

4th ANNUAL

**4th International  
Book Fair  
of  
Radical  
Black  
3rd World BOOKS**

-- 1985 --

REPORT ON A CONFERENCE

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USA

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**The Fourth Annual International Book Fair of  
Radical Black and Third World Books  
London, England - March, 1985**

**by Abdul Alkalimat**

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## CONFERENCE REPORT

The 4th London based International Radical Black and third world Book fair has just taken place and was a great success. Over 3,000 people attended the book fair and the evening forums. This event is sponsored by three key Black publishers, Race Today Publications, New Beacon Press, and Bogle L'Overture. The Fair was started shortly after the famous Black revolt in Brixton in opposition to white racism in housing and police brutality. Each year more than a dozen Black writers and activists gather from around the world to join their peers in England to share in the contemporary cultural and political developments in relation to Black communities throughout the world. The book fair is supported by a wide range of organizations and distributors.

The opening remarks to the Book fair were given by the noted Nigerian writer Wole Soyinka. He placed emphasis on the unity of politics and culture in the purpose of the fair:

In these dark days of Nkomati, let us at least be thankful; and humbled by Nelson Mandela's giant fist thrust out beyond Robben Island to smash a loud resounding "NO" in the teeth of Apartheid. TOGETHER with other heroes like Steve BIKO, Walter Rodney, Maurice Bishop, and Malcolm X, around whom the festival has been organized, they remind us, confined or at liberty living or dead, that the imperatives of struggle reach out beyond prison fortresses and beyond the grave. The philosophy of this book fair is dedicated to perpetuating the voices of such exemplars for eternity, and in this spirit, I have the honor, the privilege, to declare open this Fourth Radical Black, and third world testament to our common struggle.

The overall activities of the Book Fair included 7 forums, 4 cultural events, and 2 sessions for and with young people. There was an international poetry night that included major young poets from Martinique, Jamaica, Trinidad, Azania, Pakistan, and the USA (Jayne Cortez, and Gylan Kain). Two films were shown including the award winning Rue Cases Negres about the hard life of sugar workers in 1930's Martinique, and the British premiere of Blues For A Prodigal just made by Wole Soyinka. The culminating cultural event was a concert by Randy Weston accompanied by musicians from Angola, Sierra Leone, Cameroon, and the USA.

The forums were quite diverse, including India, Third world media, women and the crisis, the caribbean in ferment, and third world publishing. Each forum had 3 - 5 speakers make 20 minute presentations, followed by at least 1 hour of discussion and debate. There were two key forums in the overall Book Fair. The first was on "New Technology. the Working Day and Cultural Creativity." Speakers represented Black liberation movements and workers movements, especially the recently concluded year long strike by the National Union of Miners in England. The forum was mainly focused on how the capitalist class used technology to replace labor and lower production costs, thereby dislocating labor from the workplace and forcing leisure on them. This has in the past allowed for the working class to have surplus time for cultural creativity such as the steel band music or the blues in some cases. A second relationship taken up was the impact of

technology on the use of this leisure time, especially how technology can render the masses passive as consumers rather than leave them to their own creative devices.

The final forum was focused on "Malcolm X and Social Liberation." This forum was held in the Brixton community, the center of Black resistance in London. In fact, it was the forum most connected to the immediate political and ideological interests of Black movements. As such, the forum on Malcolm was the most heated, and raised the many issues that are currently center stage in the USA, in the Caribbean, and in Africa. What is the relationship of Black-white unity in the fight for Black liberation and social revolution? What is the relative importance of various ideological tendencies, Marxism, Panafricanism, Nationalism? What is a progressive view on youth gangs? electoral politics? Black-Latin unity? This forum was a great success as the 400 people who attended exploded into at least 10 small group discussions for at least 1 1/2 hours after the forum officially closed. As many people commented, the spirit of Malcolm was alive in this forum.

The annual Book Fair in London is an intellectual and cultural event of world significance. There is a great need to have such an event in the United States. For now, the plans are already being made for special activities during the 5th Annual Fair, and interested publishers, writers, and all radical Black and third world intellectual activists and cultural workers are invited.

# Preliminary Programme

## 4th International Book Fair & Radical Black & 3rd World Books

### Book Fair

**Thursday 21st — Saturday 23rd  
March 1985**

**Camden Centre, Bidborough Street, Kings  
Cross, NW1.**

**11.00am — 5.30pm daily**

**Entry 60p Children under 16 20p**

**Opening Ceremony 12.00 noon Thursday  
March 21st**

### Book Fair Festival Week

**Sunday 17th — Sunday 24th  
March 1985**

## CALL TO THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL BOOK FAIR

Dear Friend,

The Fourth International Book Fair of Radical Black and Third World Books and the International Book Fair Festival Week will take place in London, England, from Sunday 17th March to Sunday 24th March 1985.

The post-war world has been passing through an historical period of automation and computerisation of the labour process. This has resulted in the mass displacement of workers on a permanent scale only glimpsed historically before in colonial societies. What have those displaced in the past created and what will they now create?

The main forum of the Fourth Book Fair and Book Fair Festival Week will therefore focus on "New Technology, the Working Day and Cultural Creativity".

The year 1985 marks the 20th anniversary of the death of Malcolm X, who emerged from that mass of displaced labour to make one of the most remarkable interventions in politics and culture in the 20th century. So another

important forum will be held on the related theme of "Malcolm X and Social Liberation".

The Fourth International Book Fair of Radical Black and Third World Books will take place at the Camden Centre, Bidborough Street, Kings Cross, London WC1, from Thursday March 21st to Saturday March 23rd 1985.

The accompanying International Book Fair Festival Week will take place from Sunday March 17th to Sunday March 24th 1985 at centres in London, Manchester and Bradford and will consist of concerts, readings, exhibitions, films, forums and seminars.

Bogle-L'Ouverture Publications, New Beacon Books and Race Today Publications, pioneers in radical, black book and magazine publishing and in international bookselling, invite you to take part in this Fourth International Book Fair of Radical Black and Third World Books.

We hope you will be able to participate and we look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

**John La Rose**  
Director

## Sunday 17th

### INDIA THE CRISIS TO COME (forum)

**Tariq Ali** — political writer and activist; his most recent book is *The Nehrus and the Gandhis: an India Dynasty*.

**Ananta Krishna** — activist in the pre-Emergency civil liberties movement in India; journalist; currently researching problems of development in third world countries and others

1.30pm St Matthews Meeting Place Theatre, Brixton Hill, SW9.

Film evening

**RUE CASES NEGRES** — Euzhan Palcy's prizewinning film about the hard life of sugar workers in Martinique in the 1930's, seen through the eyes of young Jose and his grandmother, based on the novel *Black Shack Alley* by Joseph Zobel.

**CARIBBEAN IN CRISIS** — Documentary on the current situation of workers and peasants in the Caribbean and on events in Grenada 1983.

Discussion with:

**Florence Alexis** — Archivist and cultural figure (Haiti & France)

**Tim Hector** — Journalist, Chairman of Antigua Caribbean Liberation Movement (Antigua)

**Joby Bernabe** — Poet, appears in *Rue Cases Negres* (Martinique)

**Darcus Howe** — Journalist, Associate Producer of *Caribbean in Crisis* (UK & Trinidad)

**Lionel Ngakane** — Film director (South Africa)

Moderator: Gus John

6.30pm Admission £2.50 (£1.40 UB40)  
The Ritzy Cinema Brixton Oval.

## Monday 18th

### BLACK & THIRD WORLD MEDIA (forum)

Contributors:

**Mogniss H. Abdallah** — A member of a magazine collective Agence IM'media in France

**Imruh Caesar** — journalist and film maker; director of *Riots and Rumours of Riots*; until recently assistant producer on BBC TV's *Ebony* programme.

**Farrukh Dhondy** — Playwright and Commissioning Editor for Multicultural Programming on Channel 4 TV.

**Leila Hassan** — Editor of *Race Today*

**Yusuf Hassan** — Radio journalist on African Service of BBC and senior editor of *Africa Events*.

**Alex Pascall** — Producer and Presenter of Black Londoners BBC Radio London.

**Louis Xavier** — Producer and presenter on Radio Mango, Paris.

A person from Sankofa video & film collective

Moderator: Roxy Harris

1.30pm Tottenham Town Hall, N15.

### BLACK, RADICAL & THIRD WORLD WOMEN & THEIR CURRENT STRUGGLES (forum)

Contributors:

**Kum Kum Bhavnani** — psychologist, doing research into youth unemployment

**Sheila Capstick** — member of Sherburn Miners Support Group, Yorkshire.

**Flo O'Connor** — Co-ordinator of the Jamaican Council of Human Rights

**Patricia Rios** — member of Avanza, part of Chile Women in Exile and Chile Democratico

**Irma La Rose** — member of the Alliance of the Black Parents Movement, Black Youth Movement and the Race Today Collective.

Moderator: Ann Phoenix

7.00pm Admission £1.00  
Tottenham Town Hall, N15

## Tuesday 19th

### VARIETY CONCERT FEATURING YOUNG BLACK ARTISTS

2.00 — 4.00pm Admission £1.00  
Camden Centre, Kings Cross

### INTERNATIONAL POETRY EVENING

with

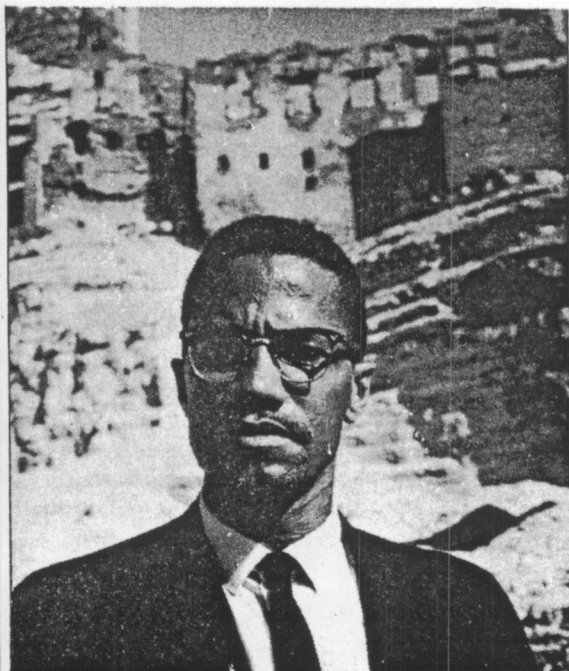
**Joby Bernabe** — Martiniquan poet, recites in creole; appeared in *Rue Cases Negres*

**Jean 'Binta' Breeze** — Jamaica's first female Dub Poet

AUDIO CASSETTES OF THIS SESSION AVAILABLE  
See back page for ordering information.



International Bookfair 1982



Malcolm X



**Jayne Cortez** — Afro-American poet; 'Cortez has been and continues to be an explorer, probing the valleys and chasms of human existence. . . a thrilling collection.' Maya Angelou on Jayne Cortez latest book of poetry *Coagulations*

**Ahmad Faraz** — leading Urdu poet from Pakistan; author of several books of poetry; *The Seige: poems of Ahmad Faraz* is soon to be published in English

**Lorna Goodison** — Jamaican poet and artist; author of poetry collections *Tamarind Seasons* (1980) and *Mulatta Song* (soon to be published)

**Gylan Kain** — Afro-American poet and actor; founder of the original 'Last Poets'

**Abdul Malik Decouteau** — Trinidadian poet and composer; author of the books of poetry *Black Up* and *Revo* and of the record *More Power*

**Bicca Muntu Maseko** — Azanian poet; his poems have been published in *Staffrider*, *New Classic* and *Ophir* magazines

**Pitika Ntuli** — Azanian poet and sculptor  
Compere: John La Rose

7.30pm Admission £3.00  
Camden Centre, Kings Cross, NW1

## Wednesday 20th

### CARIBBEAN IN FERMENT(forum)

Contributors:

**Tim Hector** — Chairman of the Antigua Caribbean Liberation Movement; political writer and activist

**Gus John** — member of the Alliance of the Black Parents Movement, Black Youth Movement and the Race Today Collective; education consultant

**Roberto Marquez** — Puerto Rican American writer and academic; activist in the movement for Puerto Rican independence

**Flo O'Connor** — Coordinator of the Jamaican Council for Human Rights

**Michel Reinette** — journalist and member of the French-based Committee for the Support of Political Prisoners in Guadeloupe

an executive member of the Oilfields Workers Trade Union, and a member of the Committee for Labour Solidarity, Trinidad.

Moderator: Linton Kwesi Johnson  
7.00pm Admission £1.00  
Tottenham Town Hall, N15

## Thursday 21st

### BLACK & THIRD WORLD INDEPENDENT PUBLISHING (forum)

Discussion with publishers participating in the Book Fair.

Moderator: Roxy Harris  
4.00pm Shaw Theatre Meeting Room, Kings Cross

### NEW TECHNOLOGY, THE WORKING DAY & CULTURAL CREATIVITY

Contributors:

**Abdul Alkalimat** — Afro-American academic and political activist; chairperson of Peoples College Press, Chicago

**Dave Feickert** — works for the National Union of Mineworkers, Sheffield

**Biodun Jeyifo** — Nigerian literary and dramatic critic; trade unionist and member of Socialist Forum Collective, Nigeria

**John La Rose** — Poet and publisher; member of the Alliance of the Black Parents Movement, Black Youth Movement and Race Today Collective

**Hilary Wainwright** — Political writer and a member of the Socialist Society

Moderator: Darcus Howe  
7.00pm Admission £1.00  
Tottenham Town Hall, N15

## SCHOOL SESSIONS TO MEET VISITING WRITERS & ARTISTS

Thursday March 21st

1.30pm — 3.30pm

Friday March 22nd

11.00am — 1.00pm



Jean 'Binta' Breeze



Randy Weston

## Friday 22nd

### YOUNG BLACK WRITERS (forum)

Desmond Johnson; Jacqueline Rudets; Sandra Agard and others

Moderator: Michael La Rose

1.30pm Shaw Theatre Meeting Room, Kings Cross

### MALCOLM X AND SOCIAL LIBERATION (forum)

Contributors:

**Abdul Alkalimat** — Afro-American academic and political activist; chairperson of Peoples College Press, Chicago

**Tim Hector** — Chairman of the Antigua Caribbean Liberation Movement; political writer and activist

**Darcus Howe** — Managing editor of *Race Today*; member of the Black Panther Movement in the late 1960's and early 1970's.

**Roberto Marquez** — Puerto Rican American writer and academic; editor of *Revolutionary Latin American poetry*

**Samba Mbuub** — Senegalese writer

**Sam Greenlee** — Afro-American novelist, poet and writer

Moderator: Leila Hassan

7.00 Admission £1.00

St Matthews Meeting Place Theatre, Brixton Hill, SW9.

## Saturday 23rd

### INTERNATIONAL FOOD FAIR

Organiser: Patricia Dick

1.00 — 4.00pm Small Hall,  
Camden Centre

## Sunday 24th

### AFRICAN RHYTHMS WITH RANDY WESTON

one of the great living pianists and composers  
'His music is beyond all category — not jazz, third stream, nor European classic — it is totally unique, serious, dramatic, infectious, delightful.' Duke Ellington

Randy Weston will be appearing with

**Talib Kibwe** — outstanding Afro-American saxophonist and flautist and **Mamadi Kamara** — drummer and percussionist from Sierra Leone  
Special guest appearance of **Mario Rui Silva** — guitarist and composer from Angola. His original interpretation and talented playing of the guitar springs from his deep knowledge of the music of Angola and other areas of Africa. He will be accompanied by **Charles Ewanje**, a guitarist from the Cameroun

7.30pm Admission £4.00  
Arts Theatre, WC2

### Publishers participating in the Book Fair will include:

A D Records (African Dawn)	Damara	Minority Arts Advisory Service	Ravan Press
Afrografika	Dangaroo Press	Mosquito	Readers International
Agence IM'media	Editions Caribeennes	Monde Noir Poche	Review of African Political Economy
Anti-Slavery Society	Editions Ouskokata	New Era	Sangam Books
Akira Press	Faber & Faber	Newsletter of International	Savacou Publications
Afrikan Cultural Centre (Azania)	Federation of Workers	Labour Studies	Scottish and Northern Book
A.P. Promotions	and Community Publishers	New Beacon Books	Distribution
Allison and Busby	GLC Women's Committee	Namibia Support Committee	Sheba
Afropress	Support Group	NOK	Silex Editions
African Dawn	Heinemann	National Committee on Racism	Susan Craig
Arawidi	Hansib	in Childrens Books	Synthesis Publications
Association Guadeloupeene	Lawrence Hill & Co.	Nigerian Institute of Social and	Third World Book Review
d'Information et de Recherche	Index on Censorship	Economic Research	Third World Publications
Arman Colin	Inky Fingers	Northern Nigeria Publishing	Tribune Africaine
Britain-Cuba Resource Centre	International Defence and Aid	Company	Turnaround
Bookmarks & Socialist Workers	Fund	Oilfields Workers Trade Union	UBS Publishing
Party	Jawahar	Oriental Publishing	University Press of Mississippi
Bala Muhammed Memorial	Karia Press	Oxford University Press	Vanguard
Committee	Leishman & Taussig	Pluto	Verso
Black Classic Press	Larkin	Pathfinder	Virago
Black Scholar	Latin American Bureau	Peoples College Press	War on Want
Black Ink	Liberation and Young World	Peoples Music Records	Westminster Press
Bogle L'Ouverture Publications	Longman	Positive Review	Women's Press
Central Books	Methuen	Presence Africaine	Zed Books
Chatto Cape and Bodley Head	Minority Rights Group	Progressive and Socialist Books	
Cora Records		Depot	
Commonplace		Race Today Publications	
Committee for the Release of		Radical Bookseller	
Political Prisoners in Kenya			
Central Books			

#### Tickets available in advance:

For tickets and further information contact:

New Beacon Books, 76 Stroud Green Road, London N4.  
Tel: 01-272 4889.

Race Today Publications, 165 Railton Road, London SE24.  
Tel: 01-737 2268.

Bogle-L'Ouverture Publications, 5a Chignell Place, London W13.  
Tel: 01-579 4920.

#### ADDRESSES & DIRECTIONS TO VENUES

**St Matthews Meeting Place Theatre**, Brixton Hill, SW2. (Brixton-Victoria line)

**The Ritzy Cinema**, Brixton Oval, SW2. (opposite Lambeth Town Hall) (Brixton-Victoria line)

**Tottenham Town Hall**, Town Hall Approach Road, N15. (Seven Sisters — Victoria line)

**Camden Centre**, Bidborough Street, NW1. (Kings Cross — Victoria; Piccadilly; Circle & Metropolitan; Northern lines)

**Shaw Theatre Meeting Place**, Shaw Theatre, Euston Road, NW1. (Kings Cross)

Arts Theatre, Great Newport Street, WC2. (Leicester Square — Piccadilly & Northern Lines)

B O O K S

# Between the lines

**'Politics is about how people organise their lives. Your life has to be surrounded by music and literature'. As the radical Black Bookfair opens in London VAL WILMER talks to its director.**

**T**wenty years have passed since Malcolm X was gunned down in Harlem's Audubon Ballroom. Despite his enormous effect on Afro-American thinking, the great revolutionary's significance is only just becoming recognised outside the liberation movements. The gap that separates what is influential in black and Third World society from mainstream ideas continues to loom large. Yet even with such obstacles as the refusal of major publications to permit more than a token 'other' voice, the black publishing business is booming. Its growth may not be synonymous with economic success, but increasingly, alternative versions are available.

The continuing presence of the annual International Book Fair of Radical Black and Third World Books—this year's is the fourth—is inspirational in itself. Each year the number of small presses participating increases, ensuring that voices other than the white-vetted ones are heard.

The Book Fair has, in a sense, a mandate to succeed. According to Director John La Rose of New Beacon Books, people all over the world gear themselves towards it as an annual event and ideas forum. Some smaller presses have won the bulk of their overseas orders through exposure there. 'So it has to be there every year and the only way you can guarantee that is to do it yourself.'

The Black Book Fair does not seek outside funding. 'From the Caribbean I

knew that economic dependency meant you'd always be tied to whoever was putting up the money,' says Trinidadian poet La Rose. 'So it's all unpaid. Hundreds of people are helping in various ways. They do this because of their conviction that this is something they want to do for themselves.'

This means that participants in the various forums must find their own way here. In exchange, accommodation is provided in 'modest homes in the black community'. Their hosts, and others, help meet their expenses. Then, where possible, other, paying, events are arranged. For example, Gylan Kain, founder of the original Last Poets, will gig elsewhere, and Puerto Rican writer and academic, Roberto Marquez will speak to the Institute of Latin-American Studies.

The Fair and Festival are constantly expanding; this year separate weekends are being held in Manchester and Bradford. The main forum in London will focus on 'New Technology, the Working Day and Cultural Creativity'. But there are events designed for all ages. 'The schools,' says La Rose, 'are particularly important.'

All the arts are represented. Legendary American pianist Randy Weston plays his African Rhythms, and there will be a showing of 'Rue Cases Nègres', Euzan Palcy's moving film version of Joseph Zobel's novel about life in the Martinique canefields of the 1930s. The diversity of events reflects La Rose's own view of activism. 'Politics is about how people organise their lives, their human lives, within certain structures. Your life has to be surrounded by music and literature. Politics may take up more of your life than anything else, but it's essentially a human activity.'

Other forums include 'India: the Crisis

to Come' and a discussion on black and Third World media featuring journalist and film-maker Imruh Caesar and 'Black Londoners' Alex Pascall. For the Women's Forum, psychologist Kum Kum Bhavani is joined by a woman from the Yorkshire Miners' Support Group and Flo O'Connor, co-ordinator of the Jamaican Council of Human Rights.

The International Poetry Evening features Jean 'Binta' Breeze, Jamaica's first woman Dub poet, Jayne Cortez, who has worked with Ornette Coleman and trumpeter Clifford Thornton, and others—including the wry, rhythmic Trinidadian Abdul Malik Decouteau and elegant but powerful Jamaican Lorna Goodison, both of whom ignited the recent Creation for Liberation Festival.

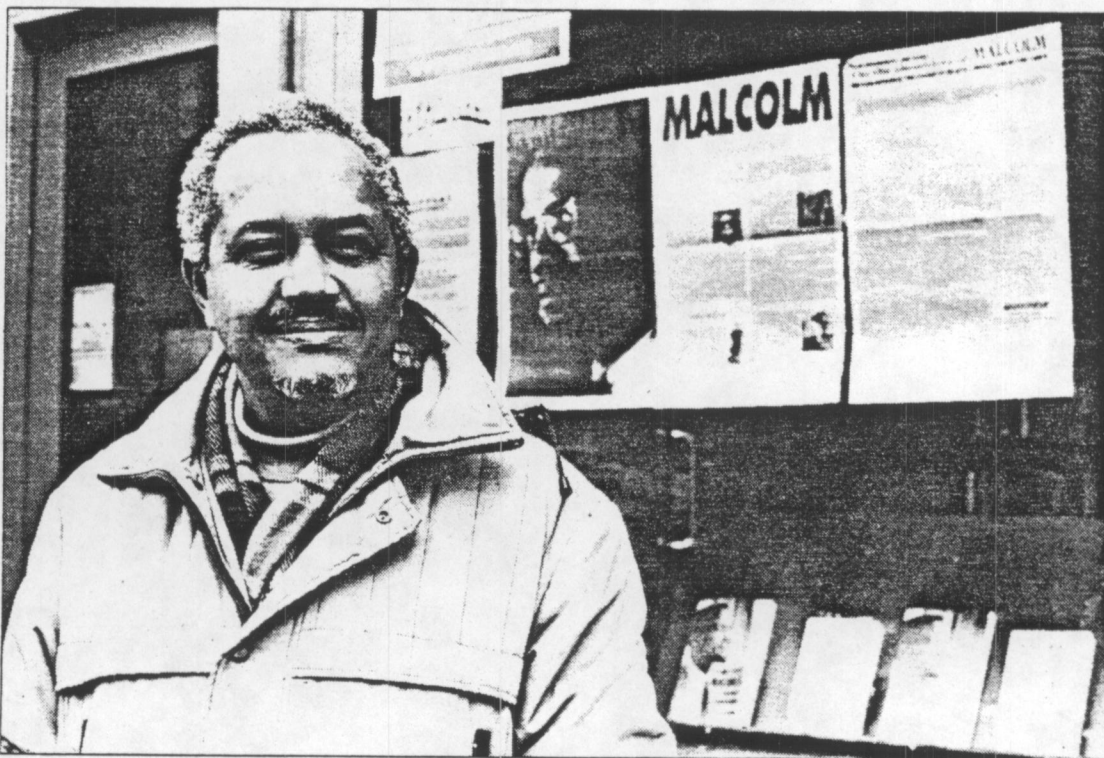
Appropriately, the final forum is dedicated to 'Malcolm X and Social Liberation'. Participants include Afro-American Sam Greenlee, author of the classic urban guerilla novel, 'The Spook Who Sat By the Door'.

'Malcolm articulated the feelings and aspirations of ordinary black people in a way nobody else had done since Frederick Douglass,' La Rose concluded. 'He, more than anyone else, removed, layer by layer, all aspects of racism in the United States in a way that other people without his experience could not have done.'

'Malcolm saw it from the depths of the underground. He had been a good young student whose aspirations had been foiled by racist teachers. He then became a gangster. Later he reformed himself, educated himself, and became the powerful tribune.'

*The International Book Fair of Radical Black and Third World Books opens on Sunday. See Books: Diary for details.*

VAL WILMER/FORMAT



● New Beacon's La Rose: 'Malcolm articulated the feelings and aspirations of ordinary black people'

Friday, March 22, 1985

POETRY

## Rooted in reality

Victoria Brittain on a powerful Caribbean poet gripped by her muse

"I'M a poet, but I didn't choose poetry — it chose me. . . it's a dominating, intrusive tyrant. It's something I *have* to do — a wicked force."

That force captured Lorna Goodison's first British audience last month and brought a much bigger one this week in London's annual International Black Fair. Next week she reads again with two other women poets from the Caribbean — Grace Nichols and Merle Collins — in a series of evenings where writers describe how they came to be writers.\*



Lorna Goodison — poetry chose me

The three are among the women poets who have taken by storm the previously all-male Caribbean poetry scene dominated by the great figures of Martin Carter, Eddie Braithwaite, and Linton Kwesi Johnson.

Lorna Goodison writes and teaches in Jamaica where economic crisis, migration, and political violence are the stuff of every day. "It is a time of a great flowering of poetry, especially among women.

You cannot write novels, perhaps, with reality as it is in countries like mine."

Lorna Goodison went to art school in Jamaica and New York determined to be a painter. She still paints and draws in bouts, but poetry, has claimed her life.

Her poems of everyday life and women and love in Jamaica strike a chord with the vogue for black women writers in America. And Alice Walker and Paule Marshall

are among her inspirations. But some Western radical feminist writing trends puzzle her.

"The right-to-work movement had us rolling on the floor at home with laughter — Caribbean women would like the right sometimes *not* to work. Jamaica's matriarchal society and irregular family patterns give us a different set of problems from the rigid nuclear family ones — on the contrary, we'd like some of these guys to get responsible. You can get tired of the strong black woman image."

But such women are nonetheless her inspiration. Her first success in London was reading a poem about a police raid on Winnie Mandela's home in which the police "arrested the bedspread." The audience in Brixton rose cheering to their feet. That poem and another, set in an airport in South Africa, are in the collection to be published shortly by New Beacon Books. Her first collection, *Tamarind Season*, was published by the Institute of Jamaica.

Coming back to London this year after ten years away she is stunned by an unexpected change. "This town, or at least Brixton where I stay, has an energy and creative vitality that wasn't here before

\*The series *Off the Page* is at Central Library, Fieldway Crescent, London N.5. Lorna will talk at 7.30, Thursday, March 28.

Speech by John La Rose, Director

International Book Fair of Radical Black and Third World Books  
at the opening of the Fourth International Book Fair of Radical Black  
and Third World Books  
at the Camden Centre, London, on Thursday March 21st, 1985

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On behalf of the Organising Committee I wish to welcome you all to the opening of the Fourth International Book Fair of Radical Black and Third World Books. The Book Fair Festival Week began on Sunday March 17th with a forum, for the first time in the afternoon. The forum was 'India: the crisis to come'. It was followed later that day with the usual film evening, which included the films 'Rue Cases Negres' and the Channel 4 TV film 'Caribbean in Crisis'.

This Book Fair has been opened in the past by C.L.R. James, who opened the first Book Fair in 1982; Kole Omotoso, who opened the second; and, last year 1984, by Edward Kamau Brathwaite, who together with myself and Andrew Salkey established the Caribbean Artists Movement, which we see as a continuity for this Book Fair.

Today I want to welcome Wole Soyinka, who will open this, the Fourth Book Fair.

Wole Soyinka was born in Nigeria in 1934 and there were recent public celebrations for his 50th birthday in Nigeria. Wole Soyinka is Nigeria's and one of Africa's leading playwrights. He is a poet, novelist, playwright, literary and social critic. He has written many works which have been widely published and translated. He has also worked in film and his latest film Blues for a Prodigal was seized by Nigeria's National Security Organisation (NSO), the equivalent of the MI5 in Britain, while it was having its premiere at the National Theatre in Lagos a few days ago on the 4th March 1985. I consider his book The Man Died one of the moving documents of our time.

I present you Wole Soyinka.

Speech by Wole Soyinka

to open the Fourth International Book Fair of Radical Black and  
Third World Books on Thursday March 21st 1985 at the Camden  
Centre, London, England.

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I am two years late for this engagement, but it hardly matters: the news is still the same - nought for our comfort. We live in the era of Nkomati, and no matter what minor variations we receive from time to time in the medical bulletin, Nkomati remains alive and well. Perhaps in future years the black children of Southern Africa will justify any psycho-social disorder by claiming that they were born under the Nkomati star. The Nkomati syndrome will take its place in the medical dictionary to explain certain forms of aberrant conduct in African leadership. After all, a veteran member of the medical profession, Professor Lambo, who is also the Deputy Director of the World Health Organisation did propose, a year or two ago, that African leaders should be subjected to psychiatric examination at least once every five years, something like that anyway. An experienced doctor in such a position, who interacts regularly with the power-wielders of the world, must have observed something, something we, as laymen, do not know.

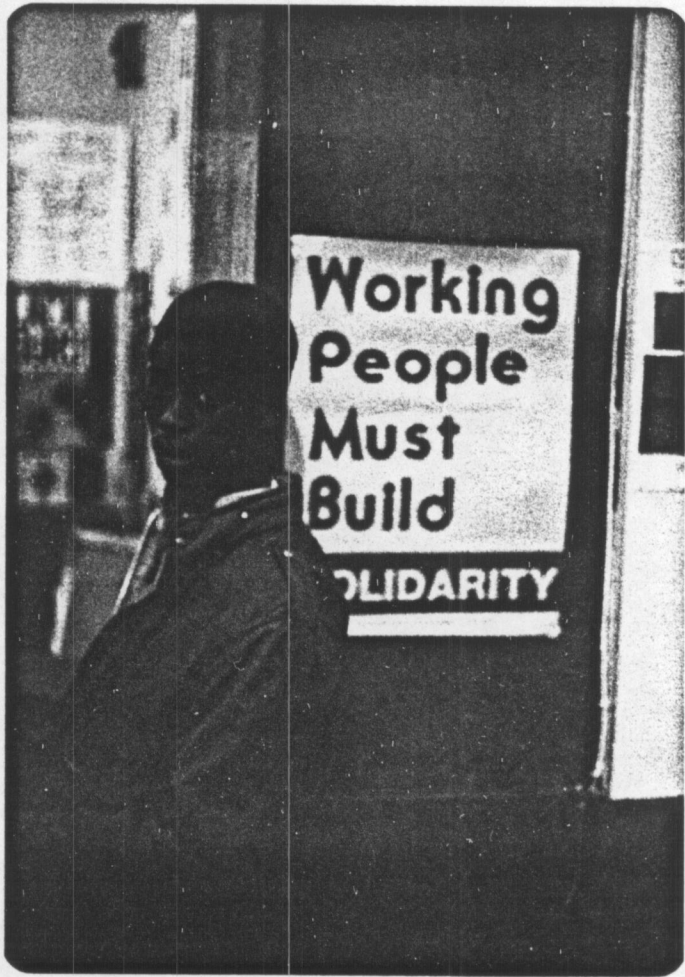
What we do know, however, and experience in our socio-political milieu, is the failure of political will throughout the continent. No one can disagree with President Nyerere's insistence that the failure which Nkomati represents is a failure, not of the signatory states, but of the entire continent. I go even further and insist that this failure will continue as long as African and black leadership continues to exhaust its limited fund of political will on creating internal structures of oppression against their own peoples, thereby isolating them from that communal endeavour which should reinforce them, at moments of crisis, in their undertakings against our common external enemies. To remain blind to this basic fact is to reveal total alienation from the organic forces which give a coherent identity to a people as a people. Such leaders exist only as members of a select, secretive club, gathering from time to time to make deals above the heads of the people whom they claim to represent, and the first item on their agenda relates, directly or indirectly, to schemes of self-perpetuation.

We know whose gun-ship helicopters, whose ubiquitous marines snuffed out the lamp of self-determination in Grenada, but what do we say of the consortium of black leaders who spread out the mat of invitation to Ronald Reagan? Who were these shameless so-called leaders, who sent out the S.O.S., which read: "Re-colonise us, PLEASE!" We know whose agency manufactured the dastardly instrument which terminated the career of Walter Rodney, but whose was the face beneath the reactionary mask, which nodded in the Brigades, signed Rodney's death-warrant and emasculates his workers' movement?

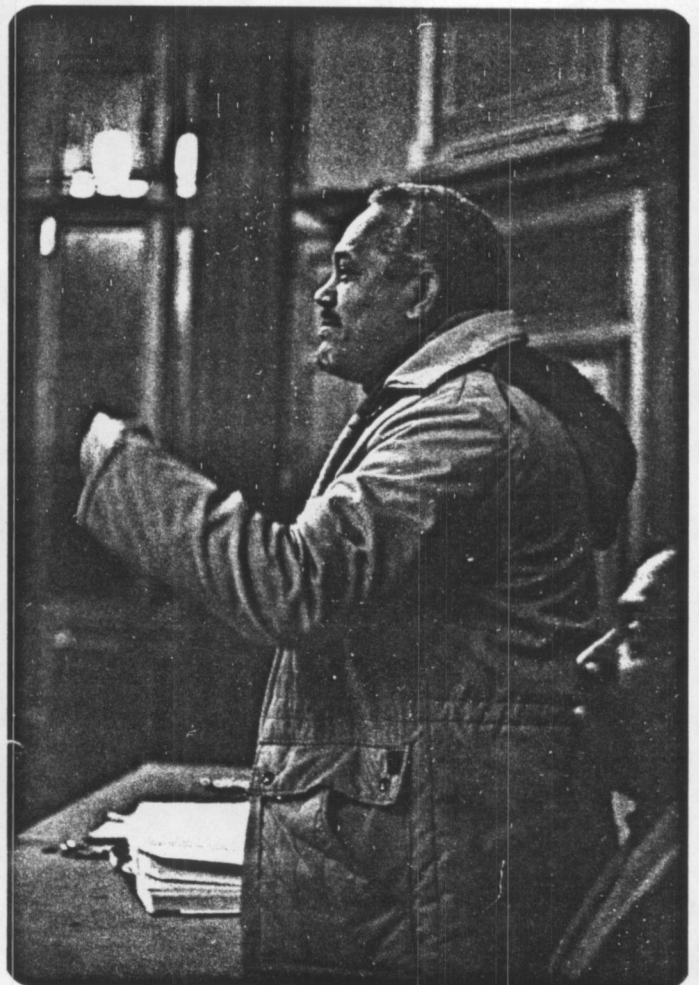
As for the mother continent, it is pockmarked with vicious replications of apartheid structures, with the full machinery of arbitrary arrests and imprisonments, torture, 'disappearances', displacement and dispossession, ingenious forms of dehumanisation which appear at times to strive to outdo one another across national boundaries. Is it any wonder that, gleefully observing these <sup>agencies</sup> ~~agencies~~ of black existence, the Ronald Reagans of the Western World continue to tip the wink at Pik Botha, who thereupon is emboldened to carry on business as usual?

Our literature must not fail to reflect the treachery of such alienates, even as our people struggle on the actual terrain to eject them, enduring hideous mutilations, dying heroic but unnecessary deaths, experiencing the despair of seeing their victory over one fascist imposition hijacked by yet another fascist opportunist, only - ten times worse. The crumbs of solace, which come our way, need also to be elevated to legendary status to counter these agents of our pessimism - and thus, even as we mourn Nkomati, we must celebrate Mandela. If we don't, the opportunist leeches, those discredited leaders, will claim him for their own. They will rhetoricise with his name, they will mouth his courage, name the odd street or two after him, then promptly forget the meaning, the challenge of his superhuman gesture.

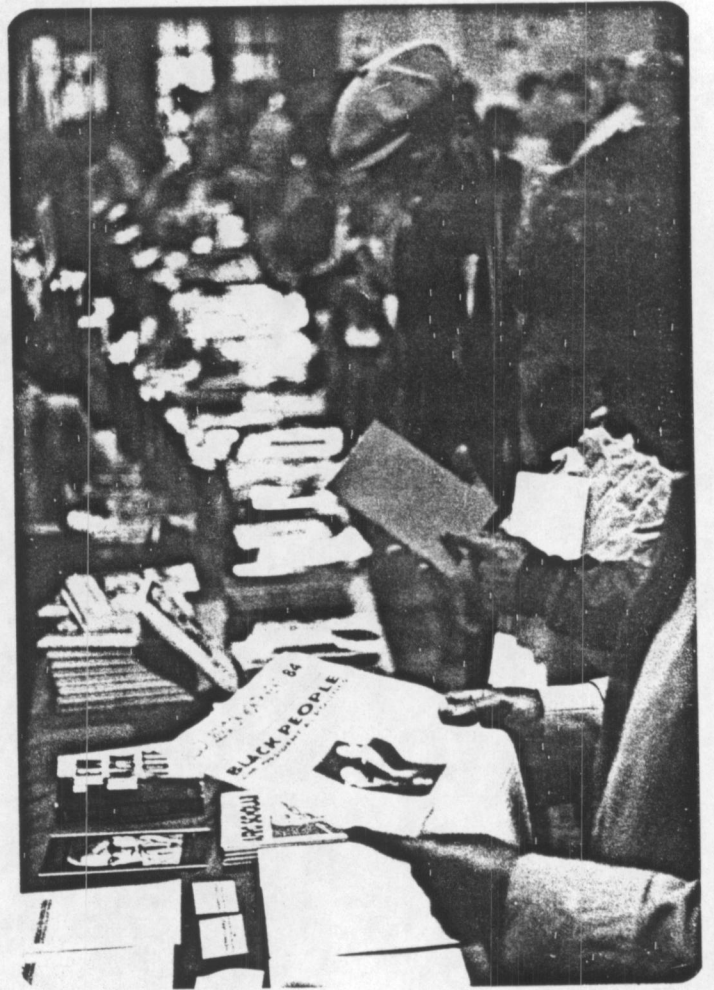
And it is <sup>a</sup> frightening - no, not gesture - but act. It is a replete, combative act on its own, the summation of that same revolutionary will that began over two decades ago when a group of committed nationalists decided that the word no longer sufficed, and took to other weapons. In these dark days of Nkomati, let us at least be thankful and humbled by Nelson Mandela's giant fist thrust out beyond Robben Island to smash a loud resounding "NO" in the teeth of Apartheid. Together with other heroes like Steve Biko, Walter Rodney, Maurice Bishop and Malcolm X, around whom the Festival has been organised, they remind us, confined or at liberty, living or dead, that the imperatives of struggle reach out beyond prison fortresses and beyond the grave. The philosophy of this Book Fair is consecrated to perpetuating the voices of such exemplars for eternity, and in this spirit, I have the honour, the privilege, to declare open this Fourth Radical, Black and Third World Testament to our common struggle.











**MALCOLM and BLACK LIBERATION in the 1980s**

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Presented to The Fourth Annual International Book  
Fair of Radical Black and Third World Books, London  
England, March 22, 1985, by Abdul Alkalimat.

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COMRADES, BROTHERS AND SISTERS, FRIENDS AND ENEMIES:

I bring you greetings from the American people who are fighting in opposition to the administration of Ronald Reagan and all of the "has-been Marbough cowboys" he has rounded up. I greet you especially on behalf of activists of the Black liberation movement and militants of working class struggle.

It is an honor to be invited to speak at this forum, to share the platform with veterans of the struggle from front lines throughout the world, and it is a special pleasure to honor our fallen comrade and discuss the contributions of Malcolm X.

When I spoke here in 1983 we addressed the question of BARBARISM. This is a good word, a word that describes to us the dangers we face and at the same time is a warning of our future unless we resist, struggle, and rebel. Tonight we discuss Malcolm, he was a warrior bred as a curse on the barbarism of white racism USA. Malcolm had a hot voice. He burned up clouds of confusion, fear, and custom. With his rhetoric and coldly penetrating common sense logic he helped to create clarity, courage, and rebellion. Yes it is a pleasure to reflect with you on our beloved hero, our supreme warrior, diplomat, minister, our apostle of manhood, dignity, and freedom.

Malcolm set the standard for the recognition of Black heroes. He said:

...when you select heroes about which Black people ought to be taught, let them be Black heroes who have died fighting for the benefit of Black people.

Malcolm said that on January 24, 1965, and then met his own criteria when he was assassinated February 21 one month later. INDEED, martyrdom is the supreme price a hero of the peoples struggle can pay for freedom, and as Malcolm suggests we must keep that standard in mind. Often, the imperialists try to get us to accept as our heroes those who they feel comfortable with, but no friend of our enemy can be one of our heroes.

My brief comments will address three questions:

1. Who was Malcolm? This is a generational question, for those of us over 40 might remember Malcolm, and those over 30 might remember when Malcolm was more popular, but all younger people will know about Malcolm only by exposure through the schools, the mass media, or the movement. So for most of us, even the old timers, we need to ask and answer the question, who was the historical Malcolm?

2. What are the key lessons to be learned from Malcolms life?
3. How can we apply these lessons to the world in 1985, some 20 years after Malcolm?

### WHO WAS MALCOLM?

The historical Malcolm, meaning his concrete biography, is at once simple and complex. It is simple as he went through four distinct stages of development, but it is complex as to the ideological and political character of the continuity and disjuncture between each stage.

He was born May 1925 Malcolm Little in Omaha Nebraska, a small midwestern town with few Black people, as his parents 7th child. His father was a big Black outspoken leader, combining the cultural legitimacy of being a Baptist preacher and the political program of the UNIA and Marcus Garvey. His mother was a nearly white looking Black woman from Grenada, the land of our great fallen leader Maurice Bishop. Further, Malcolm Little was an aggressive ambitious young man who, while getting into some trouble and being sent to a detention home, worked hard in school and got approval from his peers by being elected president of his 7th grade class.

But every strength was brutally smashed by the vicious white racism that became the dominant negative force against which his life forces were thrust. At the age of 6 his father was brutally lynched by a Ku Klux Klan type outfit in Michigan after being run out of Nebraska. At the age of 12 the welfare system had so disturbed his mother that they forced her into a mental hospital for over 20 years, and they separated Malcolm from his brothers and sisters. At the age of 15 when he expressed a desire to be a lawyer to a white teacher he was told to forget that and get ready for a life of working with his hands because after all, he was a NIGGER. Malcolm Little was like so many young Black men, reaching out for strength from family and school only to have the society destroy the family and be rejected by the school. He was refused access to America, and the Black alternative promised by his father was snatched away. He was forced into the streets, he was driven away from legitimacy.

Malcolm left the midwest and went to live with his sister in Boston. He hit the streets and became Detroit Red. Light skinned Blacks are frequently called Red, and since there were several in New York's Harlem, he was called Detroit Red to make it clear. Detroit Red was a hustler, he sold drugs, stole whatever he could use or sell, and basically lived life for a feeling. If it felt good to you, it was assumed by Detroit Red to be good for you, and the feeling justified the risk of being an outlaw. He took all the drugs, dressed in the latest clothes, knew all the dances

and most of the musicians, and was commercially involved with prostitution and any thing else yielding fast big money.

But Detroit Red was "busted" and put into prison, where he was so anti-social that even his fellow prisoners began to call him SATAN. And having reached this symbolic bottom of hell, he began to see an alternative. He became aware of a prison intellectual named Bimbi who won the respect of the other prisoners by his intellectual strength and the clarity of his verbal articulation. He also became aware of the teaching of Elijah Muhammad in the Nation of Islam from his family, and this motivated him to want communication with the outside world other than the streets. Both of these men represented paternal authority figures, who grabbed Detroit Red and made him realize his ignorance and limitations, and then helped him to develop the necessary commitment to transform his being, his behavior and consciousness.

Elijah Muhammad gave Malcolm his Black identity and his strategic orientation to wage unlimited war against racist oppression, while Bimbi gave Malcolm the thirst for book knowledge and verbal skill so that he might do intellectual combat with the enemy and be an effective missionary among his own people. His new training ground was in the prison environment, and his main interests were the library and the debating society. The Black outsider was getting inside his own thing.

Out of prison after 5 years, Malcolm moved vigorously into the Nation of Islam, and since his sister and several of his brothers were in the Nation it became his born again family. Having combined the wise perception and commanding persuasion of a street hustler with the identity, purpose and goals of Black nationalism, Malcolm became Malcolm X. He organized the most important Black nationalist mass movement since Marcus Garvey. He entered an organization with less than 10 local organizations and build it into a national force located in over one hundred strong. He started their newspaper (Muhammad Speaks) which reached far beyond the organization. Its editor was usually a Black marxist, so the coverage in international and national politics was very progressive. In these pages we read about the Vietnam war through the eyes of Ho Chi Minh rather than the US military. They laid the basis for the "Hell No I wont Go" campaign among Black youth because they established the theme for Blacks that "No Vietnamese ever called me a Nigger."

Malcolm X was the national organizer for Elijah Muhammad, and the person who was able to charm those who often feared him. On the debating floor he was a young Muhammad Ali, you could never hit him square in the face, and he could hit you at will with a

great deal of style, flash, but in his case humility not bravado. Malcolm went into the colleges, before the press, in public debate with civil right leadership, on tv late night talk shows with a diverse array of white intellectuals, and in small group settings with individuals and group representatives from many aspects of the Black liberation movement. Black nationalism became what he articulated, although he would always pay deference to his teacher and leader Elijah Muhammad.

There are two reasons that Malcolm found himself in unreconcilable conflict with Elijah:

1. Malcolm was deeply involved in the day to day experiences of Black people and was speaking to the needs of a movement of struggle, while the Nation of Islam was a separatist organization with little interest in mass action. This was a problem since as a public figure Malcolm was drawn into the immediate demands of the people, now.

2. Malcolm used the moral rules of Elijah to pull himself out of his gangster degenerate identity while Detroit Red in prison, and he continued to give nearly militaristic importance to maintaining the discipline. When he found out that the teacher was not living up to what was being taught, his disillusionment drove Malcolm to seek higher truths. Malcolm X was a man who had honestly listened to his peoples voices and vigorously represented them in the political capitals of the world, who had sought to live a righteous and lawful life according to the dogma of Islam while being open to the broadest possible political unity in the interest of Black liberation. It was inevitable that he would move beyond the Nation of Islam, for his role was to lead the movement as a whole, and emerge as a leader on the world scene.

Malcolm gained a new perspective on the USA, from outside of the USA. He was taught important lessons in Mecca, in Africa, and in Europe. In Mecca, where Malcolm X became El Hajj Malik El Shabaaz, he learned that skin color had to be interpreted in terms of social context, and that there could be no blanket racial interpretation of history. As he said, he found out that in the USA, white meant BOSS. In Africa, after being accepted by the OAU along with all legitimate representatives of liberation organizations and given diplomatic status in most African capitals, he fully grasped that our struggle was an international struggle. As he put it, you can't understand Mississippi unless you understand the Congo, and you can't understand the Congo unless you understand Mississippi. In Europe, Malcolm learned that he was an international enemy of the imperialist system, especially when the French government refused to admit him to give a public speech. He had been able to set up a short lived



but vital chapter of his new organization the Organization of Afro-American Unity.

Malcolm was all the way on the ground with the masses of people, and yet he could soar and see with power equal to the bald eagle. Imagine someone who was born into a family with direct ties to Black people in another country, and an ideology of christian redemption and political salvation, who then mastered the street culture of the fastest Black community in the USA Harlem and extended his action from Boston to Washington DC, who goes on to become a legendary self taught jailhouse intellectual, who masters Black nationalist ideology and translates it into a lively political commentary that transforms the movement from having a civil rights political ideology to one for Black liberation, and who goes on to negotiate a place in international revolutionary gatherings and African capitals for a liberation movement of the Afro-American people. This man was a danger and threat to our enemy and their whole system. The historical Malcolm was a unique combination of skills developed in the Black community that they were able to threaten the entire system.

#### WHAT ARE THE LESSONS OF MALCOLMS LIFE?

In general, much of this material I am covering in this presentation can be found in the 1985 edition of the BLACK LIBERATION MONTH NEWS.

There are two main bases on which to sum up the broad and far reaching contribution made by Malcolm: (1) self emancipation and (2) social liberation. He helped us to better understand the dual nature of our responsibility, to ourselves and to the society, to attack the problem within and without. But it must be clearly understood that Malcolm was not an advocate of self cultivation but rather saw both self and society as objects for collective transformation. It is only as an organized movement for social change that we can transform self and society. This of course stands in sharp contrast to the individualistic orientation of our current "do your own thing" style that has developed in advanced capitalistic society, and spread throughout the world.

Malcolm had a clear notion of self emancipation. For Black people the point of departure is the affirmation of Africa as place of origin, as the well spring of cultural heritage, and the greatest contemporary Black political reality in the world. Black people are forced by racism, and facilitated by heritage to unite on a world wide basis around the central reality of Africa. He stressed intellectual rigor and self reliance. As he said "The most important thing that we can do today is to think for

ourselves."

His greatest message for self emancipation was given especially as Malcolm X. He stressed morality, commitment, and discipline. For Malcolm, what was good, right, and just could be determined by its impact on the liberation struggle. His social ethics were Black liberation oriented. He stressed old Testament ethics, an eye for an eye. His orientation was to be religious, for as he said "Our religion teaches us to be intelligent, be peaceful, be courteous, obey the law, respect everyone, but if someone puts his hand on you, send him to the cemetery. that's a good religion." commitment was his strong suit, because he was almost totally absorbed into his calling. He devoted all of his resources to his efforts, mainly time and money. And discipline was the main organizational principle he advocated for transforming oneself from a life of death to a life of a liberated Black person.

For Malcolm, self emancipation meant having a positive Black identity based on an African heritage, being an independent thinker, making moral judgments a function of the liberation struggle, being totally committed based on how one allocates ones time and money, and holding fast to rigorous discipline.

There is also the issue of social liberation, the purpose of self emancipation. Malcolm dealt with this on two levels. His first overall perspective was that the struggle was world wide. He argued that in the USA that the struggle could no longer be considered as for civil rights, but had to be considered one for human rights. Malcolm pointed to world politics and the overall international situation as the proper framework in which to understand the problem of Black people in the USA. He put it this way:

We are living in an era of revolution, and the revolt of the American Negro is part of the rebellion against the oppression and colonialism which has characterized this era . . . .

It is incorrect to classify the revolt of the Negro as simply a racial conflict of black against white, or as a purely American problem. Rather, we are today seeing a global rebellion of the oppressed against the oppressor, the exploited against the exploiter.

The Negro revolution is not a racial revolt. We are interested in practicing brotherhood with anyone really interested in living according to it. But the white man has long preached an empty doctrine of brotherhood which means little more than a passive acceptance of

his fate by the Negro . . . .

[The Western industrial nations have been] deliberately subjugating the Negro for economic reasons. These international criminals raped the African continent to feed their factories, and are themselves responsible for the low standards of living prevalent throughout Africa.

His main tactical consideration was self defense, because racist violence haunted Blacks, especially those who spoke out. Malcolm must have had continual flash backs to his fathers lynching as he struggled against the tactic of nonviolence. He carried on. Perhaps his greatest slogan for clarification is his theme "The Ballot or the Bullet." Malcolm did not believe that the use of electoral politics could bring Black liberation. He argued for a revolutionary posture and frame of mind. But he had a keen sense of the nature of bourgeois democracy and its facade of liberal reforms. So he combined the point that everything that can be gained should be gained, but also that the limitations of the system meant that there was little alternative to violent revolution.

He said the worlds revolutions were about land and bloodshed, meaning that they were about the control of the productive forces with which the working classes produce all wealth, a working class revolution reflect workers resolving an irreconcilable conflict by seizing power probably through armed struggle. But, the bullet should mainly now be thought of as a tool for self defense. He specifically addressed the Black sector of the working class.

#### COMRADES AND FRIENDS:

Malcolm made valuable contributions to the struggle, but he did not solve all of our problems. The critical issues however, especially at this point in our struggle when there is great disorientation and disillusionment, is that we must take a figure like Malcolm and clarify the basic political lines that once united us and that can be the initial basis for a Black reunification movement. This applies in the USA as well as throughout the world. We should use Malcolm as a political tool to unite the militants and masses in our struggle.

So for our final point:

#### OF WHAT USE ARE MALCOLM'S LESSONS TODAY IN 1985?

There are four critical issues that seem relevant to raise at this forum in order to have some general answer to this question:

Malcolm and Black Liberation in the 1980s

1. Black youth and street gangs
2. Religion and politics
3. Electoral politics
4. Internationalism

Malcolm provides a road map into and out of the degeneracy of a criminal life style. His life provides an alternative, because Malcolm was there, he lived the life himself. Black youth have been pointed toward middle class role models who at best represent the kind of contradiction that drove them, into crime, getting it one way or the other. But Malcolm was thrown into the gutter and got up and cleaned himself off -- he is an example the masses of Black youth can identify with. It is difficult to get the Black middle class to uphold Malcolm because they are too damn loyal to the system that enables them to be middle class. Malcolm requires that one swear a death curse against the entire system and everything that it perpetuates and upholds.

The one positive thing about most criminals is that they lack respect and fear of the system. Malcolm liked this, even though he fully understood the limitation of a life of crime. Of course, this is really about the world view of the street brother versus the Black bourgeois, field slaves and house slaves. Perhaps the main thing its about is the slave system, the system of wage slavery and how it divides Black people, subordinates them, and keeps them in conflict with each other.

If anything Malcolm would have said that the problem of Black on Black crime is always secondary to white on Black crime, because when a Black acts he or she is merely acting out the designs of a system that they have little control over so it is impossible for them, to be conscious of why they are poor and suffering, unless they have the commitment and discipline to wage a long struggle to become conscious, and keep on struggling. Crime is easy, and if its against Black people it is even easier.

Malcolm can help us fight this, but the Black middle class has to be threatened more than it currently is to turn to Malcolm, and they will be so threatened and they will be looking around for some help. We have to make it clear to them that Malcolm is one answer, he does provide a road map for the masses of Black youth. And I'm not sure what its like in London, but in Chicago, New York, and other places we have a problem and unfortunately many reformist Black leaders are blaming Black youth rather than the system.

Another critical issues is the relationship of religion to

politics. During the civil rights movement Black activists, especially clergy, and white liberal Christians and Jews grabbed the moral high ground and placed moral claims on the USA to uphold their beliefs and join the fight against sin and segregation. This power of moral authority has been coopted by the right wing, the moral majority, and their gun totin' bible slingin' preacher president. The right wing has taken its religious zeal to such an extent that we are debating issues as if the USA was becoming a theocracy, shades of Khomeni.

Malcolm can be, actually is, the basis for a new progressive political utilization of religion and the church. He is our link to Black liberation theology more than Martin Luther King, but through both of these men we have a link to the kind of relevant religious activism of the Liberation theologians in the popular church of Latin America.

James Cone, a prominent Black Christian theologian, who is currently calling for a Black Marxist Christian dialogue, puts it this way:

The life and thought of Martin Luther King, Jr., and Malcolm X are the best examples in the black community of the creative role that religion can play in the transformation of society. They combined their religious vision with their political commitment, but they refused to allow either their politics or their faith to separate them from other persons struggling for justice even though those persons held different views. Both men always remained open to be taught by the experiences of others in their struggle for justice. Although Martin King was a Christian preacher of the black Baptist tradition and Malcolm X was a minister in the religion of Islam, the distinguishing mark of their thought and practice was their commitment to justice for the poor and their willingness to die for it. Though they held sharply different views regarding religion and politics, they were one in their rejection of religious and political dogmatism. Both realized that an inflexible attitude was detrimental to the creation of coalitions among the poor and their supporters--coalitions that are indispensable for the establishment of a just society.

Malcolm was very clear on his views, especially since he was a Muslim in a Christian context. He was keen on being quite clear. His first and most important point was that religious differences should not be allowed to become divisive factors since the necessity of unifying the forces for liberation is so great. He said that we should put our religious differences in

the "closet." This was the insight of Malcolm after Mecca, Malik Shabaaz.

In this context he was clear on the difference between ideology and politics. Malcolm saw that it is political unity that is the critical juncture for effective social action for a community or nation of people. Political unity can exist with ideological disunity or diversity. This is the magical quality of the political unity in a country like Nicaragua. Here there are Marxist Leninists in unity with Christians. Make no mistake, each is quite clear on their ideological differences, believers versus atheists, but in the politics of national sovereignty and independence, for the health and well being of the masses of Nicaraguan people, they unite as one, as Sandinistas. Malcolm would have held them up as a manifestation of his view. This does not hold true for Louis Farakhan, who is more of a reflection of Malcolm X than Malik Shabaaz, and even then the comparison is weak.

A third issue is that of electoral politics. Malcolm would have been very critical of the recent history of electoral struggles. The first major thing would have been that most of the elections have consisted of Black people continuing to build the Democratic party without having a more independent basis of organization. Secondly, the most prominent political leadership is not providing an effective orientation. When Jesse Jackson spoke at the Democratic convention he made the error of separating his head from his heart, and claiming that even if he made mistakes, his heart was in the right place. This was considerably less than what Malcolm would have wanted. Indeed, the issue is more what are the limitations of the Democratic party and why is a new political movement, a party of a new type needed to give the necessary leadership.

Malcolm would have approved of the massive voter registration campaigns, but only if done to create a new independent force. The fact is that white people were pretty evenly split between the Republicans and the Democrats so that the Black vote was the critical factor, but now the democratic party is white at the top and Black at the bottom, with Blacks giving them their most consistent, loyal support. This is in fact causing them to take Blacks for granted and becoming more conservative in search of the white male.

Malcolm would have been critical of the class character of the Black politician. Black electoral politics are based on working class votes and middle class leadership in the interest of the Black middle class. Their call is still "vote for me and I'll set you free" while Black mass politics calls for massive demonstration and the mobilization of the masses to rise up and

prepare to take over. This is a long multi-generational effort, but we have to be bold enough to see the necessity now.

Black people are under an intense polarization scheme, by which some Black people are maintained as legitimate within the system while most of the others are kept marginal in an underground economy, underemployed, unemployed, disillusioned and disgusted. Malcolm stirred up the rejected ones, the ones at the bottom, but Black politicians today don't, except perhaps as is typically done in the USA, rhetoric barely precedes election day. Most Black politicians actively support the notion that the people they serve can be served by the further development of the capitalist system, either by involving more Black businesses or by having more US investments in Africa or even to the extent of arguing for stricter immigration quotas. This is outrageous identification with what is wrong in the USA and Black politicians must learn to speak out, must learn that capitalism is a moribund system, jerking about in its death bed. A public discussion of socialism in the Black political movement is desperately needed. This can also give leadership to the white progressives because they are as desperate as Blacks are to find a new vision.

This leads us to the last point, the international dialogue. If alive, Malcolm would have been speaking here this week. He would have been a regular guest of the OAU, and an observer at many international conferences concerning the major issues of the day. The dialogue he was seeking was a world wide one, and it is this very dialogue that we so desperately need now ourselves. Each national context in the advanced capitalist world shares similarities and yet has many differences. It is useful to have people meeting to share views. It is also important that Black people from the developing world in Africa, the Caribbean, Central and South America gather to share cultural and political developments. We are building personal and political ties that can begin to bind us back together.

Malik Shabaaz had a vision. He understood that revolution was necessary, and it was possible. Further, he dedicated himself to that task and for that he will live forever in the hearts and minds of his people, and freedom loving people all over the worlds and universe. Yes, when thinking of self emancipation and social liberation think of Malcolm, then think of what ought to be done, and then please , for the sake of us all, DO IT!

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