mutiny, and the kaisers, kings, and capitalists who ruled Europe grew afraid of revolution. My heroes in Germany from that period are Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknicht, and all the tragedies of the twentieth century are directly traceable to their inability to rally the German working class to take power after the war.

You describe a situation in your town, and ask what you should do. The question makes me smile, for several reasons, even though I suppose you meant it rhetorically. I can't tell you what you should do, because we are different people. In this case I can't even tell you what I would do, because I'm not sure. I do defend black people's right to live, work, and send their children to school anywhere, but I have no wish to persecute good farmers for their private thoughts, and I view multiculturalism as no solution to anything. *Race Traitor* ran a critique of it in the second issue. That same issue also carried a story about a young man in a midwestern farming town who quit his high school football team after the coach passed racial slurs about an opponent. People threatened him and sent him hate mail -- and not one white person spoke up to defend him. A few young self-styled Nazis took the opportunity to assault Mexican-American students. (There was only one black student.) The young man was not one of the RRC types who love "racism" the way a doctor loves disease, but a German-American (like most people in the town) lad who believes in sportsmanship. To me, he is a hero. To you?

A few final notes. Although you told me the truth as you see it about the extermination of European Jewry, you did not answer my question: Why, if it was a good idea, is it so important to prove that it never took place?

Who is Lemrick Nelson? I am sorry, but I hardly read the papers. The news in them disgusts me, and I find that I learn most about the present by studying the past.

Alex Cockburn in *The Nation* regularly attacks the race privileges of Jews in Israel (not as categorically as I would like). But didn't you say those privileges are justified? Should you be offended by *Race Traitor? Probably.* We try to offend each reader at least once in every issue. The first issue ran an exchange on Jews who defend white privileges.

Why don't you capitalize "Jew"?

Sincerely,
Noel Ignatiev

Dec. 22, 1994
Noel,

It is easier to correspond with you now that I know you are a human being. All of us use stereotypes -- not just because of mental laziness but because we naturally choose friends who are like us and so reinforce our thinking. After reading about you in the *Utne Reader* it was easy to see you as just another Semitic monster hating my race and hiding his agenda behind words like "justice", etc. Clearly you are an intelligent man who is willing to discuss his beliefs -- that tells me that either 1. You don't have a sinister, hateful motive or 2. The hateful motive behind your position is part of a theology and therefore hidden, perhaps even from you. In either case you are not an overt, self-conscious bigot.

Let me hasten to add something here. I have been rude, blasphemous, and somewhat hateful in the tone and content of my letters to you. You have been quite patient with me. How very decent (even Christian) of you. You can never understand how provocative you appeared in the *Utne Reader.* Like Satan to Yahweh, if there is an antithesis to Aryan National Socialism you evince it.

I'll stop the "you jews," and "jews like you" phraseology since you don't identify yourself as such. But I maintain that there is a spirit embedded in the race (a "ghost in the

machine") and you evince a jewish spirit. I read the interview and saw your works and knew you were a jew. I agree with you that you do not reflect "jewish interests" (if I were a jew I'd call you self-hating too) -- but that is not important to a man like me who fears your immanent spirit (theology) more than your misguided schemes (conspiracy).

Please be careful of thinking stereotypically of me. You mention at one point "Jewish conspiracy." No doubt this comes from having read Liberty Lobby-type publications and naturally associating me with that type of thinking. I do not believe in conspiracies. I believe that the Aryan race is confronted with something much more dangerous than a conspiracy -- a malevolent theology. Conspirators watch the clock, worry about their kids, miscommunicate and foulup at the slightest complexity. But those guided by a theology will sacrifice everything -- even their lives -- in a cause whose fulfillment may be a millennium away -- and a cause they may not even understand; they work in concert without ever seeing, knowing, or coordinating with one another -- because they follow the same god. Holocaust revisionists think that if they can just show that the truth was not nearly as it is portrayed and that there is another side, then the jews will stop hating us and stop inflicting self-hatred and anti-white immigration on our Peoples. They are wrong. Jewish hatred of all things white is much deeper than any supposed persecution -- it is wedded in their spirit -- a spirit of Cain. Don't delude yourself that judaism is just a religion. If all religion disappeared tomorrow, there would be no more Christians, but there would still be jews. This is a racial struggle. Jews will only stop hating us when we stop being us but when we stop being us there will still be a Them. They want to win -- now, so do I. Then, along comes an article in *Utne Reader* about a guy who wants to abolish "whiteness." So what kind of universe do you think you live in Noel?

I also live in the real world. I am 40-something. I went to a majority-jewish university; I have jewish friends

(some who know my beliefs); there is a dear, sweet unreligious jew who is a close friend to my parents and who has loved me since I was a child, who is a fine artist (I have purchased $2,000 worth of his watercolors and they are my prize possessions), and whom I love, and who would be appalled to know the truth about me. I treat all people as individuals -- I have an innate sense of right vs. wrong, decency, honesty, etc. I don't hate jews as individuals. I don't believe jews can help being what they are any more than I can. But I know when my race has an enemy -- and it little matters whether my enemy is guided by evil intent or just an evil spirit.

You say you want to abolish hierarchy. Well Noel, my love of my race is not founded on a belief in white supremacy -- if I loved supremacy and hierarchy I'd love jews -- wouldn't I (read *The Bell Curve*)? It is simply a natural love of my own kind. Blacks should do the same -- just like jews do. It is natural that in a white society whites will dominate because the yardsticks by which dominance is measured are white. If we gave up materialism and TV and usury and pornography and alcohol -- jews would soon lose their dominance over our society. Blacks need to stop worshipping white things.

I am not really fighting jewish domination out of a desire for purely genetic dominance. My struggle began with the love of Western Civilization and all things flowing from it (the U.S. Constitution) for example. But my people lost the battle for western civilization a long time ago. The decline of our society is inevitable. If we can hold onto a quality Aryan genepool then I can hope that the race which founded western civilization can someday found another.

You say "...the course of human affairs lies in the social relations that people establish in the course of producing the things they need to live." As you confess -- it's Marxist. There is great truth in the Christian belief that all doctrines of human perfectibility are doomed -- and doomed to result in atrocity -- not just Nazism -- but Bolshevik

Communism (which the jews need to come to terms with) and which you implicitly acknowledge a debt to. While national socialist Germany may have been a human attempt at progress, I don't think it is quite proper to put national socialism in the same category. Eugenics is not an artificial tower of Babylon -- it is a recognition of (and a living in harmony with) natural law. No such claim can be made of Marxism. You cannot seriously maintain that history is primarily a struggle between classes. In a tribal, agrarian society, there are no classes. Classes are an inevitable result of capitalism. Your need to embrace Marxist doctrine is rooted in a running away from natural law. What are you so afraid of about race -- that you (and the jewish people) have to substitute strife between class, sexual preference, gender, etc. as primary?

Viewed in the light of historical necessity, you have me beat. Your Marxism (communism) was ultimately stopped by my folkish revolution (National Socialist Germany) which was ultimately re-defeated by a Marxist coalition (I'm not certain it's proper to call the US marxist -- but it is proper to call it anti-racialist). So at this point you have might and history to back up your faith -- but I still have my faith. And besides I suspect you delude yourself about yourself. Even Murray Rothbard (the only jew I honestly enjoy reading -- and frankly learn a great deal from) has said in a recent *R&R Report* that at the root of communism is a hatred of the Teutonic and Nordic races. Perceptive fellow that Murray Rothbard. The future hasn't happened yet. Race may yet win the day.

You say about yourself, "Why do I seek to abolish race as a social category?" But this is at odds with the interview I read about you in *Utne Reader.* You said you wanted to abolish the "white race" not "race." I'm not calling you a jew or anything Noel, but most jews would say they want to abolish "race" and mean they want to abolish the "white race." When jews identify themselves as white I believe they are telling the truth -- but they also have a deeper

identity -- that of being a jew. That makes them a fifth column inside any white racialist movement -- race traitors in the truest sense of the word -- whites with a allegiance not to the white race. Absolutely fascinating is your comment "the system of robbery and violence known as law and industry." I completely agree. That means you better examine this statement more carefully. You cannot have meant what you said.

Law and justice are two different things. Without law we have a society based on custom and ancestry -- but isn't that what you seek to destroy? Custom and ancestry derive organically from race. Law is the imposition from above of a society not based on nature (obviously -- because a society based on nature does not need law to make it work). Here we get to the point -- a society that needs ever more law to work is a society rapidly crumbling because it no longer is in tune with the hearts of the people upon which it is imposed. The Constitution as it was written is literally an enumeration of the innate values of the Northern European, Christian, Aryan peoples. The reason the Constitution is being subverted (Talmudized, sophistered, raped) is because the people from whose hearts those values were derived no longer hold power in Amerika. The jew does. He does not like freedom of speech because that means freedom to hold an open debate on the holocaust. He does not like freedom of religion because that means freedom for other peoples to be separatist as he is separatist. He does not like the right to keep and bear arms because that decentralizes power and threatens his centralized, totalitarian system of law. The most celebrated instances of abrogation of the fifth amendment's proscription against double jeopardy is in cases where the jury system produces results that jews and capitalists (almost an identical interest group) don't like. He does not like the ninth and tenth amendment for the same reasons he does not like the second amendment.

But if you really mean that about law and capitalism Noel, then consider another hot buzzword around which we

may find some common ground -- communitarianism. In a world without central authority whatever hierarchy that develops is one born of nature. If you supported such an ideal we could find common ground -- but I promise you, your biggest enemies would be organized jewry. Let's take one example before you salute. Education should be totally a function of the local community -- because communities are all different and each has its own hopes and dreams for its children. So can we agree the federal Department of Education should be abolished -- totally? I will support the Kiryat Joel Village if you would support the same institutions for Aryans. But of course you don't. You can't. Because that would perpetuate "white privilege." You are trapped in a contradiction Noel. You hate privilege but privilege is born of the inherent inequality of nature. So like the jews, you must hate nature. But you love to fish. Bummer -- dude. You want to fish without being an angler.

Thank you for your comments on the evil of slavery. I agree that slavery was evil. Just as evil however (as you rightly suggest), is the notion that Southerners (media code for white Christians) are fully responsible. Jew merchants made most of the money, Southern civilization committed a great sin that may yet be the downfall of America, and some blacks in Africa sold out their race.

I also agree with your chronology of National Socialist Germany. But the Third Reich came not from German love of their race and nation. It came from alien hatred of the German nation. I agree with you about the imperialist origins of WWI. But decrying imperialism treads dangerously close to championing racial nationalism (again you need to examine contradictions inherent in your beliefs). I think we agree on the inherent evils of imperialism, capitalism, and arms profiteering. But I hope that we agree because we agree that all Peoples have the right to self-determination -- and wherever jews are -- they are separatist and ultimately working against their hosts. I am pro-Zionist because I am anti-Jew.

You speak BS about the "tragedy" of the failure of

Rosa Luxemburg (whose death was too kind) to rally the working class. Why do you support dividing people? Hitler showed management and labor that their interests were the same -- their nation; ditto the farmers and the city folk. Germany has never been united like it was from 1933 through 1939. Nothing is more certain than that economics is not the impetus of history. Look at the last election -- it's NOT the economy stupid. German men fumed as their women were being degraded (as our women are degraded by the semitic slime coming from Hollywood). German people were deprived of the culture of their ancestors and deprived of the fruits of their labor by capitalists. The horrors of that war came from the jews who refused to leave Germany after it was clear they were not wanted, and the jews who controlled Great Britain and America and whose interests are still catered to (even though they have Israel to go to). And YES Noel, jewish privilege IS justified in Israel -- that's the whole point of Israel.

"Why is it important to tell the truth about the extermination of European jewry?" Because truth is important for its own sake? OK fine (I was only kidding), then how about this? Because slaughtering six million people is a crime against humanity if it happened -- and an even worse crime against the accused if it didn't. That is an Aryan truth (clearly not a truth to those whose morality encompasses the seventh chapter of Deuteronomy). I have to know the truth about what happened. If the holocaust as the jews present it is true then I have a problem. But it isn't. History is written by the winners and the history of the "holocaust" is packed with lies and it matters to me -- just as it matters to you.

Lemrick Nelson is the 14-year-old black kid acquitted of killing an Israeli in Crown heights. He is being retried on "federal civil rights" violations. Fear of the jew ensures that he will be retried until he is convicted.

Does it bother you that I don't capitalize "jew?" Why should I treat jews with more respect than you treat whites? I thought you wanted to eliminate race? If you don't identify

yourself as a jew, why do you care?
Sincerely,
Arthur
P.S. Happy holidays

January 22, 1995
Arthur,

Communitarianism -- yes, that is it exactly. In the *Utne* interview I said that I had no objection to people seeking out the Teutonic tribes or anything else that could provide them with a vital alternative to whiteness. I meant it. I join you in wanting to abolish the Department of Education and allow groups of people to live autonomously and bring up their children according to their lights -- provided that it does not involve power by one group over another. In this competitive society, segregation in the schools (as well as in employment and housing) necessarily involves social privilege, and it is for that reason I oppose it. If you truly seek autonomy, and are willing to grant it to others, you must oppose the capitalist system that makes education a means of equipping children for the rat race instead of a means of expanding the human capacities of the next generation. I oppose Israel not because I object to Jews seeking to build a separate community (although I have no wish to live in it) but because it was built on land already occupied by another people, who were made pariahs in their native land. Similarly, I do not regard America as a "white" country. Whatever exists here is the product of the labor and genius, voluntary or involuntary, of all those who have ever been here, and they have earned the right for themselves and their descendants to enjoy it equally.

I share also your appreciation of what you call Western Civilization (although we probably disagree on how much it was an exclusively European product). To me the culture that flowered in Europe, particularly after the Renaissance, was a moment of global significance, as were the cultures of the Arab and Chinese worlds earlier and that of

the African diaspora today. I am no less grateful than you for Durer, Munzer, Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Kant, Hegel, Goethe, Schubert, Brahms, Wagner, Schopenhauer, Nietzche, Mahler, Hindemith, George Grosz, Kathe Kollwitz, and Brecht -- to choose only a few names from the tradition that, I suspect, evokes the deepest sympathies in you. And I would add to the list the names of Mendelssohn, Heine, Marx, Freud, and Einstein. They too were friends of mankind, regardless of any doctrinal quarrels you may have with them.

Having expressed my attachment to what you call Western Civilization, I add that it is shaped by its historical context, and is therefore profoundly flawed. I am writing you while on a holiday tour of the Berkshires of western Massachusetts and the Catskills and Finger Lakes region of up-state New York. It is the first time I have traveled in this region, and I am repeatedly struck by what a magnificent country this must have been before the European came with his motels, gas stations, and shopping malls. And of course what I see here is but a small manifestation of the paradox: that the monumental achievements of Western Civilization, surpassing all previous epochs, are inextricably bound up with the capitalist system, a system that has not only despoiled the land but has plunged the world into two terrible world wars and now led to a global crisis that threatens to end human existence.

I expect you to reply that it is not Western Civilization, not even the white man, who has done this but the Jews, or at least the "Jewish spirit." And so I am forced to take up the Jewish question with you. I do so, I remind you, not because I have special Jewish interests, but because Jewish history is a part of world history, and neither Jewish nor world history can be understood apart from the other. In your last letter you wrote that I evinced a Jewish spirit, and so you knew that I was, at least by descent, a Jew. Had the interview you read been given by the coeditor of *Race Traitor,* whose name bears witness to his Irish ancestry, would you have concluded that he, too, evinces the Jewish

spirit, as a result of prolonged exposure to me or the Jewish-germ-ridden society? You can see the logical problem with a proposition that can neither be verified nor disproved.

You wrote that "Jew" and "capitalist" are virtually identical interest groups. Even if that were true (which I dispute), nay, even if every Jew were a capitalist and every capitalist a Jew, I would still be anti-capitalist rather than anti-Jewish, because unlike you, who view the capitalist system as the extension of the Jewish spirit, I view the "Jewish spirit" (to the extent it exists) as the expression of the capitalist (to be more precise, petty capitalist) outlook. As Marx said, if you want to get rid of the Jews, get rid of huckstering. (By the way, I do not "confess" my debt to Marx, I proclaim it; and whoever refuses to assimilate Marx's discoveries into his own world view thereby cuts himself off from one of the peaks of human achievement.)

The Hebrews of Biblical times were simply another of the semi-nomadic, pastoral tribes that inhabited the middle east and elsewhere, and their Bible is the record of their dynasties, their wars with their neighbors, and their tribal code. As such, it is characteristic of any kinship group, including the talk about the "chosen people." In Roman times, as the soil became exhausted, the Jews, located on the crossroads of trade with India, shifted from agriculture to commerce. Well before the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD, they were scattered across the Roman Empire, forming little pockets of commerce in the ancient world (as the Phoenicians had done before them). That was the beginning of the distinctive Jewish way of life. Throughout the middle ages the Jews attached themselves to one or another feudal court, serving it as tax collectors, money lenders, and diplomats, only to be expelled when their services were no longer required and the discontent of the peasants made them useful as scapegoats. Later on, conflicts arose among Jews, between the modernizers who sought to integrate themselves into the nations where they lived and traditional Jewish elites who had a stake in maintaining Jewish separateness. The tension

between the two camps has continued to the present. One must seek the explanation for Jewish distinctiveness not in doctrine or blood, but in the actual life of the everyday Jew, bound up with trade and activities associated with it.

The Jews are not the only people that has preserved its distinctiveness without a common territory, through attachment to a certain way of life. The Romany, so-called Gypsies, are another example. The Lebanese in the Caribbean, the Chinese in Southeast Asia, the Gujarati in East Africa -- all exhibit a similar relation to the surrounding culture. All form small pockets of commercial activity, people specializing in trade, within a larger society. If every Korean in the world owned a vegetable market or dry cleaning establishment, and had done so for hundreds of years, and in the meantime there were no Korea, they would be the modern counterpart of the Jews.

To the extent to which the Jews remain attached to petty commerce (and its modern extension, the liberal professions), to that extent they exhibit the characteristics associated with that social stratum. To the extent to which they depart from it, they cease to exhibit those characteristics. (The number who have done so is more than is generally known, because many Jews, in leaving the Jewish life, also abandoned the Judaic religion and exchanged their Jewish names for the names of those around them, and were therefore "lost" as Jews.)

I am glad to hear you say that the extermination of European Jewry would have been a crime against humanity. Given that, there seems no point in arguing over what actually happened. I view any expulsion or transfer of populations as a crime as well. Overturn the commercial system, and with it the basis of Jewish distinctiveness, yes. Force the parasites to go to work if they want to eat, absolutely. But expel people from the land on which they were born, never -- neither Arabs nor Jews from Palestine, nor Turks from Germany, nor Chinese from Malaya, nor Indians from Uganda -- never will I countenance such cruelty.

You write that you agree that World War I was an imperialist war. But then you attack Rosa Luxemburg for "dividing people." You can't have it both ways. To refuse to divide the German people would have left them in the wake of the junkers and capitalists who led them into the slaughter. And would you apply the same standard to other nations? Should Lenin have refused to "divide" the Russian people from the czar who shoveled them into the trenches by the millions? (You may consider this question apart from what Lenin did when he had the power.) Should the English labor militants have continued to support the government that destroyed an entire generation of English manhood? Should the American IWW have supported Wilson's "War to End War"? If you answer these questions affirmatively, then how would you propose to end that orgy of mutual slaughter, which would probably have gone on so long as there was a single person in any of the warring countries capable of holding a rifle and a single officer capable of compelling him (or her) to do so? No, the only answer to the patriotic slaughter was proletarian internationalism -- an end to the false unity of each nation behind its arms merchants and the creation of solidarity among the workers of every country.

That leads me to a more personal point. From your first letter to me, I have refused to see you as a Hollywood nazi. I am no liberal, no pacifist, and I understand the realities of political struggle in a civil war. So it does not offend me that, starting from your premises, you think Rosa Luxemburg's death was necessary and desirable. But what did you mean by saying that it was "too kind"? She was shot by a policeman and her body was dumped in the Landswehr Canal. What would you add to that -- public torture prior to execution? I hope that I have misread your meaning, or that what you wrote was merely an example of the beast that lives inside of you (as it does in all men) getting out momentarily. When you write back (if you write back), I ask that you respond to this point, as it calls into question the possibility of communication between us.

A few miscellaneous points in response. I do want to abolish all race, not merely the white race. However, since I believe that in this country the black race is largely a defensive response to white oppression, which would dissolve without much resistance if the oppression vanished, I limited myself in the *Utne* interview to talking about the white race. I did so also because I seek to address first the group of which I am nominally a part. In another context I would develop the point more fully. I entirely agree that Lemrick Nelson is being shafted, and that it has to do with Jewish influence on New York politics. "Jew" should be capitalized because it designates an ethnic group (like German or Italian) or else a religion (like Christian). "White" is not capitalized because it designates a social formation (like royalty), the only definition of "race" that means anything to me.
Sincerely,
Noel Ignatiev

Noel,

OK. Some progress is being made here. We agree that there is an innate need in people for community. I would claim that we need spiritual homes as individuals, within communities, and as nations -- but let's start with community.

How do you build community Noel? What is community? To all the liberals, you just take an area, stick an appropriate mixture of whites, blacks, browns, and Jews, put a fence around it and voila -- you have community.

But you know that doesn't work. Communities are based on something shared. If not race, then ethnicity or culture or religion -- but there has to be a center. That center will hold together the community -- BUT -- it will also, of necessity, separate that community from all those not a part of it. Communities are separatist in at least a small way. And the members must have something shared in order to sacrifice for the greater good of the community. This is Socialism -- at least as Adolph Hitler meant it (though he was speaking

here of nation rather than community).

I agree with you that it must not involve "power by one group over another." But I say -- let nature take it's course -- while you have a big (even fatal) problem here. The only way to prevent unequal distributions of power (because nature has nothing to do with equality Noel) is by a strong federal government. Problem -- strong federal governments are the reason we no longer have community. They destroy community. They provide an escape valve for people -- they make it easy for people to avoid the difficult task of dealing with their neighbors even when they disagree - they allow people to claim individual rights over the right of communities to demand responsibility from its members. And don't try to argue with me about which rights communities should be able to demand from their members -- as you people always say -- "Whose values?" Communities are different - they will decide in accordance with their own values. But then you will be there with lots of heavily armed cops (BATF, FBI, etc.) to say it's unfair or unequal -- do it our way. Either nature will rule or ideology will rule. The society you envision is anti-nature and so you will have an armed SWAT team on every corner. It's because people who think like you now have power that we are becoming a police state.

You may think it's great for our society to have made it so easy for a single woman to have children out of wedlock (not to do so would allow power over women by men) but I claim this has destroyed community and family. Dealing with spouses and neighbors when you disagree is not always easy but it is vital if we are ever to reclaim our society.

America is not a white country only because white people have allowed non-whites to live here (such is the nature of the Christian religion -- it is universalist). But it would be white if we used power to make it that way. That's the way the Jews made Palestine Jewish, they successfully forced out non-Jews. There is no such thing as Right and Wrong Noel -- only power. What are you -- a Christian??

There is no "culture of the African diaspora" today - because big government destroyed it by turning them into fatherless, lazy, mind-numbed, TV-watchers. Before the Great Society there WAS black culture (pace Harlem in the 20s and 30s and New Orleans, etc.)

To you Noel, culture is political warfare. I will prove it. Everyone knows "Durer, Munzer, Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Kant, Hegel, Goethe, Schubert, Brahms, Wagner, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Mahler, Hindemith..." But who ever heard of Grosz, or Kollwitz? That just proves you went to the "Exhibition of Degenerate Art." That exhibit was political. And maybe everyone also heard of Brecht but nobody denies he was about politics -- not art. Even the anti-Nazi, Peter Adams, in his classic "Art of the German Third Reich" called Kollwitz and Grosz "politically motivated leftists."

I think much of the Nazi art was magnificent (Adolph Wissel and Julius Junghanns for example). It glorified the common man -- workers -- while holding out a promise of progress. I dare you to deny that.

You engage in stereotyping when you say "I expect you to reply it is not Western Civilization but the Jewish spirit." This in relation to your point about the despoliation of the American landscape by us Christian honkeys. As well, you lie when you blame it on Capitalism. You and I both know that nature is stronger than ideology -- THERE ARE TOO MANY PEOPLE IN THIS WORLD. People emit waste and we are fouling the planet. It will return to its prelapsarian innocence when 95% of the people are destroyed. That will happen -- I'm sure than when it does, you will blame capitalism. I won't argue -- but capitalism is Jewish (and practiced by Aryans who don't know God's proscription against usury).

Some of what Marx said is interesting -- but he is anti-nature -- race precedes class -- you cannot fool Mother Nature -- race will triumph in the end.

The Jews were expelled throughout Europe for what you yourself call a crime -- capitalism. There was a time

when western man did not live under capitalism (you may say that feudalism was worse -- but I don't).

I am glad to hear you say that since I agree it would have been a crime to kill Jews in WWII, then there is no point in arguing if it actually happened. I agree. But understand -- that means it is not anti-Semitic to question history. Yet anyone who questions that period has his books banned and his livelihood threatened and is called anti-Semitic.

Let me ask you -- Do the Jews hate the Nordic and Teutonic races? Have they not engaged in a race war since the mid-19th century in Russia against my people? If it would have been a crime to kill Jews in Germany 1941-1945, would it not also have been a crime to kill White Russians, Slavs, Poles, Ukrainians, Balts, Lats, in the first half of the 20th century? And if that would have been a crime, then since National Socialist Germany finally stopped it, didn't they perform a service to mankind?

Were the Jews of East Berlin separatist by their own desire in 1930's Germany? Of course they were. As they have been throughout their diaspora. That's how come they have been able to remain Jews. But since they have separated themselves, they are going to be targeted as a separatist group. All peoples have the right to self-determination -- but not to wield power over one another -- as Communist Jews did over the German people in the 20's and 30's.

When I said Ms. Luxemburg's death was too kind, I had just seen (I can't remember where) photos of the bodies of the Nazis who were hanged after the Nuremberg trials. I was angry. If Rosa Luxemburg was trying to slaughter my people then her death was too kind - if she was just engaged in another foolish 20th-century struggle for ideology then her death was simply inevitable. You ask "What would you add to that -- public torture prior to execution?" The Nazis have been treated differently by the 20th century than the communists -- I say that's unfair. How about this -- Rosa Luxemburg deserved exactly the same death as Alfred Rosenberg. Do you agree or disagree? Is there not also a

beast living inside of you Noel?

I understand your point about the black race as a defense against the white race -- but I disagree. God made the black race to be strong and beautiful too. If they had their own homeland -- free from capitalist oppression -- that beautiful spirit would shine.

Sincerely,
Arthur

June 27, 1995
Arthur,

May I publish our correspondence in the next issue of *Race Traitor?*
Noel Ignatiev

Noel,

Yes of course you may. I'm flattered. I was a bit angry in some of my earlier letters to you. I will be happy to answer any intelligent correspondence sent through you.
Best wishes always,
Arthur Pendragon

BLACK SIOUXIE TELLS OF DAILY LIFE

BY SUSAN LASLEY

My name is Susan, born Susana, nicknamed Siouxie. Others (with the power to cause me grave harm, whatever my beliefs about my identity) have decreed that I be "black"; hence, "Black Siouxie." The federal government, because of some of my mother's relatives, considers me as "Hispanic." (Those relatives don't live in the United States and aren't subject to its rules; they consider me as just Siouxie). And another part of the government (the Department of the Interior) considers me as a Native American, because of some of my father's relatives. They completely ignore another set of my mother's relatives, who were Irish. But certain representatives of the government, like the police, latch on to my father's other set of relatives, the ones who were brought to North America from Africa. Whenever the powers that be give me a form to fill out that asks for my race, I check "other" and write in "human." One of the ways to not be silenced is to speak, and to take responsibility for your own voice. I learned long ago the importance of respecting other people's boundaries by accepting that other people speak for themselves, and that I speak for myself. I realized that by not telling "white" folks about my day-to-day experiences, I allow them to assume that everything is fine with me, and that discrimination doesn't exist. That's why I speak.

Apr 29, 1995: Black Siouxie kicked out of a medical study

Yesterday at my (now, ex-) doctor's office, I got kicked out of a medical research study for being black!

Usually, when my skin colour gets me ejected from somewhere, it's a neighborhood, or a meeting, or an organization or something. This is the first time that science has formally ejected me. Blackness must be a very serious affliction if even the scientists are openly saying, "No blacks or dogs allowed!" The doctor's research assistants had been trying for weeks to recruit me for the study. The study, which was funded by the Chronic Fatigue and Immune Disfunction Syndrome (CFIDS) Association and Temple University's Department of Molecular Biology, was to look for blood markers for CFIDS. After the many appeals, I said, what the heck, I'll do it -- all I have to do is show up at the doctor's office, answer a questionaire, and give up a blood sample every 10 weeks. The research assistant set an appointment for 8:30 a.m. Friday. I made an appointment to rent a car for the day, since I don't own one and the doctor's office is far out into a region of the county that buses don't serve, and a taxi ride is $25 or so--one way. When I showed up at 8:30 on Friday, the research assistant came out. She took one look at me and became distraught. "I didn't realize that you were black," she said to me. She lowered her voice. "I'm sorry, I should have asked you more questions. We always take race into account whenever we do these studies, since black people just don't have CFIDS. In fact, race is so important that it's been part of the protocol of every study we've ever done." I asked her to show me a copy of the proposal for the study. She went back into the lab area to get the office copy of the funding proposal (the thing they sent to Temple University to get the money). I didn't tell her anything about my having had the disease since the mid 1980s, diagnosed by this very office. "I'm sorry you had to come all the way here for nothing," she said. As she brought back the study, she was very apologetic, telling me that she was sorry if she was hurting my feelings, etc. She said that they had never had this sort of thing (a black human being show up for a research study) happen before, since only 10 of the doctor's more than 2,000 CFIDS

patients, who come to see him from all over the United States and several other countries, were black. (This doctor is a very famous one, internationally known, and one of the "name" researchers on CFIDS. I'm not using his name yet because you'd probably know who it was, and I'm in the process of deciding which legal steps to take next.) I asked her to show me in the proposal/protocol what the criteria were for inclusion in the study. By now, another research participant, a healthy control, had arrived in the office, and was watching us closely. She looked through the protocol, and read off the criteria, which included things like: be aged 15-61, have the right symptoms, had a proper Center for Disease Control (CDC)-approved diagnosis, with no other diseases/illnesses, not pregnant, etc. But nothing about race. I met all the requirements. The research assistant was shocked. I didn't ask her how they determined whether someone was white, and hence, suitable for automatic inclusion in medical research studies. I didn't tell her about the show I saw on Oprah just Thursday (or was it Wednesday -- the one with John Bradshaw on it, talking about the dangers of "family secrets") about a woman who had been raised as white all her life who learned as an adult that because her father was black, that made her black, too. Or about the man -- a professor/dean of a midwestern law school who wrote a book about his horrible experiences after discovering (in his adolescence, after he lost his white mother and had to live with his father, whom he'd always been told was "Italian") that his father was black, and that thus he was black, even though he had been raised as "white" all of his life. Had these two black folks had CFIDS and presented themselves for the research study, they would have been accepted, no questions asked, because they had light skin and smooth hair. I guess everyone knows that melanin causes all kinds of scientific troubles. "Blackness" messes up the test results. I'm sure that some doctor somewhere is working on a theory that "excessive" melanin is a contributing cause of every disease known to humanity. Except CFIDS -- which

doctors want to keep as a white disease, to ensure support from the public for people with this baffling but disabling illness. "Well, it looks like you can be in the study after all!" she said, embarrassed. Of course, by then, I'd already decided that these folks weren't going to have a drop of my blood if they paid me $100,000,000 for it. I also knew that it was time to get another doctor. I left the office. "Thank you for coming, and I'm sorry about the misunderstanding," the research assistant said with a smile as I left. I went to the ladies room, and wrote down as much as I could remember about the incident, along with the names of the organizations involved in the research study. Then, I carried my weary body back downstairs to my $45 a day rental car, and I went home. I didn't have the energy needed to cry, so I had a headache for the remainder of the day. Maybe next week my energy level will be high enough that I can cry about it. I'm still undecided about what I'm to do, but I know that something has to be done.

May 29, 1995: Black Siouxie Stares Down a Cop!

Here's another swatch of my everyday life as a black person in America -- this shit gets so annoying... On Saturday morning, May 27, I decided to go to my favorite mall. Since I don't own a car, I stepped outside my building to catch the bus. I always take a book with me to read on bus trips -- this day's book was *The Pit* by Gene Church. But I was not allowed to read my book in peace. After I had been standing for about three minutes, a police car pulled up about a quarter block from me, and a familiar ritual began. I'm obviously standing on the sidewalk, not bothering anyone, no militia insignia anywhere, READING A BOOK. The policeman evidently sees this as the act of a potential criminal, a black female standing on the street, getting ready to rob somebody's fashionable house -- or heaven forbid, waylay one of the pretty white men (I live in a yuppie neighborhood in Charlotte) who jog through the neighborhood

on a Saturday morning. After sitting staring in his position for a couple of minutes, the policeman slowly crept his car closer, in that intimidating style they like to use when they're checking someone out, and in a way that's guaranteed to attract the attention of onlookers. (The neighbors must have been having a field day with this!) He stopped a few feet closer, then sat there staring at me. He was pretending to be a lion, checking out the prospects of preying on a wildebeest that had strayed from the herd. I said to myself, "Whatever you do, Siouxie, don't laugh at this creep!" So I went back to reading my book, trying to ignore the cop, but keeping an eye on him in case he should do something truly stupid. He was one of those cops who didn't like to be ignored, so he pulled his car directly in front of me. I looked up, and my eyes locked onto his. Without blinking and while still watching me, he picked up the microphone from his police radio and started talking to it. That's when I began to realize why certain young black men feel such generic hatred toward the police. No cuss words were exchanged, and he didn't go for his gun. I didn't spit on his car. We just stayed there with frozen eyes, staring at each other, waiting to see who would blink first. He did. The Charlotte transit bus was coming, and he had to get his silly ass out of the way. A bus is bigger than a police car anyway, and besides, the bus driver was a black man. I'm almost certain that if the bus had not come at that moment, he would have gotten out of the car and started an incident. Then you'd all be watching it on the news -- either Siouxie would be in intensive care after being shot by the police during an alleged robbery attempt, or the police would be in intensive care after having a library book removed from his butt (in that case, Siouxie would still be in intensive care, having "sustained injuries from an undetermined source"). Life in America. It only goes on and on...

June 22, 1995: Black Siouxie Wears a Hat; Is Mistaken for a Negro

It happened again! Another experience... A couple of days ago, I went into my favorite copy shop to pick up my mail. This is a place where I've maintained a box address since 1989, when it first opened -- the proprietor, in fact, has told me that I was one of the first customers he ever had. I am/was on good terms with the proprietor and his employees, often bringing gifts back to them from my international travels, and listening to stories about their lives, families, and exploits. They've enjoyed thousands of dollars in business from me over the years, and I've sent friends to them as customers. The weather was crazy, so I thought I'd wear a hat with a brim, to keep the sun off as well as the rain (as happens this time of year in Charlotte, when a cloudburst can suddenly come along and drench anyone under it). Just an ordinary HAT -- nothing political, ethnic, or "unusual" about it. I had on the sunglasses I usually wear, since the sun was shining brightly, and the lipstick I like to be colorful with. I needed to make some photocopies, so I decided to use one of the copiers before I picked up my mail. When I walked into the copy shop, there was no one there for me to say, "Hi!" to, which is not unusual at that time of the day, so I went directly to the copiers. I positioned my original on the Canon, and pushed the start button. About two seconds after the Canon copier started humming, one of the employees, whom I've known for years, came running out of the back room, with a look on her face that suggested that she'd just seen a gorilla come into the shop, a gorilla with melted chocolate on her/his hands, and horse turds on his/her feet. It was an evil look, a look of total non-recognition and unwelcome, the kind of look I would expect if I showed up hungry at a Klan rally (without my own sheets), asking for a piece of watermelon. It was one of those "there's a negro contaminating the place let's get her outta here" looks on her face. At first, I actually thought that she was directing her fierce stare at someone else, so I turned around to see what evil person was standing behind me, and what they might be doing. Then it hit me -- there

was no other customer in the shop but me! I was the evil one! I was expecting the police to arrive at any minute. "May I help you!!!" she demands, with a voice I'm familiar with from certain other white folks, but not from this woman. "Hi, (the woman's name)," I answer calmly. "Oooohhh, Sue, it's YOU!" she said with a sense of surprise, shock, embarrassment, and relief. "I didn't know it was YOU! I thought you was..." Then she caught herself. Face turned fire engine red and everything. "It's just that I didn't recognize you with the hat!" "And what a hat it is," I answer, still in shock myself. "It's one of my favorites." I guess that with a hat on, I look just like the typical contamination that certain white folks expect of blacks. I wasn't "their" Siouxie any more, just an ordinary negro. And it's OK to get rid of a mere negro any way they can when her presence contaminates the purity of their business establishment. Even if it really is their very own Siouxie. Another slap in the face; another day in the life of Black Siouxie.

June 26, 1995: Siouxie Goes Downtown

Today, I sat in a downtown mall (on bankers' turf) at lunchtime just watching people and how they used the space around them. What fascinated me was the group which stood out the strongest as interfering with the spatial boundaries of the other people around them. Everyone was getting out of the way of white men as they dashed all over the place, walked past people, strutted into the faces of apparent strangers, sat themselves between two people conversing, smacked and slurped audibly on their lunches (these are Brooks Brothers men in three-piece suits...), interrupting on-going conversations, loud-talked their conversation-mates (as if he who talked the loudest ruled the world), sighed heavily and complained audibly as they waited in queues, as if other people and their needs for space and respect didn't exist. The only times I noticed that they

behaved as if they acknowledged the presence of other people was when there was a white woman (or a "dressed for success" beautiful non-white woman: Siouxie did not qualify for this status because although beautiful, she was wearing faded blue jeans, a yellow t-shirt with a tiny moth-hole in the back hem, sandals, and the infamous HAT... with the headrag underneath) about to walk through a door or onto the escalator; then those men stopped what they were doing, stopped the flow of whatever everyone else in the vicinity was doing, to engage in their own ritualized behavior. They held the door open in an obvious and exaggerated show, for the woman to walk in first. They seemed conscious only of themselves and their power relationship to other folks around them. Their consciousness about other things, I would surmise, might be very limited. I fear for my safety when I'm around such people, since they probably operate with only half a brain (the left half), and unless something weird is going on that commands attention and respect, that half is always on auto-pilot. This city is full of people like this, walking around in a complete, whiteness-induced coma. The same auto-piloted folks get angry whenever there is serious talk about making it easier to increase residential spaces downtown, increase public transit throughout the city, make public transit (and other things) accessible to all the population regardless of ablebodiedness, insure that enough stores are downtown to support all the folks who are involved there in their daily lives. Since they see past non-white folks -- as if we were the ghosts who weren't really there -- they are unconscious of the fact that if it weren't for the bus-riding, shopping, walking, working, waiting, being, living of black folks, downtown would be a ghost town, and if becoming a ghost town didn't put them out of business, it would make what they do very boring indeed.

RUNNING IN VICIOUS CIRCLES: RACISM AND THE AFRICAN DRUM

BY LILIAN FRIEDBERG

Isn't it true that what goes around comes around? Isn't this perhaps what is behind the Native American wisdom which states that the first step taken on any path is the most important one because what is there in the beginning will return in the end? The world is round, it is not flat. Space, we know, is curved. Therefore, whatever we put forth in the universe WILL inevitably return, we need only wait long enough for this to occur. So, the "boomerang principle" expressed in this "folk wisdom" is actually rooted in scientific fact. Sadly, though, many of us fail to see the connection between this simple truth and how we go about integrating ethnic traditions into our own uniquely American culture in a phenomenon we have dubbed "cultural diversity." It is sweeping the country: Seminars in "diversity training" fill the board rooms and class rooms with the buzz of new found hope. But, as long as we neglect to reconsider our own most basic assumptions and attempt to restructure them to fit the diffuse contours of those diverse cultures we seek to embrace, we will persist in chasing our tails round and round in the same circle of cultural monotony we hope to escape. However well-intentioned our efforts to introduce "foreign" cultural elements to US-American society -- whether in classroom curriculum, corporate practice or popular culture -- we will

Lilian Friedberg is a writer, performing artist, and percussionist specializing in the Djembe Drum technique and the rhythms of the Malinke people of Guinea. She lives in St. Paul, Minn.

necessarily fail as long as we continue changing *them* to adapt to *our* way of life and of learning. In order to benefit from the process of cultural integration and cultural exchange, we must change ourselves, our structures, our *modus operandi.* Recently, I experienced an example of this malformed brand of "cultural diversity": A drum circle. Let us call the event facilitator "Arthur" and assume him to be a "normal" American white male -- chivalrous, gallant and charming in his innocent quest for the holy grail. He telephoned, inviting me to attend and be introduced to the circle as "elder." I wrote him a letter, politely requesting that he refrain from addressing me as "elder" because this was a term I reserved for select members of tribal communities who had passed through certain pre-established rites and rituals to earn it. Ignoring my request, Arthur called me to the center of his circle and introduced me as "elder."

Certainly, I could not have been *seriously* offended by his attempt to honor my wisdom, my position, the thick callouses covering my drummer's hands. Arthur, after all, is a highly regarded "expert" on ethnic drumming. He holds a seat at a learned institution, is chummy with all the big names in "ethnic" percussion and even manufactures a fine line of African Drums -- made in America, of course, by a battery of white men in his employ. He is as well-reputed as any of the myriad of knights in tarnished armor venturing now into their modern-day quests for the holiest of holies. Perhaps Arthur attributed my rejection of his flattery to a case of courtly coquetry -- the old familiar, "she-said-'no'-but--she-really-meant-'yes'." Perhaps he thought it was the false humility appropriate to the damsel-in-distress role I was forced to assume by virtue of my gender and the rules of the white man's game. Chalice. Grail. Drum. "It's all the same they seek," I think as I peruse the unsuspecting faces of the participants and am suddenly struck by the tragedy of the situation, "They don't know, do they?" I ask myself. They really do not KNOW, they haven't a clue. They do not know they are doing anything WRONG. They stand in a circle.

Smiling, happy faces beating Drums of every size, shape, color and cultural origin. They have "honored" me, called me by the highest of names. "Elder," they said. Arthur's adventure consisted of an educational presentation on "African" Drums -- a loosely veiled sales pitch for his own commercial enterprises ranging from such "music circles" designed to transport participants to a "timeless place of healing" to "instructional" videos (tacitly designed to cut real African Drummers out of the business of teaching ethnic art forms) to his own mass-manufactured fiberglass "Drums" with plastic heads (the expert assured us of their superiority over their cruder, more authentic African counterparts). About halfway into this live info-mercial I decided to act in accordance with the title I'd been granted and speak, as an elder is entitled to do, my piece. Dampening the deep spirit of Drumming and community the Arthurian wizard tried to conjure, I dared the dastardly deed and uttered the ineffable: I put the "s" on the New Age "A" word and began talking about Africans in the presence of seventy-some white Americans and one Black. In the attempt to redirect community focus from African *things* to African *peoples,* I said what any authentic elder would have had to have said: "The African Drum cannot be detached from the issue of racism in this country."

Mistakenly, I had assumed this community of "Drummers" would respect its elders. Much to my dismay, this was not the case. "Elder, go home!" they chimed. "Spoiler! Troublemaker! How dare you do this to us? We're just trying to have some *fun* here!" Obviously flustered by the presence of a dissenting female expert in his midst, the man who'd burdened me with the title and position of "elder" begrudgingly allotted me four minutes to speak. Overcome by anxiety, he could not refrain from reminding me of each passing minute:

"OK!" he growled, "you've got four minutes." (Yes, I know, Arthur, it's why I'm speaking so quickly). I stressed, as politely as I could, that all of us who employ African art media for personal pleasure or professional gain must accept

the responsibility for addressing the issue of racism. "Three minutes." (I am a drummer, Arthur, I do not need you to keep track of time for me). I felt compelled, not as elder, but rather as drummer/musician to publicly critique the manner in which ethnic drumming is currently being converted into the USA-Today format so that it, too, might successfully be woven into the fabric of a white supremacist society -- "two minutes!" -- caught in the throes -- "One minute!" (I think you're speeding up a bit, Arthur.) -- of denial. "Time's up!" Before I could even begin to explain what was wrong with the bright colors he'd glossed over the man-made-in-America object that perhaps looked like an African Drum, but certainly did not and could not ever *sound* like one, much less transport anyone, anywhere to any place of healing whatsoever, my authentic hand-made-in-Africa-by-Africans Drums and I were whisked out of the room. This "negative energy" source thus eliminated, the Drum circle was free to continue in the same vicious circle of cultural debauchery and desecration so vital to the success of such a circle.

More than likely, the incident was passed off as a display of "arrogance" on my part. It is the classic Caucasian response to my plea that we finally see just what it is we are missing about African Drums and drumming. My background in this field includes years of intensive study with world-class African professionals in Europe and in Africa. I spent nearly a decade teaching, performing, studying, practicing (8 to 10 hours daily!) -- studying the intricacies of just *one* West African Drum tradition -- the musical wealth of but one tribe in one small country in Africa[1]. Still, I cannot claim to be an "expert" on the subject, nor am I the "master" drummer others have made me out to be. Inasmuch as I have perhaps traversed more miles across the head of the Drum than others, I may be an "elder" drummer. Ultimately, though, I know only enough about these traditions to be quite clear as to how much I *don't* know, that is to say, how much there is yet to learn.

But, ten years into my own career as a Drum expert,

there are some things I do know for certain. One is that what I witnessed at Arthur's circle has little to do with African drumming as I experienced it in Africa. I also know that African Drumming is as much about African peoples (of whatever nationality) as it is about African Drums: You cannot take the Drums without the people any more than you can the people without the Drums, for the Drums are the heart of a people. Any people. All peoples. But the people gathered there didn't want to hear that. They had come to beat the Drum, not to Drum the beat. Their purpose was to pound sound *into* the Drum, not to extract the Drum's wisdom from its head. The basic misconception underlying the mis-directed (ab)use of these art forms and terminologies is this: we still seem to suffer under the illusion that these things, like everything else under the sun and beyond, were placed on the planet for the purpose of entertaining and serving the ends of the dominant white class. In the aftermath of the self-inflicted suburban wound, we look to the Drum as mystic panacea, miracle cure, spiritual medium and fine instrument of healing. What we do not understand is that the healing power of the Drum cannot be confused or even compared with any form of "Western" healing. We cannot transport ourselves into a "shamanistic" journey the way we might step into a shiny new Lexus and speed off into Nirvana. The ability to unleash the healing power of ANY Drum cannot be gleaned from one brief circular session such as this. A circle consisting of novice Drummers led by one moderately proficient (by African/African-European standards!) ringmaster cannot affect any sort of healing. What participants experience, rather, is a "rush" similar to the effect of caffeine or nicotine. It is a quick-fix to a chronic problem: human psychic disintegration in the aftermath of three thousand years' psycho-social decline. The therapeutic value of such a session lies primarily in the venting of frustration. Participants often state this as their explicit purpose for Drumming: to beat out their frustration. To vent.

This attitude, though, reflects the height of arrogance

because it necessarily denies the complexity behind these holistic instruments of healing. The tacit assumption is that these healing methods are somehow "less sophisticated" than Western medical practices. If we take the Drum *seriously* as a healing medium, though, we would have to compare Drum circles like this to handing out scalpels to a group of untrained would-be surgeons. Unless, of course, we view Arthur as the omnipotent master surgeon about to reshape the souls of seventy-some patients at once! The Drum, though, unlike the scalpel which has no purpose other than to cut and to slice, is also a musical instrument rooted in a complex, formal tradition like any other. Every Drum has a sound "spectrum" which, in many cases, even resembles or is identical to a "scale." It is a series of notes placed at specific, carefully calculated intervals -- a chain of sounds that can be produced only by stroking the Drum with a specific technique that is different for each Drum type but the same for all the Drums of one type. Thus, the "djembe" Drum must be played with a technique that is quite unlike that of the "conga," the "ashika," the "sabar" or the "bougarabou," but all properly strung and constructed djembes should emit the same basic sound when played with the "djembe technique." A djembe played like a conga will not sound like a djembe. If we take the Drum seriously as a musical instrument, then, the Drum circle could be likened to a situation in which novices are given saxophones, clarinets, French horns, tubas, etc. and instructed to "blow." Just blow to your heart's content. Blow in unison. Blow in tandem. Blow together. Blow apart.

Literature on the subject is replete with analogies drawn between Drumming and heterosexual eroticism. In Drum circles, we are sometimes told this is about "loving" the Drums. If we are serious, though, about our "love" relationship with the Drum, we would have to see the Drum circle as little more than a metaphorical gang bang or a hasty one night stand at best. Neither medicine, nor music, nor love can be made in the clumsy clutter of cultural fragments haphazardly thrown together in a "drum circle." Perhaps it is

because we are so unaware of our own traditions that we barter so recklessly with those of others. Perhaps we avoid scouring our own historical past for something as powerful as indigenous Drum traditions, fearing we will come up empty-handed. If this is the case, why can't we just apply our American ingenuity to developing an entirely NEW Nouveau-Euro-American Drum tradition? In essence, this is what we have done in creating the "Drum circle," for this type of Drum event does not exist in tribal societies where drummers Drum and dancers dance for the rest of the community. But, we have taken the Drums from the hands of others to do so. The first step along THIS "drummer's path," then, involves an act of thievery.

Every ethnic population on the planet has developed a unique Drum tradition: most of us, though, have let them slip our minds and consequently slip out of our hands. But it is in our hearts that we feel the absence and it is this void that draws us to the Drum circle. This is, ultimately, a positive development. But, we cannot seek to fill that void by re-inventing the tradition of the Drum. We cannot simply wrench the Drums from the people who made them and introduce them to traditions we have developed, like the Drum circle. Drumming, in the indigenous context, is a profession or a "calling." We are "called" by way of spirit visitation to the Drum. We devote our lives to the practice of perfecting our technique and our rapport with the instrument. Drumming is a *discipline,* not a pastime. It is not something anyone and everyone in Africa does. The "village Drum circle" is an auditory illusion: the noise produced in the course of such an event bears absolutely no resemblance to the music produced by a trained African Drum ensemble. Most African peoples would not embarrass themselves by attempting to create what only a select few have been chosen to create and are capable of creating as a result of years of practice and study. The practice of the Drum circle, together with the packaging of Drum wisdom in "do-it-yourself" video tapes and comic books, reinforce the illusion that Drumming

is something anyone can do; that this musical/medical tradition, unlike any other in the world, can be mastered without the guidance of mentors and with a minimum of personal investment and sacrifice. What is the purpose of a "self-help" system for learning African Drumming? Why is it easier to invest resources into the production of such automated learning devices than to invite authentic experts from the African continent to come and teach us? Could this be the only way to escape the realization that there might be some things in this world African people have to offer us in America other than their bodies as pack mules and sex-toys? Could it be that we are so embarrassed by the part our past has played in the chapter we call "Black" history that we can not look the descendants of the Drum makers in the eye long enough to learn from them? Could it be that seeing the whole spectrum of planetary, pre- and post-slavery "Black" history is too painful a prospect for us to bear because we will be confronted with what WE have taken, and what we haven't?

The Drum mania currently taking the country by storm is understandable and, frankly, long overdue. These art forms may indeed be the one thing with the power to save us, i.e. the human species, from ourselves. But our search for salvation will inevitably backlash into disaster if we do not accept indigenous wisdom, the Drum included, on indigenous terms. This requires a rethinking of how we beat, barter, buy and sell Drums. It requires the willingness to abandon our own preconceived notions of what learning is, what love is, what respect is; of hierarchy, of power, of what we have the "right" to do and what we don't.

Drumming must be passed from hand to hand. Written materials and videotapes may be useful supplements to qualified and on-going, interpersonal transmission of information, but the fine and folk art of African Drumming cannot be plugged into an interactive video station. Nor is there any reason to manufacture pseudo-African Drums for commercial purposes on this continent until there is not a starving child in Africa, unless, of course, the profits serve the cause of

Black America. Concern for the tropical rain forest is hypocritical as long as it detaches itself from the rain forests withering in our inner cities.

What must occur before any kind of mutually beneficial cultural exchange between "first" and "third" worlds can transpire (whereby, from a historically correct perspective, we "Euro-Americans" are members of the third world, not the first!), is that Caucasians begin addressing the issue of racism without prompting from people of color. Racism is not a "Black" issue, it is not an "African" issue. It is not an indigenous issue. It is a white American issue. The problem is in *our* heads and its presence is evidenced by the fact that we can, without any thought or consideration for the shared history that brought us to the position of handling African Drums, gather to beat them in this manner. This point has been driven home to me again and again as I have brought my authentic African Drums to the inner cities. A child of about eight years old once reached up, stroked the hairs on the hide of my Drum and said, awestruck, "I can't believe I am touching this." An adult African American once told me, "When I heard that Drum, it took me HOME." I have yet to be confronted with this type of heart-felt reverence/reminiscence on the part of any Caucasian in this country. They seem oblivious to the spiritual significance of the Drum as a cultural artifact. Consequently, they have little or no sympathy for objections raised by Black people in this country to the phenomenon of the white-Rasta or "Scandifarian" Drummers flooding the marketplace with their own peculiar brand of "cultural diversity." This stance can only be the result of socio-pathological moral degeneracy or a complete denial of historical reality. An African once told me that the djembe Drum was the Drum that Kunte Kinte, protagonist in Alex Haley's *Roots,* was making when the slavetraders came and wrenched him from his homeland and, essentially, from his heart, i.e. the djembe Drum. Against the backdrop of this historical tidbit, then, one can only begin to fathom what it must mean for African-American peoples to witness the

spectacle created by so-called "Drum makers" currently manufacturing their own djembe Drums for commercial purposes in the United States.

African Americans have not been afforded the luxury of forgetting the racist tradition upon which this country was built. Rodney King is just one case in point. But, this very history is as much a part of who we white Americans are as who Africans have become as a result: Americanized Africans, i.e. Africans who, as a direct consequence of our historical development as whites in this country, are no longer recognized as Africans in Africa. This history is essential to the cultural context of the African Drum in the United States. We cannot partake of ethnic traditions without also confronting racism as it necessarily exists in our own minds. We are products of this society; and, because this society developed out of a racist tradition, each of us is part of that tradition. We cannot wipe the slate of history clean with the wet-nap of a civil rights act or affirmative action plan. These are superficial bandages applied to the deep and aching wound of institutionalized and internalized racism. Just as women are tired of forcing men to confront the sexism inherent in the mind of any man born into male supremacist society, people of color are tired of forcing Caucasians to confront their own most subtle racist tendencies. We need to begin policing *ourselves* by identifying latent racism in each other's practices and our own. This cannot occur as long as we deny that a problem even exists. It cannot occur if we do not heed the voices of people of color who assure us repeatedly that a problem exists: People of color are the only ones who can tell us when the problem has ceased to be a problem.

The African Drum has the potential to heal the wounds of any society, but this cannot occur as long as the patients refuse to cooperate. The healing power of the Drum is contained within the Drum itself, not in the hands of the drummer. In the community Drum circles cropping up all over the country what we have are patients springing in an

anesthetized state from the operating table to perform their own surgery. It is akin to a group of drunken alcoholics mutually perpetuating their own illness, all the while maintaining amongst themselves the illusion that there is no problem. But, there is a problem. That problem is deep-seated, internalized, institutionalized racist disregard for the sanctity and complexity of indigenous traditions.

This is not to imply that African drumming is something only "Black" people should do. To do so would be to impose a racial polarity on a culture which, in its pure form, is alien to this kind of vicious dichotomization. What is objectionable is the manner in which we venture into this "new" territory: we do so without recognizing that it is not uncharted territory. It has been occupied by indigenous peoples since time immemorial. Taking specific cultural elements, i.e. Drums, employing them to forge "new" supposedly superior traditions like that of the "Drum circle" and ignoring their greater cultural context replicates precisely the same first step the pilgrims took when they arrived in Native America. It is like taking the corn without the cob and calling it "Thanksgiving" without giving thanks to anyone but ourselves. We must recognize that the past five hundred years of US history -- Red, White and Black History -- have brought us to a position of slight imbalance in the world. Its most crass expression is evident in the fact that white Americans can traipse into a local Drum shop and pick up an African cultural artifact with a price of $300-600 slapped on its head while, at the same time, children in the inner cities play with more affordable toys, like guns. The Caucasian crime is not so much its interest in African art forms; it is the refusal to see the connection between the Drums and the descendants of the people who made them. Accepting and understanding this connection is one prerequisite to integrating the tradition of the Drum into our lives. It is the price *our* ancestors have placed on the Drum -- a price only we can pay.

The Drum circle is a commercial enterprise wrapped

in the guise of spiritual experience. The real motivation behind it is sales, not salvation. But, in the indigenous context, Drums are for people, not profit. So, reinventing the African Drum at a considerable profit to the American multi and at a considerable loss to the African native is "against the rules" established by the authentic ethnic/ethical tradition of the Drum. But making money, something that used to be a means to an end, has since become an end in itself -- one to be reached by any means necessary, even if those means include the wholesale sellout of entire continents. The rules of American commercialism permit us to circumvent Africa and African labor, employing African know-how and ingenuity to re-construct a crude facsimile of what is a sacred object and sophisticated musical instrument. The commercialization of the pseudo-African Drum is socially, ethically and legally upheld by our uniquely American moral framework. It is, however, in violation of the ethic of the ethnic Drum.

Notes

1. See my article, "Djembe: Drum with a Thousand Faces" in *Percussive Notes, Official Journal of the Percussive Arts Society,* Vol. 31, No. 8, December, 1993, pp. 35-36.

HEADGEAR

BY MANSFIELD B. FRAZIER

Throughout history the wearing of various headgear has held significant importance in cultures. Rank, station, and homogeneity are often determined by the type and style of what one wears on their head. In prison this method of determining who belongs to a certain group and who doesn't, this personification of headdress, is extremely important.

For a convict to wear anything other than the generic baseball or watch caps sold by the commissary requires permission, in writing, from the chaplain. Prison officials know all too well that gangs will form around the identity created by the wearing of some type of headgear -- if it were allowed to happen. In federal prisons special care is taken to insure that this doesn't occur. One current fad is to cut off the bottom six or eight inches of the leg of an old pair of sweatpants, tie off the small end, and wear it for a hat, that is until the lieutenant catches the convict and confiscates it as contraband. Even decorating the caps sold at the commissary with insignias can get them taken from a prisoner. The only different types of headgear allowed in federal prisons are those which have a religious significance: the tajjs and koufies (pillbox-like hats) worn by Muslims; the yarmulkes worn by Jews; the Rasta tams worn by Jamaican Rastafarians; and the handkerchiefs worn as headbands by Native Americans.

To be allowed to wear the headgear of the group requires that the convict satisfies the chaplain that he indeed is a member of that religion. Since many young men coming

Mansfield B. Frazier is the author of From Behind the Wall: Commentary on Crime, Punishment, Race, and the Underclass by a Prison Inmate, *published Spring 1995 by Paragon.*

to prison join the Muslim religion, in their cases this doesn't prove difficult; the chaplain generally knows who has been attending the various worship services. In the case of Jews the convict normally has to belong to that religion before coming to prison to be allowed to wear the yarmulke; the same applies to Rastafarians...but both religions can, with some difficulty, be embraced while in prison. The only group which requires real concrete proof of membership is Native Americans.

To wear the handkerchief headband the convict has to be able to prove to the chaplain that he is at least 1/16 Native American -- that at least one of his great-great grandparents was a full-fledged member of a recognized tribe.

The firmness of this proof can vary from institution to institution. Where the chaplain at one prison might require accurate documentation of such heritage, one at another prison might not be so thorough before signing the slip of paper which some hack will eventually demand that the convict produce. Here it seems that all a white convict has to do to be allowed to wear the headband is to ask; and ask they do.

In the two years that I've been incarcerated here I've noticed a marked increase in the number of men wearing the headband of the Native American. While there are some convicts whose outward appearance leave little doubt as to their Native American heritage, there is a growing number of young men who appear to be of other heritage (one is a blue-eyed blond) who wear the headband also.

What I sense among these young men is a feeling that they *would* rather be considered anything other than white; that whether they do or don't have a distant progenitor who is Native American is not as important to these young men as pretending that they do.

Virtually all blacks have Native American ancestors if one were to look far enough back on their family tree. Many runaway slaves were hid by tribes of Native Americans and there was much intermarrying. Likewise, many whites do

actually have Native American ancestors also. However, where formerly whites attempted to hide anything which detracted from their claims to total whiteness, some now are embracing this other blood.

I personally think that this incipient movement is part of a growing repudiation of the dominant racist white culture by some young whites. It's as if they are saying, "Man, don't include me in that racist shit!" Most who have never been to prison fail to take into account that the attitudes and mores of a certain segment of the youth population are determined by what convicts are doing and thinking. Prisons often are a realistic bellwether of the coming culture among certain classes. And some white youth are not waiting for society to change, but are attempting to change themselves instead.

The "angry white male" would be amazed at how some of his sons are not carrying on his tradition of hatred; that the indoctrination in racism is not taking as well as it once did with their children; that some young whites are making up their own minds about how they want to relate to those of other races -- and that they find their parents' point of view morally lacking. I can't guarantee that this movement will spread to the culture at large outside of the confines of prison... but I sure pray it does.

BLACK-JEWISH CONFLICT IN THE LABOR CONTEXT: RACE, JOBS, AND INSTITUTIONAL POWER

BY HERBERT HILL

Largely forgotten in the many discussions of black-Jewish relations is the fact that the current conflict between the two groups was preceded by an older continuing discord within the labor movement. Indeed, it may be argued that the antagonism that developed in the labor union arena is emblematic of the larger black-Jewish conflict, one which has its roots in the profoundly different condition of Jews and blacks in American society.

Close scrutiny of the racial labor issues that developed

Herbert Hill is Evjue-Bascom Professor of African-American Studies and Professor of Industrial Relations at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He is the former National Labor Secretary of the NAACP and author of Black Labor and the American Legal System *and other books. Herbert Hill has lectured extensively in the United States, Great Britain and Europe, he has been a special consultant to the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations and to the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Professor Hill has presented testimony before congressional committees and frequently appears as expert witness in federal court litigation involving employment discrimination.* *This paper in an abbreviated version was given at the Conference on Blacks and Jews: An American Historical Perspective, Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri, December 2-5, 1993.*

soon after the merger, in 1955, between the American Federation of Labor and the Congress of Industrial Organizations reveals much about the characteristics of the subsequently strained relations between blacks and Jews and the tensions between them. The years immediately following the merger were marked by widespread disappointment among black workers as the AFL-CIO failed to implement the civil rights policy adopted with much fanfare at the time of the labor federation's formation. These were also the years of a great black awakening, of the emergence of new militant black protest movements in the North as well as in the South.

Soon after the merger black workers protested against the continuing pattern of racist practices by many AFL-CIO affiliated unions, both industrial and craft. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People repeatedly documented practices such as provisions in union contracts that limited black workers to segregated job classifications, the widespread exclusion of blacks from craft unions, the existence of segregated locals, the refusal to admit non-white workers into union-controlled apprenticeship training programs and other forms of labor union discrimination.[a]

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[a] See, for example, "Labor Criticized over Negro Curb," (*New York Times,* May 22, 1958, p.21.) Later in 1958 Roy Wilkins, executive secretary of the NAACP, sent George Meany, president of the AFL-CIO, a detailed memorandum based upon complaints from "our members and from Negro workers throughout the country," charging racial discrimination by AFL-CIO affiliated unions. Wilkins documented the patterns of labor union discrimination with specific examples, and stated, "I am sure you realize that the NAACP is obligated to its own membership to press vigorously for the elimination of discriminatory practices within trade union organizations" (Roy Wilkins to George Meany, Dec. 9, 1958; copy in author's files). On January 3, 1961, the NAACP issued a report which concluded that "five years after the AFL-CIO merger, the national labor organization has failed to eliminate the patterns of racial discrimination and segregation in many important affiliated unions" (Herbert Hill, "Racism Within Organized Labor: A Report of Five Years of the AFL-CIO, 1955-1960," rpt. in *Journal of Negro Education,* Spring 1961: 109-18. See also Herbert Hill "The AFL-

In April, 1957, James B. Carey, president of the International Union of Electrical Workers, a former CIO affiliate, and a member of the Federation's executive council resigned as chairman of the AFL-CIO Civil Rights Committee because of its ineffectiveness, and he publicly criticized the Federation. According to the *New York Times*, Carey believed that "the committee had not been given enough power or freedom to do an effective job of stamping out racial bias in unions," and felt that "he was being hamstrung in his anti-bias assignment."[1] Carey was replaced as chairman by Charles S. Zimmerman, vice president of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union and a prominent leader of the Jewish Labor Committee. At the time of his appointment he was chairman of the National Trade Union Council of the JLC.

The Jewish Labor Committee was founded in 1934 to provide vitally needed assistance to European Jewish labor leaders. It performed much valuable service in rescuing endangered anti-fascists and arranging for their resettlement in the United States and elsewhere. With the end of World War II, the Jewish Labor Committee had completed its task and, given its original purpose, no longer had a function to perform. In an effort to justify its continued existence, the JLC tried to become a civil rights organization within the labor movement.

By the late 1940's, with financial support mainly from the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, the JLC was revived and began referring to itself as "the civil rights arm of the labor movement." But although it presumed to represent the interest of minorities within organized labor, the Committee had no contact with the great mass of black workers in the industrial unions where they were concentrated, or with black community institutions. The JLC was in a very dubious position as it presumed to speak on behalf of those

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CIO and the Black Worker: Twenty-Five Years after the Merger," *Journal of Intergroup Relations,* Vol. X, No. 1, Spring 1982, pp. 5-78.)

who had not authorized it to do so, since it had no membership and no constituency, beyond a small group of Jewish labor leaders from the needle trades unions mainly in New York City.

When Zimmerman became chairman of the AFL-CIO Civil Rights Committee, the JLC intensified its efforts to expand its influence within organized labor and among civil rights groups. But Zimmerman's term in office was a stormy one, and as black demands for effective action against the racist practices of labor unions intensified, Zimmerman's impotence as a leader and his repeated attempts to justify and defend union discrimination increasingly placed him in direct conflict with black labor representatives and civil rights organizations.

A typical example - one of many - is found in the case of *Ross. v. Ebert,* involving Local 8 of the Bricklayers Union in Milwaukee.[2] This conflict, which came before the Supreme Court of Wisconsin, received national attention and resulted in the legislature amending the state Fair Employment Practices Law.[b] In 1955, the Wisconsin Fair Employment

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[b] James Harris, one of the plaintiffs in *Ross v. Ebert* was dismissed from a job in 1946 at the insistence of the union because he was not a union member, but upon making application for membership he was informed by an official of the union that it did not admit Negroes. In 1953 Harris again applied for membership. He was again rejected and repeated efforts to obtain support for his case from the international union and the AFL-CIO were to no avail. (Personal Record, Re:James Harris and the Bricklayers, M. M. M. Prot. Int. Union, 9/25/46, Industrial Commission, Equal Employment Opportunities Division, Case Files 1945 - 1974, Series 1744, Box 6, Folder 16 and Folder 12. State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Archives Division, Madison.) The intransigence of the Milwaukee Bricklayers Union in refusing to admit African-Americans was a characteristic of many craft unions in the building trades. In New York City, there was a quarter century of litigation involving the discriminatory practices of Local 28 of the Sheetmetal Workers Union, in Philadelphia, many years of litigation against Local 542 of the Operating Engineers Union, and in Chicago the extensive litigation against Local 597 of the Pipefitters

Practices Division found the union, whose membership had always been limited to white persons, guilty of racial discrimination in violation of state law and ordered the admission of two fully qualified black men, but the union refused to comply and challenged the authority of the state agency.[3] On September 24, 1957, James Harris, Randolph Ross and two other black workers were admitted into the union, but only after the state legislature enacted a new judicially enforceable fair employment practice law. After eleven years of efforts by public and private agencies, three rounds of litigation, and action by the legislature, Zimmerman defended the racist labor organization and stated in defiance of all the facts that "the denial of membership to them was not based on their race but was due to their failure to submit satisfactory evidence of their trade qualifications."[4] The extensive litigation record in this case directly contradicted Zimmerman's statement, including the fact that two union members and former employers gave testimony verifying James Harris's competence as a skilled mason.[5] Zimmerman repeatedly

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Union, to take but three examples. (For a history of the judicial record and protest actions against Plumbers Union Local 2 and other construction unions in New York City, see Herbert Hill, "The New York City Terminal Market Controversy: A Case Study of Race, labor and Power," *Humanities in Society,* Vol. 6, No. 4, Fall 1983, pp. 351-91, Reprint No. 255, Industrial Relations Research Institute, University of Wisconsin-Madison.)In the decade between the merger of the AFL with the CIO in 1955, and July 2, 1965, the effective date of Title VII, the employment section of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, union leaders had the opportunity to take action against the patterns of discrimination that were pervasive within much of organized labor. But they failed to do so and the extensive record involving many unions, both industrial and craft, as defendants in Title VII litigation demonstrates that the compulsion of law was necessary to eliminate the traditional racist practices of numerous labor organizations. (See Herbert Hill, "Black Workers, Organized Labor, and Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act: Legislative History and Litigation Record," in *Race in America, The Struggle for Equality,* edited by Herbert Hill and James E. Jones, Jr., Madison, University of Wisconsin Press, 1993, pp. 263-341.)

defended discriminatory labor unions in many other contexts, acting on behalf of a white labor bureaucracy committed to perpetuating the racial status quo.

At the 1959 annual conference of the NAACP, A. Philip Randolph, president of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, called for the formation of the Negro American Labor Council and stressed that black workers must speak for themselves within organized labor. He said that "We ourselves must seek the cure" and that the establishment of the NALC would "make it possible for Negro workers to take a position completely independent of white unionists.... History has placed upon the Negro and the Negro alone this basic responsibility."[6]

With the emergence of the Negro American Labor Council and the increasing involvement of the NAACP in the issue of labor union discrimination, the Jewish Labor Committee found itself in conflict with black unionists and with black civil rights groups. On December 12, 1959, there appeared the first of a series of articles on antagonism between blacks and Jews within organized labor in the *Pittsburgh Courier,* a respected and widely circulated black newspaper with editions in Chicago, Detroit and New York. Under a front-page headline "Will Negro, Jewish Labor Leaders Split Over Civil Rights?," an article by Managing Editor Harold F. Keith began, "Negro and Jewish labor leaders are on the 'brink' of outright war between themselves with the civil rights issue spread out before them as a prospective field of battle." In that issue and in those following, Keith reviewed the history of the conflicts between the AFL-CIO Civil Rights Committee and black trade unionists. The Jewish Labor Committee was criticized, as was Zimmerman, for presuming to speak for blacks and it was reported that Jewish labor leaders had adopted a "paternalistic and missionary" attitude toward Negroes. The article in the Courier also reported that the AFL-CIO was "ignoring the mounting bitterness in Negro communities....over scandalous racial discrimination" by both craft and industrial unions.[7]

According to Keith, the Jewish Labor Committee "exerts more influence upon the AFL-CIO than any non-union group" and had "more say-so than the NAACP or the National Urban League." Keith also charged that pressure from the Jewish Labor Committee was a factor in the failure of the Federation to act against the racist practices of many affiliated unions.[c]

Randolph and Roy Wilkins, executive secretary of the NAACP, denied that the conflict with the AFL-CIO was an issue between blacks and Jews, and Zimmerman, who was trying to expand the role of the Jewish Labor Committee within the AFL-CIO as well as advance his own career, was eventually forced to resign. However, the Jewish Labor Committee, by defending discriminatory labor organizations,

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[c] In 1964, Donald Slaiman, previously director of the Jewish Labor Committee's office in Detroit, was promoted from assistant director to director of the AFL-CIO Civil Rights Department. Typical of the criticisms of Slaiman made by black union members was the statement distributed by the Ad Hoc Committee, a nationwide caucus of black steelworkers at the 1968 Convention of the Steelworkers Union. Black workers demanded that Steelworkers President I. W. Abel, a member of the AFL-CIO executive council "secure the reorganization of the Civil Rights Department of the AFL-CIO." According to the Ad Hoc Committee, "The present director of the AFL-CIO Civil Rights Department has no involvement with Negro workers and their problems. He does not know of our problems. He does not represent us. He does not act in our interests. We believe we speak for many thousands of Negro workers not only in the Steelworkers Union but in other AFL-CIO affiliates with large Negro memberships, when we demand the replacement of a white paternalist with a black trade unionist who can honestly represent Negro workers and act on their behalf. For years Negro workers have stopped filing complaints with the AFL-CIO Civil Rights Department because experience has taught us that the department is unable to function on our behalf. Most often it represents the discriminators in organized labor rather than the black workers who are the victims of white racism within the house of labor." ("An Open Letter to President I. W. Abel From A Negro Steelworker," Jonathan Comer, for the Ad Hoc Committee, July 15, 1968. Copy in author's files.)

and by functioning as an apologist for racist unions, succeeded in transforming a black-white conflict into a black-Jewish conflict. Sadly enough, this was not the last time Jewish trade unionists would engage in such behavior.

In 1961 the NAACP issued a report documenting the continuing discriminatory racial practices of many AFL-CIO unions.[8] The Negro American Labor Council endorsed the NAACP's report, and Randolph in his address to the Association's annual convention stated:

> We in the Negro American Labor Council consider the report timely, necessary, and valuable.... Moreover, the Negro American Labor Council can, without reservation, assert that the basic statements of the report are true and sound, and that delegates of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters have presented these facts to convention after convention of the American Federation of Labor for a quarter of a century."[9]

George Meany, president of the AFL-CIO, at a meeting of the Jewish labor Committee held at Unity House, the summer resort of the ILGWU, made a sharp attack on the NAACP, the NALC and the black press because of their criticism of the racial practices of organized labor.[10] That Meany chose a meeting of the Jewish Labor Committee for his widely-reported denunciation was not lost on black workers and civil rights groups.

Events in the early 1960's, involving the International Ladies Garment Workers Union in New York City, were to have a major impact on black-Jewish relations and also upon the liberal coalition for many years to come. On November 21, 1962, Roy Wilkins sent to all members of the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights and to other organizations a memorandum which read:

> Because of the current widespread discussion of the relationship between the NAACP and organized labor,

> with particular but not exclusive reference to the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, and because a resolution of the Jewish Labor Committee on this subject has been distributed widely to labor groups and to persons in the intergroup relations field, we attach for your information, our letter of October 31, 1962.[11]

Wilkins was responding not only to recent attacks by the AFL-CIO against the NAACP but also to a resolution adopted by the Jewish Labor Committee, widely distributed and reported in the press, which denounced the Association and accused it of anti-Semitism. In his letter to Emanuel Muravchik, executive secretary of the Jewish Labor Committee, Wilkins stated:

> When you declare in 1962 that the NAACP's continued attack upon discrimination against Negro workers by trade union bodies and leaders places "in jeopardy" continued progress towards civil rights goals or rends the "unity" among the civil rights forces, or renders a "disservice" to the Negro worker or raises the question "whether it is any longer possible to work with the NAACP" you are, in fact, seeking by threats to force us to conform to what the Jewish Labor Committee is pleased to classify as proper behavior in the circumstances. Needless to say, we cannot bow to this threat. We reject the proposition that any segment of the labor movement is sacrosanct in the matter of practices and/or policies which restrict employment opportunities on racial or religious or nationality grounds. We reject the contention that bringing such charges constitutes a move to destroy "unity" among civil rights groups unless it be admitted that this unity is a precarious thing, perched upon unilateral definition of discrimination by each member group. In such a situation, the "unity" is of no basic value and its

> destruction may be regarded as not a calamity, but a blessed clearing of the air.[12]

In reply to the charge of anti-Semitism, Wilkins went on to say:

> This is a grave charge to make.... We do not deign to defend ourselves against such a baseless allegation. Its inclusion in the resolution, as well as in the statements to the press by Mr. Zimmerman is unworthy of an organization like the Jewish Labor Committee which in the very nature of things must be conversant with the seriousness of such a charge and with the evidence required to give it substance.... Similarly, we do not feel that the general denials and outraged protests which have been the response of the ILGWU to our charges of discriminatory practices are in any way an adequate answer to those charges.[13]

In taking its stand, the NAACP demonstrated that black institutions would no longer be junior partners in coalitions dominated by liberal whites whose institutional interests and priorities were often in conflict with those of the black community.[14]

Although their numbers had greatly increased within the ILGWU, by the 1960's black workers were limited to the lowest paying, unskilled job classifications in New York's garment manufacturing industry, as they were largely excluded from the craft locals where much higher wages prevailed. In the 1960's, blacks in New York as elsewhere were overcoming the passivity of the past, and increasingly they struggled against the forces that were responsible for their subordinate and depressed condition.

The ILGWU, founded by European socialist immigrants in 1900, was not immune to these developments, especially since its membership base had become increasingly black and Latino. Through a series of restrictive procedures

(of doubtful legality under the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act of 1959), non-white workers were excluded from the leadership of the union. Not a single black or Latino was an officer of the international union or served as a member of the General Executive Board.[d]

The general suppression of membership rights within the ILGWU in conjunction with the extreme exploitation of non-white workers in the garment industry resulted in an increasingly restive labor force. (During this period the majority of black and Puerto Rican garment workers in New York received less than $1.50 an hour in wages under ILGWU contracts.)[15] The union was rigidly controlled by a self-perpetuating bureaucracy of white males whose Jewish working class base no longer existed, and who were now increasingly in conflict with their non-white, largely female membership.

The rapidly accelerating transformation of the ethnic and racial composition of the garment industry labor force in the 1940's and 1950's caused serious problems for the ILGWU since its traditional Jewish leadership was unwilling to accept blacks and Puerto Ricans as equal partners in an interracial union, to share control of the organization with non-whites and to permit them to share in the power that derived from such institutional authority. Instead of honestly confronting and resolving these issues, the white male union leadership, increasingly isolated from its non-white female membership, attempted to maintain the racist and sexist status quo by bureaucratic means. In response, rank and file workers protested in a variety of ways including demonstrations at union headquarters and filing petitions for the decertification

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[d] For a detailed description of the restrictions on political activity within the ILGWU and the eligibility rules for union office and related matters, see Herbert Hill, "The ILGWU Today: The Decay of a Labor Union," and "The ILGWU: Fact and Fiction," in *Autocracy and Insurgency in Organized Labor,* edited by Burton H. Hall (New Brunswick, Transaction Books, 1972), pp. 47-160, 173-200.

of the ILGWU with the National Labor Relations Board.[16]

The increasing discontent of black and Latino workers employed in the New York garment industry provided the context for actions that occurred in the 1960's on these issues. On April 4, 1961, Ernest Holmes, a black worker who was a member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, filed a complaint with the New York State Commission for Human Rights against Local 10, a craft unit of the ILGWU, charging the union with discriminatory practices, including the refusal to admit him to membership on the basis of race, in violation of state law.[17e] The New York *Herald Tribune,* in a front-page report headlined "ILGWU Condemned for Racial Barriers," summarized the findings of the state commission with the comment that "the

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[e] The union's response was to engage in repeated evasion and distortion, as when Moe Falikman, manager of Local 10, told the *New York Times* (May 18, 1961, p. 27) that there were "more than 500 Negroes and Puerto Ricans" in the cutters local. Later the ILGWU said there were 400 non-white members in this craft local, but subsequently reduced the figure to 300 and then to 200. The state commission challenged the ILGWU to produce names and addresses and places of employment of these alleged members, and the NAACP said it would withdraw the complaint if the union would comply, but such identification was never produced. Gus Tyler, assistant president of the ILGWU, wrote, "In Local 10, there are 199 known Negro and Spanish-speaking members" ("The Truth About the ILGWU," *New Politics* 2:1 Fall 1962, p.7.) Tyler explained that his figure included "Cubans, Panamanians, Colombians, Dominicans, Salvadorans, Mexicans, etc., as well as Puerto Ricans" (ibid.). But later he stated, "We had 275 black members in that local" (Gus Tyler, "The Intellectuals and the ILGWU," in *Creators and Disturbers, Reminiscences by Jewish Intellectuals of New York,* ed. Bernard Rosenberg and Ernest Goldstein, New York: Columbia University Press, 1982, p. 173). According to a tract published by the American Jewish Committee and distributed by the ILGWU, there were "250 Negro and Spanish-speaking cutters in Local 10," (Harry Fleishman, "Is the ILGWU Biased?," National Labor Service of the American Jewish Committee, New York, November 1962). The evident disparity in these numbers and their obviously arbitrary nature requires no further comment.

New York Cutters local of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union was judged guilty of racial discrimination in a report released yesterday by the State Commission for Human Rights." The news report noted that the cutters are "the most highly skilled and highly paid workers" and that wages for members of Local 10 "are roughly double that for other workers in the industry."[18] According to the *New York Times,* the State Commission for Human Rights found Local 10, the cutter's local of the ILGWU, responsible for discriminatory acts, and "the union was told that the commission would maintain a continuing interest in its training and admission practices and that these would be reviewed periodically to assure that the terms of the decision would be fully and conscientiously carried out."[19]

The ILGWU initially failed to comply, but after additional hearings and protracted negotiations, on May 17, 1963, 25 months after the original complaint was filed in *Holmes v. Falikman,* the union entered into a stipulation agreement to comply with the law without admitting guilt.[20] These events received much public attention and led to a congressional investigation of the ILGWU's racial practices.[f]

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[f] The ILGWU often distorted the history of the congressional investigation. Gus Tyler wrote, for example, that Adam Clayton Powell, chairman of the House Committee on Education and Labor, was "riding a little wave of anti-Semitism" and that the union was exonerated. According to Tyler, "There was no case. There was nothing...We won the round. We won the war" (Tyler, "The Intellectuals and the ILGWU," pp. 155-75). The official record directly contradicts Tyler's claim, for the union was not exonerated (see *Hearings Before the Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Investigation of the Garment Industry,* Committee on Education and Labor, United States House of Representatives, 87th Cong., 2d Sess., Aug. 17, 18, 23, 24, and Sept. 21, 1962). Documentation in congressional files, together with extensive interviewing of congressional staff members by the author, revealed that the ILGWU used its considerable political influence at the highest levels of government to stop the hearings. An announcement was made at the last session, on September 21, that the hearings were "recessed, to reconvene subject to call." But they were never reconvened. After the union

After the Holmes case, a black woman and a Puerto Rican man were added to the union's General Executive Board, some black and Latino workers were moved into better paying, more skilled jobs, and several were employed in previously all-white positions within the union. Furthermore, the Union found it necessary to cancel its financial support for the ILGWU wing of the Workmen's Circle Home in the Bronx, a home for retired workers built with union funds and annually subsidized by the union which did not admit black and Puerto Rican members.[21]

But conflict between the ILGWU leadership and nonwhite workers continued. At one point a group of black, Asian and Latino garment workers filed a lawsuit against the East River Houses, known as the ILGWU Co-Operative Village, which refused to admit nonwhites. Federal Judge Robert L. Carter found that there was indeed a pattern of unlawful racial exclusion.[22] Documentation introduced into the court record revealed that the ILGWU had contributed more than $20 million of union funds to subsidize a housing project for middle-class whites who were not ILGWU members, adjacent to a vast area of substandard housing

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succeeded in making certain political arrangements, the congressional committee quietly abandoned the hearings, which were never formally concluded, and there is no final report. (For the author's testimony before the hearings, see *Congressional Record-House,* Jan. 31, 1963, pp. 1496-99.) Mrs. Florence Rice, a black woman who was a member of ILGWU Local 155, had been told by a union official that if she gave testimony before the congressional committee she would never work again in the garment industry. She told the committee in a sworn statement that "workers have been intimidated by union officials with threats of losing their jobs if they so much as appear at the hearing" (*Hearing Before the Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Investigation of the Garment Industry,* p. 167.) Soon after her testimony before the committee in open hearings, she was dismissed from her job and was not able to obtain employment thereafter as a garment worker (interviews with Florence Rice by author, Nov. 17, 1962, May 17, 1966, and April 9, 1972). Mrs. Rice later became a leading community activist and director of the Harlem Consumer Education Council.

inhabited mainly by members of racial minorities.

This became a major issue among nonwhite ILGWU members in the New York area. Several thousand workers signed petitions demanding an end to the racist pattern in the East River Houses, and union members mounted a protest demonstration at the headquarters building of the ILGWU.[23] One union member, Margarita Lopez, was quoted in the *New York Daily News* as saying:

> How could this happen? How could this happen in a union that is supposed to be so liberal? The blacks, Hispanics, the Chinese are the workers. The dues come from these people, but the housing is all white and middle class. These were union pension funds. They give union funds but union workers who are black and Hispanic and Chinese cannot live in those houses.[24]

To the great dismay of the union's leadership, after the effective date of Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, complaints were filed against the ILGWU with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. In many of these cases, the EEOC sustained charges of race and sex discrimination against both the international union and its locals. In the *Putterman* case, a federal court in New York found "willful and intentional" violations of the legal prohibitions against discrimination by both the local and the international union.[25] Among the many EEOC charges filed against the ILGWU were cases in Chicago, Philadelphia, Cleveland, Atlanta, New York, and elsewhere.[26]

To divert attention from the central issue of racial discrimination, the ILGWU conducted an intensive campaign characterized by prevarication and distortion in an effort to make anti-Semitism the issue. The ILGWU repeatedly claimed that criticism of its racial practices was a malicious anti-Semitic attack upon the Jewish leadership of the union. Many local and national Jewish organizations, including the Ameri-

can Jewish Committee, the American Jewish Congress, the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, and the Jewish Labor Committee, became actively involved and each group distributed a torrent of resolutions, correspondence, newsletters, bulletins, press releases and brochures defending the ILGWU.[8]

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[8] The following is a small selection. The American Jewish Committee gave wide distribution to an eight-page tract, "Is the ILGWU Biased?" written by Harry Fleishman, a member of its staff, and through its newsletter, *Let's Be Human,* repeatedly praised the ILGWU and denounced its critics. A letter dated November 13, 1962, from John A. Morsell, assistant to the executive secretary of the NAACP, to Harry Fleishman provides a thoughtful response to Fleishman's assertions, which contain many errors of fact. (NAACP Papers, Group III, Box A190, Library of Congress). On January 15, 1963, David Dubinsky, president of the ILGWU, sent a copy of this letter, together with a covering note, to George Meany, president of the AFL-CIO. (Dubinsky Collection, Box 207, Folder 30, International Ladies Garment Workers Union Archives, Labor Management Documentation Center, Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y.) Data in ILGWU files indicate that Fleishman was actively involved in the union's campaign. A memorandum from Will Chasen of the union's staff to ILGWU vice-president Charles S. Zimmerman, dated October 28, 1962, for example, makes reference to Fleishman's activities and to a letter he received from Herbert Hill, labor secretary of the NAACP, dated October 23, 1962. Chasen writes, "The awful thing about Hill's letter is that, on the whole, it is probably an accurate summary and it exposes the awful idiocy of the way this situation was handled" (Zimmerman Collection, Box 26, Folder 8, International Ladies Garment Workers Union Archives, Labor Management Documentation Center, Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y.). Later, Fleishman tried to intervene with the State Commission for Human Rights on behalf of the ILGWU. (Letter to George H. Fowler, Chairman, SCHR from Harry Fleischman, Director National Labor Service, American Jewish Committee, December 19, 1962, NAACP Papers, Group III, Box A184, Library of Congress.) The American Jewish Congress, on December 6, 1962, sent a statement signed by Shad Polier, chairman of the organization's governing council, to all its members, defending the union and repeating Fleishman's distortions including references to "Ernest Holmes, a Negro member of the International Garment Workers Union." It is a matter of record in sworn documents filed with the New York State Commission for Human Rights that Holmes was never

The reaction of the union leadership demonstrates how white immigrant groups, once they achieve integration into American society, defend their own privileges and power when confronted with demands from blacks. The criticisms of the ILGWU raised in the course of the *Holmes v. Falikman* case, and in its aftermath, charged the union with perpetuating a pattern that limited non-whites to the least desirable jobs and with routinely violating the basic requirements of internal union democracy. To put it simply, an institution controlled by an established stratum of Jewish leaders who were anxious to preserve the privileges of their group within the industry, and who by then had more in common with employers than with their non-white members, was unreceptive to the demands of a growing black and Latino working class for advancement.

Black organizations understood that what non-white workers were doing in attacking the union's practices was

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a member of the union. On December 7, 1962, Polier sent copies of his statement to Zimmerman, along with a letter suggesting a meeting on "the ILGWU-NAACP controversy." The Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, the largest Jewish fraternal order in the United States, also came to the union's defense. Oscar Cohen, national program director of the league, reported its efforts on behalf of the union to Zimmerman in a letter dated December 3, 1962. He wrote, "We are terribly upset... we are going to give this statement [from the union] wide distribution." He closed by promising Zimmerman to "do as much as I can." The Jewish Labor Committee was extremely active on behalf of the union, as the ILGWU provided major financial support to the organization and many of its leaders were officials of the union. Among the many mailings sent by the JLC to individuals and groups throughout the country in defense of the ILGWU was that by Emanuel Muravchik to various organizations, September 5, 1962, and Muravchik's memorandum with enclosures, October 17, 1962, as well as many press releases and assorted statements and resolutions. Archival sources for documentation of this history are the NAACP Papers in the Library of Congress, Jewish Labor Committee Files, Robert Wagner Labor Archives, New York University, New York, Library of Jewish Information of the American Jewish Committee, New York, as well as the ILGWU archives cited above and the author's files.

precisely what Jews and other immigrant groups had done in the past. Indeed, the history of immigrants in America is a continuum of efforts in which ethnic groups, as they rose, fought as a bloc within institutions to advance their interests, using the availability of particular occupations as a lever for their goals. But in the 1960's, when the ILGWU was the focus of criticism, Jewish organizations viewed this tactic as an assault on the Jewish community. Thus they responded as a community in defense of the ILGWU leadership and denounced representatives of the black workers as anti-Semites.

The response of Jewish institutions to the effort of blacks to advance economically in New York's garment industry demonstrates the profound changes that had occurred in the status of Jews in American society. With the rising affluence of the Jewish population and its assimilation into American society, the foundations of Jewish radicalism disintegrated. Many descendants of Jewish socialist immigrants now were upwardly mobile professionals or corporate managers with a stake in the perpetuation of existing social institutions. The intellectual skepticism cultivated by previous generations of radicalized Jews gave way to an acceptance of the legitimacy and indeed the virtue of existing values and institutions, including those related to racial dominance and subordination. By the 1960's Jews in America had become "white," that is, they had become assimilated and successful enough in a society sharply divided by race that they regarded themselves as "white" and by and large they were accepted as such by the majority of the population.

The unprecedented transformation of Jewish life in the United States and its implications required analysis and explanations within the Jewish community, and this was the purpose of Nathan Glazer's writing in *Commentary,* a publication of the American Jewish Committee, as well as in other journals. In "Negroes and Jews: The New Challenge to Pluralism" which appeared in the December 1964 issue of *Commentary,*[27] Glazer asserted that the crisis in the early

1960's between blacks and Jews occurred because these groups had "different capacities to take advantage of the opportunities that are truly in large measure open to all." The environment, Glazer said, is not prejudicial to one group or the other. Jews, Glazer asserted, are able to take advantage of the "democracy of merit" which he believes characterizes contemporary American society. In contrast to Jews, patterns of Negro personality and behavior are held responsible for the Negro's incapacity to realize the opportunities available to all.

In his version of cultural pluralism, Glazer argues that Jewish resistance to new black militancy is based "on a growing awareness of the depths of Negro antagonism to the world that Jewish liberalism considers desirable." Jews, he wrote, lived a different kind of life in American society, with their own businesses, neighborhoods, schools and unions. Jews never attacked social discrimination per se, Glazer asserted, they never challenged "the right of a group to maintain distinctive institutions," but now Negro demands "pose a serious threat to the ability of other groups to maintain *their* communities." Negroes, Glazer complained, had no distinctive institutions of their own and wanted, therefore, to become integrated into all of American Life. Glazer reprimanded the Negro for wanting to enter on an "equal footing" into "Jewish business...the Jewish union...or the Jewish (or largely Jewish) neighborhood and school." The "force of present-day Negro demands," said Glazer, "is that the sub-community, because it either protects privileges, or creates inequality, has no right to exist." The separatism which "other groups see as a value," Glazer wrote, "Negroes see as a strategy in the fight for equal rights." He also noted, "The resistance of Jewish organizations and individual Jews to such demands as preferential union membership and preferential hiring...."

Glazer's comment about "Jewish unions" and the irresponsibility of blacks trying to enter them is an example of the application of his theory. What union did Glazer have in mind? The only union regarded as a "Jewish union," that came under attack from blacks at the time because of

discriminatory racial practices was the ILGWU. In what ways could the ILGWU be classified as "Jewish?" Jewish immigrants founded the ILGWU, constituted a majority of its membership until the late 1930's, and Jews remained in control of the organization long thereafter.

Two decades before Glazer wrote his article, the percentage of Jewish membership in the union had fallen to 30 per cent and continued to decline steadily.[h] The blacks accused of forcing themselves upon another ethnic group constituted - together with Latinos - a far greater proportion of the union membership than did Jews. In the central ILGWU membership base of New York City, where the garment industry and the union were concentrated, Blacks and Latinos constituted a majority of the membership. In this context, the "privileges" of the ethnic "sub-community" described by Glazer are in fact derived from the institutionalization of racial discrimination and the exploitation of subordinate groups. When the non-white victims of that arrangement attempt to advance themselves by doing what other groups, including Jews, have succeeded in doing, they are, according to Glazer, "challenging the very system under

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[h] The percentage of Jewish membership in the ILGWU had been declining since the late 1930's and continued to fall thereafter. By 1960, blacks together with Hispanics constituted a majority of the union membership in New York City. See Ben Seligman, *Contemporary Jewish Record,* December 1944, pp. 606-7; Will Herberg, "The Old-Timers and the Newcomers: Ethnic Group Relations in a Needle Trades Union," *Journal of Social Issues,* 9.1 (1953): pp. 12-19; *Jewish Labor in the United States* (New York: American Jewish Committee, 1954); and Roy B. Helfgott, "Trade Unionism Among the Jewish Garment Workers of Britain and the United States," *Labor History* (Spring 1961), p. 209; also Irving R. Stuart, "Study of Factors Associated with Inter-Group Conflict in the Ladies Garment Industry in New York" (unpublished doctoral dissertation, School of Education of New York University, 1951), and Robert Laurentz, "Racial/Ethnic Conflict in the New York City Garment Industry, 1930-1980," (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Department of Sociology, State University of New York at Binghamton, 1980).

which Jews have done so well." The result which blacks desired, according to Glazer, was structural integration as a group into American society, something Jews already had but which blacks could not have because of their well-known defects; hence Glazer advised blacks to forego that aim.

Nathan Glazer argued for an interpretation of the black condition based upon the alleged inability of blacks to take advantage of the "democracy of merit." He formulated a theory corresponding to the needs of an affluent Jewish population, that Jews, while highly assimilated, also sought to maintain an unusual degree of group distinctiveness. These divergent goals raise certain problems however, notably an anxiety about the status of assimilated groups whose roots are in an immigrant past. Demands for substantive change in the racial status quo are understood to threaten established institutional arrangements that are conducive to Jewish advancement, but not to the advancement of blacks.

If the 1962 conflict between blacks and Jews regarding the racial practices of the ILGWU raised doubts about the future of a black-Jewish-liberal alliance, the bitter conflict that emerged in 1968 between blacks and Jews in the Ocean Hill-Brownsville school controversy involving the United Federation of Teachers in New York City shattered whatever limited consensus may have still existed. The president of that union, Albert Shanker, who came out of a Jewish socialist background, used the issue of anti-Semitism as a response to black demands for decentralization and community control of public schools. When anti-Semitic attacks upon the union leadership appeared, Shanker widely circulated anti-Semitic leaflets allegedly published by black community groups who in turn insisted that much of the material was counterfeit. His purpose was to provoke black-Jewish conflict thereby stimulating support from the Jewish membership of the union and Jewish organizations during a strike initiated by the Teachers Union. According to Dwight Macdonald, the United Federation of Teachers was actively seeking "to increase fear and hatred driving Negro against Jew in this city."[28]

At the conclusion of the Ocean Hill-Brownsville teachers' strike, which Richard Parrish, a national vice-president of the American Federation of Teachers described as "a strike against black parents and teachers," the liberal coalition lay in ruins. The Ocean Hill-Brownsville confrontation symbolized the end of the liberal consensus on race in New York and throughout the nation. Since Jews were such a significant part of that consensus, this development had of necessity much significance as a Jewish issue.

A major reason for the white liberal retreat on racial issues during this period was that after substantive civil rights enforcement began in the 1960's, there was intense opposition by northern whites to compliance with the law, especially in regard to affirmative action, school desegregation and job seniority. These and other issues now clearly affected the lives of urban whites, including Jews. Earlier civil rights struggles were largely concentrated in the South, and advances were for the most part of a limited symbolic nature that required no change in the daily lives of white people, especially those living in northern cities. But after 1964, institutional change in the status of blacks directly impinged on the lives of whites who sought to maintain their traditional race-connected privileges.

Buttressed by the emergence of a new body of constitutional law on race and the adoption of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, blacks demanded not merely an abstraction called "equal opportunity," which usually changed nothing, but equality as a fact and as a result. Black institutions sought affirmative measures to narrow the great gap between the conditions of blacks and whites in every aspect of the society. Such an approach demanded the recognition of racism, in the past and in the present, as a basic and pervasive fact of American life and, confronted by this challenge, the traditional appeals of liberalism fell before the imperative of race. It is in the context of affirmative action that the consequences of this development are most sharply demonstrated.

An examination of briefs *amicus curiae* filed in

Supreme Court cases involving affirmative action reveals the very active role of Jewish organizations in attacking affirmative action. In the *De Funis* case in 1974, briefs opposing affirmative action came from the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, the American Jewish Committee, the American Jewish Congress and the Jewish Rights Council. On the other hand, the National Organization of Jewish Women filed a brief in support of affirmative action which was endorsed by the Commission on Social Action of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations. In *Bakke* (1978), among the groups which filed *amici* briefs against affirmative action were the American Jewish Committee, American Jewish Congress, Anti-Defamation League, Jewish Labor Committee, and the National Jewish Commission on Law and Public Affairs. The two Jewish groups that had supported affirmative action in the *De Funis* case did not file in *Bakke*.

In *Weber* (1979), the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith and the National Jewish Commission on Law and Public Affairs urged the Supreme Court to decide against affirmative action. In *Fullilove* (1980), the Anti-Defamation League joined with employer groups and the reactionary Pacific League Foundation to argue against affirmative action. The Anti-Defamation League also filed briefs in opposition to affirmative action in several lower court cases and has been among the most active of all groups in attacking affirmative action in the courts. In 1982, for example, the ADL filed a brief against minority interests in *Boston Firefighters Union, Local 718 v. Boston Branch, NAACP,* and in 1984 in the Memphis Firefighters case known as *Firefighters Local Union No. 1784 v. Stotts.* In addition to filing briefs *amicus,* ADL has also initiated its own litigation against affirmative action.[29]

In court and out of court, for more than two decades, Jewish organizations have led the attack against affirmative action, and prominent Jewish leaders, institutions, and publications have engaged in a campaign against affirmative action characterized by misrepresentation and the exploitation of racial fears. They have succeeded in making the term

"quota," like "busing," a code word for resistance to demands for the elimination of prevailing patterns of discrimination.

The pages of *Commentary,* for example, have been repeatedly filed with shrill denunciations of affirmative action. Jewish neo-conservatives such as Irving Kristol, Nathan Glazer, Norman Podhoretz, Eliott Abrams and Carl Gershman, among others, have provided the ideological basis for the civil rights retreat of the Reagan and Bush administrations, the most reactionary administrations on racial issues in the twentieth century.

One can only wonder what Jewish interests are served when Morris Abrams, former president of the American Jewish Congress, testifies before Senator Orin Hatch's Senate subcommittee urging adoption of a constitutional amendment prohibiting affirmative action. One can only wonder what Jewish interests are served when Jewish organizations intervene in federal litigation to oppose agreements that would open jobs for black men and women in the fire departments of Memphis and Boston. Is it in the interests of the Jewish community to make it more difficult for blacks to become doctors and lawyers or to obtain training for other professions that would allow them to enter the middle class?

In defense of their attacks upon affirmative action, Jewish leaders often cite the past experience of Jews as victims of discriminatory quota systems. But no justification can be found for the continuing attack on affirmative action by invoking the memory of discrimination against Jews in the Czarist Empire or by elite educational institutions in the United States. The issue is current racial discrimination and the purpose of affirmative action is to include those groups that have long been excluded on the basis of race. Affirmative action developed as the most effective means of eliminating the present effects of past discrimination, and of correcting the wrongs of many generations. Affirmative action is not directed against Jews; it is directed against white racism.

One must also note the disingenuous argument of those Jewish spokesmen who state that they are not against

affirmative action but only against "quotas." Affirmative action without numbers, whether in the form of quotas, goals, or timetables is meaningless; there must be some benchmark, some tangible measure of change. Statistical evidence to measure performance is essential; there cannot be effective affirmative action without numbers.

By now it should be very clear that the opposition to affirmative action is based on narrowly perceived group self-interest rather than on abstract philosophical differences about "quotas," "reverse discrimination," "preferential treatment" and all the other catch-phrases commonly raised in public debate. After all the pious rhetoric equating affirmative action with "reverse discrimination" is stripped away, it is evident that the opposition to affirmative action is rooted in the effort to perpetuate the privileged position of whites in U.S. society.

Race has been and remains the great division in American society and as the civil rights gains of the 1960's are eroded, the nation becomes even more mean-spirited and self-deceiving on the issue of race. That Jews have played an all too prominent role in this retreat reveals much about the status of Jews in American society, and about how the descendants of Jewish immigrants are playing out their role in the continuing anguish of American racism.

The current conflict between blacks and Jews has stimulated racism among some Jews and anti-Semitism among some blacks and these destructive forces feed upon and reinforce each other. In such volatile circumstances, it is often a quick jump from history to mythology; hence the myth of the grand old alliance of blacks and Jews or the counter myth of their innate antagonism accompanied by a growing mutual demonization.

Sherman Labovitz, in his study *Attitudes Towards Blacks Among Jews: Historical Antecedents and Current Concerns,* concludes that there is "a general tendency to romanticize the relationships and overemphasize the extent to which Jews and Blacks have worked harmoniously."[30] Based upon my own experience of more than four decades in the

civil rights movement, I am forced to question the assumption that a black-Jewish alliance ever existed. What did exist was a symbolic agreement between the heads of some Jewish organizations and the heads of certain black organizations, an arrangement limited to leadership elites and professional staffs, but there was no mass involvement of the Jewish people with African-Americans in a joint struggle for racial justice. Relations between the respective organizations were entirely bureaucratic in nature and did not in any way address the profound class differences between blacks and Jews.

Until the mid-1960's, some Jewish groups lobbied on behalf of civil rights legislation and supported litigation attacking segregation in the South, and some Jews participated together with non-Jews in civil rights activities that briefly involved the best of a generation of young Americans. But even this was short-lived. Intense conflict emerged within the civil rights movement when African-Americans, frustrated by the fierce resistance of white society to anti-racist struggles, initiated new strategies to eliminate discrimination. Mass action and direct confrontation began to supersede the litigation and legislative lobbying of an earlier period and this tendency was intensified by the ghetto rebellions of the 1960's in Detroit, Newark, Los Angeles and many other cities. Expressing concerns that had long been suppressed, black activists increasingly criticized liberal whites, including Jews, for their paternalism and found it necessary to question their motives.

After the adoption of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the attention of black interest groups was increasingly drawn to the urgent problems of African-Americans trapped in the decaying ghettoes of the urban North. In large measure, emerging black-Jewish conflict was a consequence of the shift of civil rights activity to the North, Now, for the first time, blacks in the cities were in direct competition with Jews and other urban whites for desirable employment and admission into institutions of higher learning, and the vast disparity in the economic and social conditions of Jews and blacks in every aspect of American life provided the basis for increasing

and continuing conflict.

I have argued above that the charges of anti-Semitism made by the leadership of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union in 1962 not only had no justification but were a dishonest attempt to divert attention from the union's own discriminatory practices. Regrettably, as I write in 1994, it must be acknowledged that self-declared black messiahs are resorting to anti-Semitism in their effort to control and manipulate black anger, and there is a danger that in some instances the struggle against white racism may take the degraded form of anti-Semitism.

The epic legacy of the historic black struggle for freedom must not be tarnished, must not be compromised by anti-Semitism, which is not part of the black heritage in America or in Africa. On the contrary, there is an old strain of folk philo-Semitism in African-American life that continues to be expressed within the church community.[i] Anti-Semitism belongs to the history and culture of the white Christian world. It belongs to those who are responsible for the creation and perpetuation of a culture of racism based upon white supremacy.

While I believe that both black and Jewish leaders have an urgent responsibility to break the cycle of charge and counter-charge, I also believe that Jews have a special, a unique obligation to initiate action on behalf of justice and reconciliation. Steven Schwarzschild, Professor of Philosophy and Judaic Studies at Washington University and a dear

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[i] For a valuable account that demonstrates this tradition, see Hollis R. Lynch, "A Black Nineteenth-Century Response to Jews and Zionism: The Case of Edward Wilmot Blyden," in Joseph R. Washington, Jr., ed., *Jews in Black Perspectives: A Dialogue* (Lanham, Md: University Press of America, 1989). Blyden's essay "The Jewish Question" is his own statement on this subject. An interesting discussion regarding the cultural implications of the diaspora experience of both blacks and Jews appears in Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1993, pp. 208-217).

friend until his death in 1989, explained why. According to Professor Schwarzschild,

> Jews are defined by neither doctrine nor credo. We are defined by *task.* That task is to redeem the world through *justice.* To accomplish that task, the Jewish people needs to stay alive, but survival is not an end in itself but rather a means to enable us to pursue our task. Indeed to make survival into an end in itself, to seek it for its own sake, is to belie the values of the Jewish tradition, of Jewish law. If the notion of "chosenness" means anything supportable, it is that our portion, our task, is unlike that of other peoples, being in fact the duty to refine, exemplify and apply human and social justice.[31]

Reference Notes

1. *New York Times,* April 12, 1957, p. 52.

2. *Ross v. Ebert* 275 Wis. 223 (1957).

3. Industrial Commission, Equal Employment Opportunities Division, Case Files 1945-1974, Series 1744, Box 6, Folder 12, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Archives Division, Madison; letter from Virginia Huebner, Director, Fair Employment Practices Division, Industrial Commission, State of Wisconsin, to Boris Shishkin, Director, Civil Rights Department, AFL-CIO, April 15, 1957 (AFL-CIO Department of Civil Rights, Discrimination Case Files (#36), Box 3, Folder 21, George Meany Memorial Archives, Silver Spring, Md.), and Memorandum to Boris Shishkin, Director, Civil Rights Department, AFL-CIO, from Herbert Hill, NAACP Labor Secretary, re *Ross v. Ebert,* January 21, 1957 (AFL-CIO Department of Civil Rights, Discrimination Case Files (#36) Box 3, Folder 21, George Meany Memorial Archives, Silver Spring, Md.).

4. Charles S. Zimmerman, "Our Drive for Civil Rights," *American Federationist,* December 1957, p. 18.

5. *Personal Record,* re: James Harris and the Bricklayers, M. M. M. Prot. Int. Union, 9/25/46, Industrial Commission (Equal Employment Opportunities Division, Case Files 1945-1974, Series 1744, Box 6, Folder 16 and Folder 12, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Archives Division, Madison).

6. A. Philip Randolph, "The Civil Rights Revolution and Labor," address to the NAACP Annual Conference, New York, N.Y., July 15, 1959.

7. Harold F. Keith, "Will Negro, Jewish Labor Leaders Split Over Civil Rights," *Pittsburgh Courier,* December 12, 19, and 26, 1959, and January 3 and 10, 1960.

8. Herbert Hill, "Racism Within Organized Labor: A Report of Five Years of the AFL-CIO, 1955-1960," rpt. in *Journal of Negro Education,* Spring, 1961, pp. 109-18.

9. Address by A. Phillip Randolph to the 51st Annual Convention of the NAACP, St. Paul, Minnesota, June 24, 1961. (Copy in author's possession).

10. Joel Seldin, "Meany Hits Negro Groups For Attacking Union Bias," *New York Herald-Tribune,* May 28, 1961. p. 1.

11. Memorandum from Roy Wilkins, executive secretary NAACP, to members of the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, November 21, 1962 (Reuther Collection, Box 504, Folder 1, Archives of Labor History and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University, Detroit).

12. Letter from Roy Wilkins, executive secretary, NAACP to Emanuel Muravchik, executive secretary, Jewish Labor Committee, October 31, 1962 (Reuther Collection, Box 504, Folder 1, Archives of Labor History and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University, Detroit).

13. Ibid.

14. For a detailed account of internal conflicts within the civil rights lobbying coalition during the 1960's, see Herbert Hill, "Black Workers, Organized Labor, and Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act: Legislative History and Litigation Record," in *Race in America, The Struggle for Equality,* edited by Herbert Hill and James E. Jones, Jr., Madison, University of Wisconsin Press, 1993, pp. 263-341.

15. The contract between Local 98 of the ILGWU and the Manufacturers Association in effect until August 14, 1963, was typical and provided the following minimum wages, page 7, Article 4(A):

Floor Girls	$1.15 per hour
Operators	$1.20 per hour
Shipping Clerk	$1.20 per hour
Cutters	$1.20 per hour

Describing the collective bargaining agreement in force in 1971 between Knitgood Workers Local 155 of the ILGWU and the employers of New York City, New Jersey and Long Island, the labor lawyer Burton H. Hall wrote that take-home pay is "between $57 and $59 for a full week. Sweatshops have not disappeared; they are hiding behind an ILGWU union label." Burton H. Hall, "The ILGWU and the Labor Department," in *Autocracy and Insurgency in Organized Labor,* edited by Burton H. Hall, New Brunswick, Transaction Books, 1972, p. 295.

16. Interviews by author with Daniel J. Schulder, president of the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists, New York, Nov. 18 and 24 and Dec. 2, 1958, together with examination of data in the Association's files. See Peter Braestrup, "Life Among the Garment Workers: Puerto Ricans Rebel Against Boss--and Union," New York *Herald Tribune,* Oct. 6, 1958, p. 19, Oct. 8, 1958, p. 15, and Oct. 10, 1958, p. 20.

17. *Holmes v. Falikman,* C-7580-61, New York State Commission for Human Rights (1963).

18. Joel Seldin, "ILGWU Condemned for Racial Barriers, *New York Herald Tribune,* July 2, 1962, p. 1; See also Fred Feretti, "Crusading Negro Finds Road is Rough," *New York Herald Tribune,* July 2, 1962, p. 8.

19. "Union Told to Get Job for Negro," *New York Times,* July 2, 1962, p. 22.

20. Stipulation and Order on the Complaint of Ernest Holmes v. Moe Falikman et al., Case No. C-7590-61, May 17, 1963 (*Holmes v. Falikman,* File 1963, New York State Commission for Human Rights).

21. In 1959, the union had begun construction of the ILGWU wing, at a cost of $1,300,000, and after it was dedicated on June 11, 1961, continued to make substantial annual financial contributions to its operation, though fully aware of protests by Latino and black members against the use of union funds to build and maintain a facility closed to them. In 1965, after the *Holmes* case, the ILGWU canceled its agreement with the Workmen's Circle Home. See *Report of the General Executive Board,* 32d Convention, International Ladies Garment Workers Union, 1965, pp. 57-58; also June 1961 issue of *Justice,* with page 1 headline "ILGWU Wing of Circle Home Opening June 11."

22. *Huertas et al v. East River Housing Corp et al,* U.S. District Court (S.D.N.Y., 1977), 77 C. 4494 (RLC) a977.

23. Interview by author with Frederic Seiden and Frances Goldin of the Lower East Side Joint Planning Council, New York, March 24 and 25, 1983. Sources that document the ILGWU's role in sponsoring and financing the $20 million ILGWU Co-Operative Village are Max D. Danish, *The World of David Dubinsky* (Cleveland: World Publishing Co., 1957), pp. 305-7; David Dubinsky with A.H. Raskin, *David Dubinsky: A Life with Labor* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1977), pp. 216-18; and *Justice,* May 1, 1952, p. 1. See also *Report of the General Executive Board,* 32nd Convention, International Ladies Garment Workers Union, 1965, p. 8.

24. Quoted in Earl Caldwell, "When a House Can't Be Your Home," *New York Daily News,* June 1, 1983, p. 4.

25. *Violetta Putterman v. Knitgoods Workers Union Local 155 of ILGWU, International Ladies Garment Workers Union, Sol Greene and Sol C. Chaikin,* U.S. District Court, D.D.N.Y., Memorandum Opinion and Order, 78 Civ. 6000 (MJL), August 20, 1983.

26. A sample of the charges against the ILGWU filed with the EEOC include the following in New York: TNY9-0648; TNY1-1413, 9-0059, and 1754. In charge YNK3-063, the International Union itself was a respondent. The charges filed against the ILGWU outside New

York included those in Chicago (TCH8-0277); Kansas City, Mo. (TKC1-1101); Memphis (TME1-1091); San Francisco (TSF-0853); Baltimore (TBA3-0084); Philadelphia (TPA2-0651); Cleveland (TCT2-0468, 2-0043, 1-0002, 1-0004, 1-0006, 1-0010); and Birmingham (TB10-0954, 1-0357, 1-0195, 1-0873, 9-0098, 2-0975).

27. Nathan Glazer, "Negroes and Jews: The New Challenge to Pluralism," *Commentary,* Dec., 1964, pp. 29-35.

28. Dwight MacDonald, "An Open Letter to Michael Harrington," *New York Review of Books,* Dec. 5, 1968, p. 48. For a discussion of these issues, see exchange between Albert Shanker and Herbert Hill, "Black Protest, Union Democracy and the UFT," in *Autocracy and Insurgency in Organized Labor,* edited by Burton H. Hall, New Brunswick; Transaction Books, 1972, pp. 218-235.

29. See, for example, Press Release, Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, New York, January 14, 1975.

30. Sherman Labovitz, *Attitudes Towards Blacks Among Jews: Historical Antecedents and Current Concerns,* Saratoga, CA: RPE Research Associates, 1975, p. 7.

31. Letter from S. Schwarzschild to H. Hill, February 22, 1988.

REVIEWS

William Upski Wimsatt. *Bomb the Suburbs,* second edition. Chicago: The Subway and Elevated Press Company, 1995. 112pp $7.

BY KINGSLEY CLARKE

Upski's *Bomb the Suburbs* is a brilliant synthesis of humor, cultural examination, and the politics of race treason, combining aspects of *On the Road* and "What Is To Be Done." It is a collection of essays, stories, graffiti/graphics, and free association pieces tracing the development of hip hop.

Bomb the Suburbs opens with an adventure of high anxiety, hilarity and suspense. It is a story of crime (big-time tagging) and escape -- through Chicago's subways. Anyone who has engaged in clandestine political activity will flee with Upski through the subways, reliving adrenalin-fueled paranoia ... the state of mind that heightens senses but causes one to misjudge reality with bizarre results. I had never laughed so hard while reading. By the way, "bomb" means tag, do graffiti. The suburbs are "an unfortunate state of mind." I felt like an anthropologist digging in the culture and still cannot provide an explication of Upski's beloved Beastie Boys.

The first edition's sub-title was: "Graffiti, Freight-Hopping, Race, and the Search for Hip-hop's Moral Center." The struggle with race treason is at his moral center:

> "Blacks were born biking into a head wind. ... Rather than posturing about the pros and cons of affirmative action as a government policy, I make it my personal policy... The main reason more whites don't become wiggers -- instead of just white rap fans

> -- is that getting down with blacks, like any relationship, requires that precious, ego-endangering resource: effort... Effort is why the White B-boy, the Wigger, rather than the white liberal is at the center of my attention... If channeled in the right way, the Wigger can go a long way toward repairing the sickness of race in America."

By virtue of his childhood choices Upski partook early of the alternative to whiteness: black Chicago, the richness, the danger, the sisterhood/brotherhood, the culture of resistance. He grappled with what he correctly labels the national obsession of race and transformed his piece of it into integrated, unique art and political action. A noteworthy accomplishment! His art has captured Chicago in the '90s. *Bomb* became a discussion piece and an organizational tool. He stuck up posters advertising his book on every mail box and most walls in receptive neighborhoods. He has coalesced a mini-movement... in these quiescent times. I was amazed, for example, to see a worker, day-glo construction vest, reading *Bomb* on her break. His book is frequently sold out at local bookstores. He had to print a second edition.

One of Upski's strengths enabling this artistic, political, transformation is his brutal honesty about race and personal development, choices. This self-revelation is embarrassing to read, but that is the point. Upski had the courage to put in print that which most avoid. Without this painful working through of our developed emotion and motivation even well-meaning Euro-Americans are doomed to lifetimes of repeating white errors.

> "The six-flat condo I grew up in was perfectly integrated: two white families, two black, and two mixed. ... Yet even in these harmonious circumstances, whether by parental design, personal preference, or simple habit, my playmates of choice were almost always white. For all of my fascination, I knew little

> of black people. Even in places like Hyde Park [his integrated, intellectual Chicago neighborhood], most whites never do.
>
> Next to them, my voice was flat, my personality dull, my lifestyle bland, my complexion pallid. I didn't yet know race was the national obsession. I thought obsessing about blacks was, like masturbation, my dirty little secret."

This reviewer's generation, '50s and '60s, shared the obsession. But the moral center was clear and solid... black power! Any immersion in black culture, solidarity with the struggle for black liberation, the possibility of rejecting white privileges... had to be within this strategic, moral, context. Black America was the conscience of the nation. No Euro-American could have seriously undertaken the task of "searching" for a moral center in the liberation movement. Indeed, the moral center has not shifted. However, the present destruction of community, chaotic violence, mis-directed black anger, temporary triumphs of white supremacy obscure it for many. Upski writes: "the city has declared war on itself." Thus his search, although bold... even presumptuous, is justified as a guide for lost "whites." But this is the point at which it gets very tricky. Problematic at a minimum, Upski's book is also out there as a Euro-American guide for black readers. It is complicated, if not mitigated, by the fact that the hip hop movement is integrated... the point of departure for *Bomb*. Emblematically, Upski's booksigning party was the largest integrated, alternative social/political event I have witnessed in Chicago.

I find some of Upski's stated politics a bit hard to swallow. He has bought into the mini-capitalist pseudo-solutions and the anti-ideology of "post-modernism." For him ideology is always a bad thing. "The white liberal is a worthless frustration to black efforts; he has never put any skin on the line and never will. The white missionary has

guts, but he also has his own agenda, whether religious or ideological." A great deal of truth here, but he goes further with a blanket criticism of "poster belief systems of the '60s." He suggests that the solution may be an organized movement based upon an amalgamation of the Nation of Islam and the Beastie Boys.

Kingsley Clarke teaches in the Criminal Justice Department at Northeastern Illinois University. This review was developed in conversation with his neighbors, Hal Adams and William Upski Wimsatt.

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Eric Lott. *Love and Theft: Blackface Minstrelsy and the American Working Class.* London and NY: Oxford University Press, 1995. 314 pages. $14.95 pb.

BY MATT WRAY

Ever wonder what is it about blacks that white Americans love so much? The question startles -- surely anyone posing this question must be ignorant of the history of black/white relations in America. Yet, in important ways, many white Americans *do* love blacks, or more precisely, black culture and style. White America's longstanding fascination with black sports figures, jazz, rap, and hip-hop musicians, and entertainers and movie stars are cases in point. From the 'white negro' of the 1950s to present day 'wiggers', White America's love affair with black cultures has been an important, if seldom remarked upon, aspect of American culture and history.

Perhaps it is seldom remarked upon because it has been a relationship largely structured by domination and white supremacy, a one-sided tryst in which blacks have often been unwilling partners. Whites have, whenever possible, expressed their love of black cultures by appropriating and incorporating

what have historically been black cultural practices into their own whiteness. This inescapable fact puts the above question in a far different light: what we are to make of a dominant white culture that expresses a love for black cultures, yet systematically tries to deny equality and justice to black people. How do we understand, and more importantly, how do we change that fact?

In *Love and Theft: Blackface Minstrelsy and the American Working Class,* cultural critic Eric Lott offers an answer to this question by tracing the history of a peculiarly American tradition: "blacking up." Beginning in the 1830s, white musicians and actors, their faces and hands blackened by burnt cork, performed black folk's music and acted out comic skits and plays to the delight of large, mostly white, audiences. Thus began a longstanding American tradition of racial cross-dressing which continues, albeit in muted forms, to this day. As the thick bibliography (there are over 700 entries) at the end of the book indicates, Lott is by no means the first or only scholar to take up the history of blackface minstrelsy and its manifold meanings and effects in American culture. Recent writings by David Roediger, Alexander Saxton, and Michael Rogin have all focused considerable attention on the practice of blackface. While they handle the history of blackface minstrelsy in different ways, a common theme runs throughout their writings: that whites, in the process of imitating and performing "blackness," produced something called "whiteness." To put it differently, whites' notions about blacks and black cultures tell us as much about what whites think about themselves as what they think of blacks. In many ways, the argument goes, whiteness is never more visible than when it is in blackface. Lott carefully explores this notion of whiteness in blackface and he, like the historians above, takes a more or less materialist view of the social construction of whiteness, focusing our attention largely on the discourses, economic and social relations, and cultural practices surrounding blackface as popular entertainment.

I say more or less materialist, because Lott goes beyond previous thinking on blackface, delving into historical forms of consciousness to show how the psychoanalytic logic of desire and expropriation -- love and theft -- affected the social practices of whites and gave a particular shape and form to their racism and their feelings of racial difference. Specifically, Lott suggests that white men's desire for black men's bodies, or more precisely, for the potent masculinity and sexuality believed to reside in black males, motivated whites to try to step into and inhabit blackness by blacking up. What is suggested here, besides the dynamic of love and theft, is a kind of white male homosocial bonding through and over the black male body. In making this kind of analysis, Lott moves beyond the realm of traditional history to incorporate theories and methodologies more closely associated with the Birmingham tradition of cultural studies. His deft readings of the connections between the political and cultural realms follow the example set by thinkers like Stuart Hall, Paul Gilroy, and Richard Johnson, who in their turn had followed Marx, Gramsci, and Raymond Williams. And he pushes against the boundaries of the Birmingham tradition with his borrowings from psychoanalytic feminisms and queer theory, all the while maintaining a materialist frame. All this makes for pretty heady stuff at times, but for the most part, Lott, to his credit, steers clear of dense or specialized theoretical jargon, making the book accessible to general readers.

Love and Theft is likely to spark a good deal of controversy and debate, for in Lott's description, the history of blackface is not simply a story of racial domination and white supremacy. Blackface first appeared as entr'acte, a comic diversion in between the acts of serious plays, in northern theaters in the early part of the nineteenth century. At first, audiences were comprised of a mixture of social classes, but as blackface developed, it very quickly came to be associated primarily with working-class whites. Just as quickly it grew to be the single most popular form of entertainment in America.

Lott devotes a chapter to the story of how and why this shift took place, a story which is rife with tensions. These tensions reveal how blackface functioned to address tensions not only between whites and blacks, but between different groups of whites as well. Blackface emerged at a time and place where lines were being drawn in American cultural life, lines between 'high' culture, associated with the opera and theater, and 'low' culture, associated with taverns, circuses, and popular theater. These distinctions were largely class based, although gender also came strongly into play, as the 'low' cultural spaces were almost exclusively reserved for males. Tensions between the bourgeoisie and working-class whites erupted in the Astor Place Riot of 1849 when working-class 'b'hoys' interrupted a Shakespearean performance at the Astor Place Opera House. Militia were called in to quell the violence and ended up killing twenty-two and wounding one hundred and fifty others. Lott uses this incident to argue that blackface was in many ways then, not only a figure of whiteness, but a figure of working-classness as well. Lott argues that blackface was instrumental in the formation of a self-consciously white working-class culture and goes on to suggest that the white working-class rejection of nineteenth century Abolitionism was based, in part, on class prejudice.

There is considerable ambiguity in Lott's argument on this point. His carefully constructed account of the interweaving of racial and class consciousness raises many questions only to leave them untouched or unresolved. Why was there no labor-based abolitionism? Why did working-class whites not recognize their own racism as an obstacle to class struggle? On the one hand, Lott maintains blackface was a popular expression of the ideology of white supremacy, and on the other hand, he holds that blackface "became an idiom of class dissent -- a fact that implied some sense of cross racial identification" (p.84) Unresolved tensions like this one run throughout *Love and Theft* and can be very disorienting and frustrating for the reader. The shifting meanings and contradictory readings of blackface offered by Lott often leave

the reader wondering where exactly Lott stands on a number of issues. For instance, despite an entire chapter and several lengthy passages devoted to a discussion of "wage slavery" and Abolitionism, this reviewer found it difficult to get a sense of Lott's own assessment of the class politics of Abolitionism. Thus the question of whether or not some form of abolitionism might work well today is never directly addressed.

To be fair, these kinds of questions are not Lott's primary concern. He is more interested in offering a new understanding of the cultural politics of blackface and he draws from a wide array of sources to do so. At times, Lott's thesis bears a close resemblance to that offered by historian Sean Wilentz. Wilentz has argued that in blackface shows, the real object of scorn was not blacks, but rather the upper class. In Wilentz' reading, blackface was primarily a form of working class critique of the pretensions and privilege of the emergent bourgeoisie. David Roediger, among others, has forcefully rejected this idea, choosing instead to point to evidence which shows that blackface performances reinforced pro slavery sentiments and white supremacist politics. While Roediger agrees that blackface was a means of expressing social differences among whites, he is insistent that the racism of blackface not be swept aside. Lott gives a more satisfyingly complex reading of the class and racial politics of blackface than offered by either Wilentz or Roediger, showing the extent to which the languages of racial and class oppression mixed and combined to produce moments where working-class whites shared a sense of oppression with blacks, even if those moments quickly passed.

Love and Theft is a fascinating and provocative account of the multiple meanings that one can read in the history of blackface minstrelsy. As such, it may offer us insights into contemporary race relations in American life. And New Abolitionists and others concerned with deconstructing contemporary forms of whiteness and the structures of white supremacy may find a great many uses for Lott's book

by adapting his analysis of nineteenth century white racial feeling to the present. After all, blackface haunts contemporary American culture in uncanny ways. Lott takes great pains to remind us that blackface is by no means strictly a thing of the past -- as he puts it, "Every time you hear an expansive white man drop into his version of black English, you are in the presence of blackface's unconscious return." This is nowhere more apparent than in popular music -- from Elvis to Vanilla Ice, a significant part of the history of rock'n'roll resembles the history of blackface, an ambiguous history of cultural love and theft. As Lott repeatedly, often brilliantly demonstrates, race relations, like all social and cultural relations, are enormously complex and contradictory in nature. Thus, on the level of consciousness, there are always deep ambiguities in the meanings we derive from the social. With *Love and Theft,* Lott offers us the most detailed, complex, and suggestive analysis to date of the history of race consciousness and racial formation in America.

Matthew Wray is a graduate student in Ethnic Studies, UC Berkeley. He is the editor, with Annalee Newitz, of an anthology on marginalized whites, entitled White Trash *(forthcoming from Routledge, 1996).*

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Ann Douglas. *Terrible Honesty: Mongrel Manhattan in the 1920s.* New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1995. 604 pp. $25.00.

BY BETH HENSON

Where are the roots of American culture? Is collaboration between black and white artists possible? What is the American component in Afro-American music? When "white" people play "black" music, is that rip-off or homage?

As the twentieth century winds to a close, the debate on multi-culturalism grows increasingly polarized: in one camp,

European roots are asserted, granting blacks and other so-called ethnics a footnote, the status of an exotic accessory, an accent note: the message is assimilate or die. On the other, the champions of identity politics marshall their forces in separate enclaves, each with its own folklore, kitchen, and dance, while Euro-Americans look on with envy. Meanwhile, the real drama of U. S. history, in which the Negro masses play a starring role, gets lost in the shuffle.

Ann Douglas has made an important contribution to the contemporary debate in her study of modernism, *Terrible Honesty: Mongrel Manhattan in the 1920s.* She portrays the Harlem Renaissance, when black culture flourished, offering inspiration and vitality to the "lost generation" of whites, when ragtime and the blues gave birth to jazz, a uniquely Afro-American music, when black and white intellectuals mingled as never before. She examines the lives of a number of artists, among them Jean Toomer, Langston Hughes, Countee Cullen, Zora Neale Hurston, Dorothy Parker, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Gertrude Stein, Ernest Hemingway, Hart Crane, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Bessie Smith, George Gershwin, Bix Beiderbecke, and Fats Waller, whom she numbers among the moderns, and provides an extensive discussion of the influence of Freud, William James and Christian Science.

She views modernism as a revolt against the cultural reign of the Victorian mother, instigator of Prohibition, characterized by piety, hypocrisy and middle-class reformism, a rebellion in favor of the ironic virility of the jazz age, characterized by advertising, entertainment and fashion. She describes a world transformed by mass production and speeded-up media transmission, where the supremacy of the mind has given way to the hegemony of mood, whose capitol is no longer puritan New England but secular New York.

The Great War had ended in America's emancipation from Europe. Freud takes the place of Christianity, skepticism replaces faith and atheism becomes heroic, a kind of terrible honesty. Her whites feel like orphans as they reject the sentimentality of middle-class life, they are now disinherited

but free. The terrible honesty of the title is the refusal to flinch in the face of horrible facts, a revolt against Pollyanna. They champion a language free of euphemism, committed to precise observation and description.

For blacks, and particularly the "talented tenth," things were looking up: it was a time of guarded optimism and widening opportunity. The boom brought hundreds of thousands north in search of industrial jobs, the Great Migration had begun, and Harlem became the first black metropolis. The expansion of radio and the recording industry meant the wide dissemination of black music for the first time. Black poets and playwrights were extensively published. While some black moderns succumbed to trademark lost generation anguish, most resisted, feeling not lost but found.

The rebellion of Hurston and Hughes against the genteel negritude of W. E. B. DuBois and his opponent, Booker T. Washington took the form of exploring the themes of color consciousness, self-hatred and vice among blacks. Black intellectuals insisted on their right to the whole of their heritage, and not only the African component. The poet Countee Cullen, whose favorite poet was Keats, when rebuked by a white hostess and asked what Endymion, a creature of Greek myth, meant to him, an African, speculated what Keats, a cockney poet of the early nineteenth century, had to do with Endymion.

While the white women's suffrage movement had betrayed its roots in abolitionism by campaigning for the vote on the basis of racial exclusion, the optimism and style which characterized the black moderns proved a potent beacon to white moderns in search of authenticity and vitality. Nancy Cunard, the British poet and heiress, dedicated her life and considerable wealth to promoting the cause of Negro rights and published the important anthology, *Negro,* a compilation of essays, reminiscence and poetry which included an impassioned defense of the Scottsboro boys as well as sections on blacks in Africa, the West Indies and South America. As the

novelist Mary Austin remarked in praise of Bojangles, "the eye filmed and covered by 5,000 years of absorbed culture" is cleared by the rhythm of his flying feet.

Nowhere was the American fascination with the Negro clearer than in the theater and music, where America's only indigenous forms draw on the only folk art to survive into the age of print. Minstrelsy or "coon" songs were performed to white audiences in the antebellum south by both black and white actors in blackface. Meant to ridicule and stereotype blacks, they also betrayed a fascination with black language and rhythm. They were the first musicals and led to both vaudeville and the variety show. Ragtime was the fusion of black and white music, a percussive, syncopated rhythm, the five-note scale -- the black or "nigger" keys on the piano -- and an emphasis on the weak or off beat played against the steady 2/4 marching rhythm of the left hand or bass line. "Shuffle Along," an exuberant all-black musical revue produced in 1922 starring Noble Sissle and Eubie Blake, combined a happy parody of the old-time minstrel show with the latest in black and white slang, ragtime, and up-to-the-minute black dances. It was a smash hit and spelled the decline of the white blackface performance. Jewish songwriters and singers in particular were drawn to black music, among them George and Ira Gershwin, Irving Berlin, Fanny Brice, Sophie Tucker and Al Jolson, the most famous blackface performer of all. When George Gershwin visited the south with Todd Duncan, the opera singer who played Porgy in "Porgy and Bess," they bantered that he, Gershwin, was the blacker of the two and Todd the more Jewish. Jazz, which benefited greatly from new techniques of recording and distribution, combined African rhythm and the pentatonic scale with a tempo derived from the motorized modern city, nervous, abrasive, dissonant and strident: a black, but a black *American* invention.

In their rejection of the optimism and conformity of earlier days, their defiance of the middle-class matriarch, and their espousal of black and white collaboration, the twenties moderns put one in mind of the early 1960s. But although

I'm as ready as the next person to blame my mother, Douglas' vilification of the Victorian woman is unfair; whatever petty tyrannies the matriarch exercised on the domestic and cultural fronts, she did so in the absence of real power anywhere else, and the archetypal gorgon-matron was but a tiny minority. While further discussion lies outside the scope of this article, Douglas' glee in the "new feminist spirit of freely roving misogyny" gives pause.

Douglas has written a lucid study of a fascinating period in American history, in accessible and jargon-free prose. Exhaustive in scope, it may be more than some readers need to know. I recommend it to New Abolitionists as an important study in race relations during a time when white artists took their cue from blacks, and black culture entered the mainstream and transformed it once and for all.

Beth Henson is associate editor of Race Traitor.

CORRESPONDENCE

ZIONISM

To the Editors:

Adam Sabra's insightful article, "Abolish the Jewish Caste in Palestine," raises important questions. Sadly, it accepts the flawed view of the class structure of the European Jewish community promulgated by the Zionists. The Zionist (and antisemitic) view of class parallels, in several respects not immediately obvious, "white" views of class among American Blacks, which helps define "whiteness," and reproduces the false doctrine of productionism that has for too long prevented the liberatory potential of socialism, labor, and the left. It is interesting the editor chose an article from the *Forward* to demonstrate the antisemitic potential of Zionism because the *Forward,* more than any other journal, represents the loss of the revolutionary potential of the Jewish community when it chooses to be "white." By publishing such honest information, ghosts of the *Forward*'s socialist past are heard. At issue, of course, is the historical necessity of Jews choosing to be "white."

Essentially three questions must be answered. Although distinguishable, they are not separable. One is a simple question of whether by any judgement of creating social value (but not the narrow Marxist judgement of only creation of surplus value) oppressed groups are productive. The second is to define productivity (and determine who should define it). And finally we must view the costs of productionism as false ideology. Even though the arguments are intermingled below, the strands of thought can be distinguished.

The Zionist view of Jewish class (and here I use the views of Borochov, intellectual leader of left socialist Zionism) was that Jews had an abnormal and parasitic class structure because they were forced to have, in a non-Jewish state, a truncated and unproductive working class. I will argue that

Jews in interwar Eastern Europe as Blacks in America, since the Second World War were, by any test, hyper-productive, but, and more importantly, the parasitical label applied to them by the ruling caste/class, is but an excuse to hide the ruling groups' oppressive and truly parasitical role. Paradoxically, and tragically, Zionist laborist groups, especially the small, but powerful *Achdut Avodah* (Voice of Labor) group, justify the oppression of the Palestinian people by claiming their backward and nonproductive social structure.

This perversion of the socialist vision forces leftists into the position of handmaidens, more properly, handmasters, of oppression. Blacks can be viewed as unproductive only if the roles of mother or farmer are discounted, Jews in Europe only if tailors and artisans were held to have less value than steelworkers (it is instructive that the person most identified with the perversion of socialism chose as his party name Stalin-steel!!!) In fact, Jews were employed almost exclusively in the largest industrial enterprises in Eastern Europe (tobacco) American Blacks supply (and historically supplied) the hardest labor (foundry, paintrooms) in auto and steel factories; and Palestinians supply much of skilled blue collar labor in Israel (indeed throughout the Middle East).

Ruling groups will (and have) defined productivity as their role in society. As Blacks in America moved into skilled, industrial positions, ruling white elites defined the most truly parasitical classes (the techno-managerial elite) as productive in a post-industrial society. By doing so, they not only attempt to give a pseudo-scientific underpinning to oppression, they hope that the oppressed will accept their own "inferiority."

What does all this have to do with the concept of race treason, and, more important, its practice? Well, everything! By rejecting the chauvinism and pessimism of Zionism, the Jewish Labor Bund presented other possibilities. Rather than rejecting the actual Jewish life, the Bund, through the medium of Yiddish, organized the Jewish masses into militant and effective unions, creative and democratic cultural

and educational programs, and comradeship with all working people. Rather than create "a state like all other states" -- in other words, an institution of class oppression -- the Bund posited revolutionary internationalism! The Polish Socialist Party accepted the role of race traitors. The liberation of the Polish workers was predicated upon the smashing of the special oppression of Jewish workers. Not only did they fight antisemitism among the Polish workers, but actively supported Jewish workers. In 1938, at the May Day demonstration in Warsaw, the Polish Socialist Party offered to defend the Bund demonstration and to entrust their own defense to the Bund! Imagine for a second, if the Black Panthers were to defend strikers and the Teamsters were to defend the Panthers. What a different America, what a different world! Almost every gun used in the uprising of the Warsaw Ghetto was smuggled by the Polish Socialist Party. Today, it is commonplace to state that history is written by the victor, but what horrible vicious victors! How heroic the defeated!

Zionism has historically used the Jewish people as hostages to its racist power politics. That most Jews accept (perhaps embrace) that role, makes it no less tragic or wrong. In 1947 the Zionist leaders of a Displaced Persons Camp rejected the offer of a haven for Jewish children in Denmark, proclaiming "Israel or Death." Throughout the 1970's, the Zionists refused to let any Jewish organization help Soviet Jewish refugees settle anywhere except Israel. If Zionism can eat off its own, imagine what it can do to those considered (on good Marxist grounds, no less) inferior!

Whiteness is not only a form of caste privilege, but defines its oppression by productionism and its superior role in directing this surfeit of things. Horribly, because of "whiteness," socialism is perverted into a more efficient form of productionism than capitalism. The great claim of Israel is not its equality (altogether lacking) or freedom (always at risk), but that it "made the desert bloom." Zionism conjoins with whiteness as an international system of imperial oppression. Other Jewish socialist alternatives were strong enough,

as late as 1966, for Chuck McDew, the first chair of SNCC, to declare himself "a Black by birth, a Jew by choice, and a revolutionary by necessity." I can only hope the possibilities are not so limited today that it is without meaning to consider myself a Jew by birth, a Black by choice, and a revolutionary by necessity!

Eric Stern
Brooklyn, N.Y.
June 18, 1995

THE WHITE LEFT

To the Editors:

I have been reading and enjoying *Race Traitor* and sharing it with other prisoners. *Race Traitor* is a great journal that should be widely read -- especially among the white left and other activists and progressive-thinking people.

I still have a bitter taste in my mouth from the seventies, when some white activist groups were putting forth the bullshit that "narrow-minded Black Nationalism was the problem." I came to Boston in 1974 to protest the attacks on the black students being bused to school. I remember one white left group adopting the stop-sign symbol used by the opponents of busing. Since that period I always had difficulty trusting white leftists and working with them. I deeply resented them for blaming African people for their condition, and for white racism.

I have since found that there are people of European descent who are willing to deal with whiteness in an upfront and honest manner. Regardless of any negative criticisms *Race Traitor* might receive, don't let it faze you. *Race Traitor* serves a meaningful purpose. It is insightful, informative, and it creates the atmosphere for positive and principled working relationships. *Race Traitor* helps repair a lot of damage that was done by the white left.

Perhaps one day the Jews will publish something like

Race Traitor. I am not anti-Jew but the unjust attacks by Jews upon African leaders greatly upset me, as do the revelations about the spying on the African Liberation Movement and the supplying of information to our enemies by Jewish organizations. The Jewish community has been silent through all this, and a lot of us notice that. Apologizing would go a long way towards healing the bitterness a lot of Africans are feeling.

Richard Mafundi Lake #079972
3700 Holman Unit #4-10B
Atmore, AL 36503-3700

LIFE IN THE SUBURBS

To the Editors:

New Trier High School, Winnetka, Illinois, 1994. To some it could be looked upon as the "Harvard of High Schools." It is located in one of the richest neighborhoods in the United States, and many of the kids drive their own cars. Needless to say, New Trier is predominantly white. Many of those unfortunate enough to attend this elitist public school like to call it New Trier Hell School.

Everything here is a rat race. Coming from an elite school, we feel the pressure most to get into an Ivy League College, earn a 4.0+ grade point average, participate in activities that students really could give a damn about, take as many "intellectually stimulating" courses as one can possibly fit into four years, and last but most definitely not least, fit into this twisted little image of what a New Trier High School student should look like, act like, and in general, CONFORM TO. It's all basically a summary of what your perfect little girl or boy should be. Here's the illusion: good grades, primarily gets along with the family, drives their own car (but only if they got that "A"), neat, clean, respectful, and the girls must have a ponytail, and everyone MUST participate in a varsity sport. It's all about trends, who's

doing what, where's the place to be, and who will go furthest in life.

Just recently there was a scandal. The problem wasn't the scandal so much as the way it was handled. After years of senior pranks consisting of mostly pulled fire alarms and intentionally spilt food, on the day before Halloween, all the administrators' addresses were distributed amongst the student body. On Halloween night, there were houses egged, windows broken, cars smashed, and (figure this one out) there was a squid thrown on the lawn of one administrator's house. Every student involved was expelled. This could be attributed to a variety of motivations. I have thought about this extensively, and my conclusion is that there is one viable option for the cause of this vandalism. I was later to find out, upon speaking to the culprits, that my hypothesis was correct. It is that the administrators have ceased to listen to the requests or consider the needs of the students. Among others, campus was primarily closed to prevent fights and littering, and there has been a recent crack down on those kids wearing suspicious colors for GANG AFFILIATIONS. Anyone who has ever visited the North Shore knows that anyone who pretends to be in a gang here is either just kidding really hard, or is actually involved in a gang in Chicago. Does the administration think that the expulsion of one kid in a ritzy neighborhood for gang involvements is going to solve any of the real problems?

Rachel Edwards
Wilmette, Il.
January, 1995

UNBONDING

To the Editors:

After reading the essay about white bonding ("White Silence, White Solidarity," RT #4), I used the writer's comments to challenge a guy in a bar who approached me in

spite of the newspaper I was reading (a sign that I do not want to be bothered). Since the subject of the newspaper article was welfare, his first comment, looking for my approval, was about "those people on welfare." I would have gotten on his ass anyway (about welfare and male aggression) but in addition I asked him why he expected me to approve his comments. Would he say this to a black woman? A black man? Flabbergasted, he muttered something about a "feminazi" and walked back to his friends.

Leslie Griffiths
Atlanta

FAMILY MATTERS

To the Editors:

Our family -- white -- is adrift. My husband has bought into much of the current junk on the tube and over the airwaves. Having a strong and magnetic personality, he wields influence over our sons.

I'm not very courageous, and too often have kept quiet to "preseve the peace" here at home. Of course, it is not peace. Perhaps with a publication such as yours I might find the words to help me speak up.

Name withheld

RACE TREASON IN SEATTLE

To the Editors:

Capitalist, white supremacist society is like hard dead earth. It needs to be dug up, so that all the good stuff at the bottom can enjoy the sun and the rain. The white race is a collective ally to the power structure. Without the alliance of the white race, rich or poor, the white government would not survive. As it stands today, most white people are acting as indirect executioners.

My solutions include an organized body of active race traitors, which to me means a group of people who confront racists and expose the environment that encourages racist traditions and values. The violent racism is only the physical manifestation of what is always there -- white-skin privilege, whites using a racial code of ethics to get what they want, knowing that other whites will back them up. If someone challenges this white approval process, the whites can always yell "reverse racism." Confronting these people won't change them at all, but it may inspire others who are racist only because they have not seen anything else.

Shannon Megan Foley
PO Box 362
Seattle, WA 98111-0362

TECHNO TRACKS

To the Editors:

Your ideas sound really cool. I'm a (nominally and unwillingly) white person who has a hobby of spinning techno tracks on Tuesday nights on a college radio station in the area. What disturbs me about the Race movement, though, is how much Afro-Americans have been discredited and displaced within the scene.

Techno, if you don't know, began as a style of dance music in Detroit during the mid-80s. Its founders (Kevin Sanderson, Derrick May and Juan Atkins) are all African-American. The music caught on in Europe before it caught on in the U.S., amd influenced a large number of musicians and recording artists on the other side of the Atlantic. When these European musicmakers released tracks, techno was marketed as a European product without giving credit to the sound's Detroit roots. As a result, there is much hypocrisy in Race's "Peace & Love" lip service, having little more influence on changing the status quo than a Fruitopia commercial. Could Moby be a Pat Boone for the 90s?

Dave Duncan, aka DJ prund
WITR Radio
Fairport, NY

RACE CATEGORIES

To the Editors:

When I first got to Cameroon [ed. note: the writer was a Peace Corps volunteer], many people would call me "la blanche." Others made sure I knew I was black and not white and still others called me "matisse." I persistently explained that I was not white (or "matisse") but that I was "une noire americaine" or "une africaine-americaine." Well, this caught on and pretty soon most people referred to me as "la noire americaine." I thought everyone had gotten "it" and I was happy. The another volunteer visited me -- a woman who in the U.S. would automatically be classified as white. I introduced her to many people, and three different times I was asked if she was a "noire americaine" too. I guess they didn't get "it," but I was starting to.

Valarie Moses
Bloomfield Hills, Mich.
November 1994

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#4 Manifesto of a Dead Daughter; Police-Assisted Homicide; White Silence, White Solidarity; Family Matters; Palestine; Fiction; Poetry; Exchange with a Socialist; Reviews.

WHAT WE BELIEVE

The white race is a historically constructed social formation. It consists of all those who partake of the privileges of the white skin in this society. Its most wretched members share a status higher, in certain respects, than that of the most exalted persons excluded from it, in return for which they give their support to a system that degrades them.

The key to solving the social problems of our age is to abolish the white race, that is, to abolish the privileges of the white skin. Until that task is accomplished, even partial reform will prove elusive, because white influence permeates every issue, domestic and foreign, in U.S. society.

The existence of the white race depends on the willingness of those assigned to it to place their racial interests above class, gender, or any other interests they hold. The defection of enough of its members to make it unreliable as a predictor of behavior will lead to its collapse.

Race Traitor aims to serve as an intellectual center for those seeking to abolish the white race. It will encourage dissent from the conformity that maintains it and popularize examples of defection from its ranks, analyze the forces that hold it together and those that promise to tear it apart. Part of its task will be to promote debate among abolitionists. When possible, it will support practical measures, guided by the principle, **Treason to whiteness is loyalty to humanity.**

The editors publish in Race Traitor what they think will help build a community of readers. Editorial opinions are expressed in editorials and unsigned replies to letters.

journal of the new abolitionism