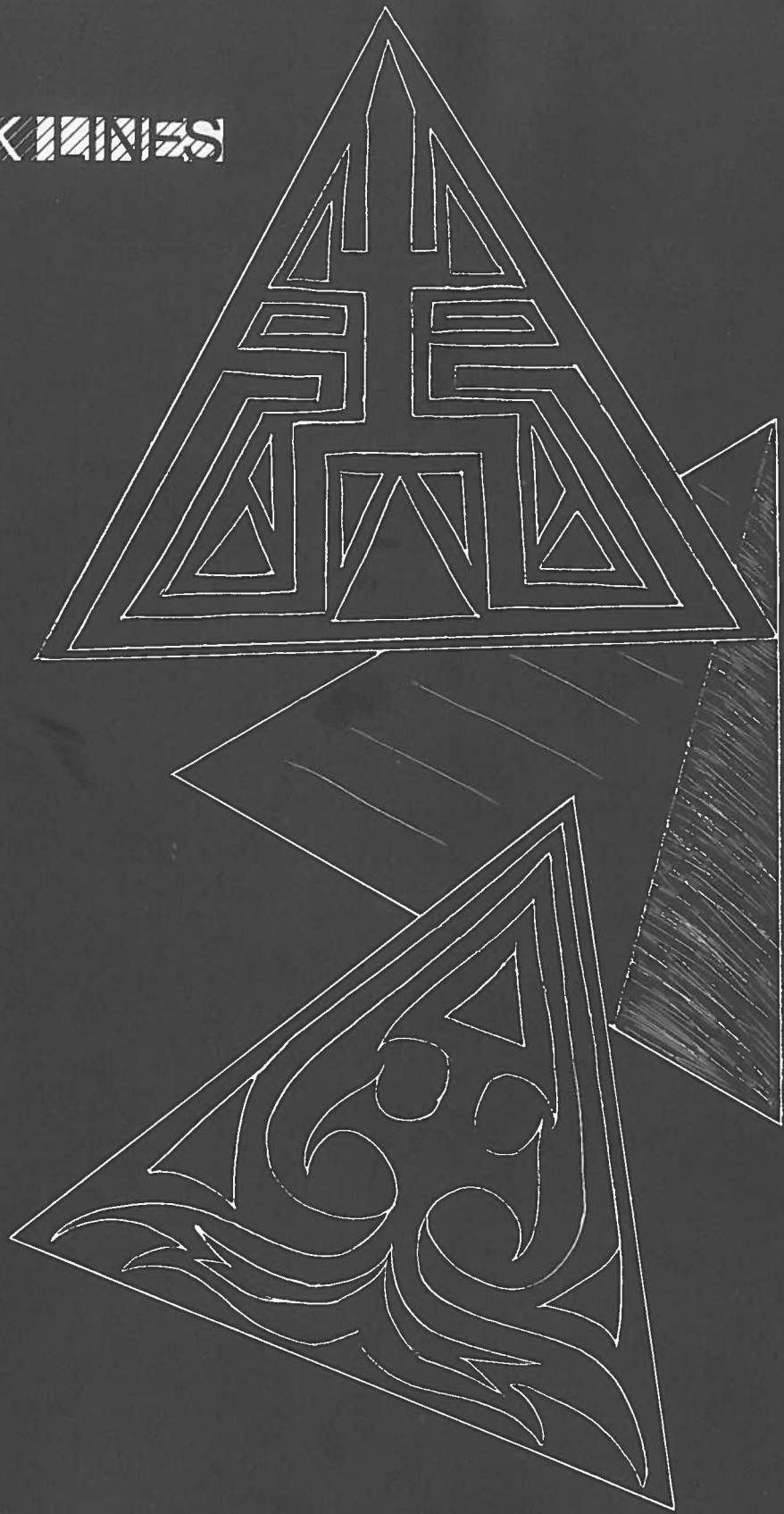


BLACK LINES



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The rising forces of facism have forced Black people to make a new analysis, and to reevaluate the programatic direction of struggle. It is clear that the United States is increasingly becoming a police state preparing to use genocide against all revolutionary leadership. Moreover, it is clear that the combined reactionary forces on the campuses have mobilized and are preparing to purge all progressive Faculty and Students. So, we must get down with our analysis and find their achilles heel in order to survive their repression and rise victorious. This means that we must develop a new education.

Only New Community Programs can be free from direct connection to the system of education in this country. And it is this that has the smallest number of brothers and sisters have chosen to do. The question of change then is how to get brothers and sisters to move away from the interests of the society and DEFECT (move away from it) in order to join the struggle for a relevant education and the liberation of Black people.

Our analysis of black education leaves us with several conclusions that will serve as a basis for further analysis and action. One basic conclusion is that most Black people experience educational activities inside public school systems and colleges, although it is also true that cultural and political forces in the community are exposed to people for a longer period of time. A second observation is that both the community street experiences and the new institutions only come about in response to the failure of legitimate institutions. In fact they result from the contradictions inherent in oppressive educational institutions.

This last point is very crucial. For the past ten years (since the sit-ins) contradictions have been raised by mass confrontation. This has for the most part advanced our struggle forward. However, each form of confrontation could only be used for a limited period of time, because the authorities would adjust their control mechanisms and be ready to cut it short, or the people

1970's: what must be done by black students

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would get used to it and it would lose its effectiveness (picketing becomes like pick-nicking). We have passed the stage of seizing and/or burning campus buildings. The federal government has laws now to intervene directly in all arson cases, as well as to hold back funding of students and colleges who violate guidelines from the Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

So we are concerned with working out a methodology for students in white and/or Black colleges, high schools, etc. We are concerned with developing a methodology that will work under the most rigid and oppressive form of fascist militarism so that whatever happens we can continue with the struggle prepared to endure, growing in strength to rise victorious.

The methodology must include two sets of concepts:

1. the unity of *theory* and *practice*
2. the joint concern for community and self

This protects us from the dangers of intellectual irrelevance, and mindless action. From a loss of self as well as self-centeredness. The methodology must be dynamic and capable of constant use over and over

as the situation of the world changes, and as we move from place to place. It must be change oriented, and help us to deal with objective reality in terms of conflicts and changes.

The chart, Four Educational Steps Toward Black Liberation is a methodology tool for Black students. It attempts to isolate four specific steps in sequential order, realizing that step four automatically becomes included in step one, requiring a new analysis. It is a dynamic method in that it is set up to be used over and over again.

STEP ONE: It is necessary to have a total analysis of all educational alternatives being used by Black people. This enables one to have an overview of all that is happening. The only way to accomplish this is to read newspapers, magazines and journals that contain relevant information.

It is also necessary to become acquainted with government publications and statistics. The oppressors information must be used as a tool for our liberation just as much as it is used against us.

And equally as important as this reading material is the vital experiential information

FOUR EDUCATIONAL STEPS TOWARD BLACK LIBERATION

WHO

BLACK COMMUNITY

SELF

	Step One	Step Two
THEORY (Analysis)	Analyse all Educational Alternatives	a) locate self in analysis b) project self in analysis
WHAT		
PRACTICE (Action)	Step Four	Step Three
	Organize New Educational Alternatives	Implement Changes in Personal Commitment and Program

that one gets by traveling to different places to examine a program first hand. And when we can't travel we have to use the telephone (call on weekends or at night for the cheapest rate) and the mails. Most programs have some material that they will send to interested brothers and sisters.

This analysis must take into consideration both the educational *problems* that face Black people, and the *solutions* that Black people are using to deal with these problems.

STEP TWO: This involves using the total analysis in order to better understand oneself. This can either refer to an individual or to a small group of people. The first step is to locate yourself within the total analysis and specify the particular characteristics of your situation. Once you have objectively located yourself the way you are now, then you will be able to clearly state what is in your class interest. By this I mean every group of people found in the analysis has a position to the total society and this position has "normal" behavior associated with it. A "normal" capitalist has the interest of making money even if it means exploiting someone to do it. A "normal" hustler will exploit people even to the point of prostituting women, stealing, etc. So you must identify what your objective interests are under these so called "normal" terms.

Once you have focused in on the way things are, then you can project the way things must be, the way they ought to be. This means that you have clearly defined the objective interests of every group of Black people in the total analysis, and are choosing the real objective interests of all your people rather than one specific group of people.

The revolutionary guideline is **THE LAST MUST COME FIRST**. This means that the revolutionary choice is to choose the objective interests of those people most down and out in our community as the people whose objective interests you choose to lead your life to serve—the wretched of the earth. Once you project your self into the

objective interests of the most exploited Black people, then and only then are you prepared to make the Revolutionary Act of Class Defection. It is not possible without a thorough understanding of the social structure and dynamic of change within the Black community. And only by choosing the wretched of the earth is it possible to work creatively for all the people.

What precisely is this Revolutionary Act of Class Defection? Simply put it means you no longer live for the particular interests of what are called normal middle class people. No longer do you want to be a doctor for the money and status, be a playboy for the attention and things you get, no longer do you want to be anything the society wants you to be. Rather you use the objective conditions of those Black people most down and out to establish priorities. Then you use these priorities to determine what you must do. The change is from what you *want* to do, to what you *must* do. Yes, you might still be a doctor, but not because its what your mamma wanted (money, status, etc.) Now you will be a doctor because the health needs of your people demand that if you have the aptitude and the inclination that you must be a doctor. This way of approaching things means that you have to turn your back on what is "normal" for a student—you must defect from your class.

In order to understand the full meaning of this you must study the lives of other revolutionaries in order to see how they made the act of defection. Study how both Che Guervara and Frantz Fanon were trained in medicine and both became revolutionaries. How the choice was made by Kwame Nkrumah (Ghana), Fidel Castro (Cuba), Amilcar Cabral (Guinea-Bissau), and Oginga Odinga (Kenya). You must become acquainted with the intimate details of their lives so you will understand that all of the seemingly small considerations that are large to you had to be faced by all of these men on their way to revolution.

STEP THREE: Once you have a clear set of priorities with which you will move forward it is time to implement changes in

your life. The only correct move under a government headed toward facism is to first change those things that you have complete control over and that involves other people as little as possible. The purpose for this must be understood. You never move from a position of weakness, you always avoid confronting (if you can), until you have mobilized and unified all your resources.

And the easiest way to do this is to use the objective resources of time and money.

(A.) *Time*: all of us are trapped in the 24 hour day. And each of us uses that much time every day. A way to check yourself is to keep a diary for one or more days (preferably a week). Then ask yourself about how consistently you have or have not utilized this time to do relevant things in light of your priorities. Whatever you spend your time doing is what you are committed to. **WE MUST SEIZE THE TIME.**

(B.) *Money*: all of us use money (or one of its forms, e.g., credit). No matter how much it is, it is possible to keep a weekly financial record of every penny and evaluate its use in the same way that you looked at time. We've got to minimize cosmetics, clothes, cars, liquor, house furnishings, excess foods, etc. Now is the time to tighten up. **WE MUST SAVE OUR MONEY.**

These two exercises are indispensable in having an objective criteria to use in changing your life.

The use of time and money in ones life represents a rational approach to getting oneself together. A student must also examine the substance of his student life and implement specific changes there. Most schools present the student with certain given alternatives, and allow the student to make choices. The basic academic choices involve a major, specific courses, and topics for term papers. Each is twofold: a.) what are you going to choose? and b.) what are you going to do with your choice? Both choices must reflect your new theoretical analysis of your people and yourself. Both

choices must be maximized for struggle. You've got to choose your areas of study in a serious manner, then work your ass off so you can make a contribution to your people.

A major problem with the kind of work that Black students are engaged in is that it is impossible to get yourself together without dealing with reality. This is a combination of social practice and social research. Without social practice one cannot possibly understand the dynamics of life and struggle. Without social research a person will never know more than his own experiences, except what he gets vicariously through the experiences of others. And for both practice and research we must go directly to the action itself. We need a basic method for research on the world, not just research on writings that interpret the world. The student must become a scientist using the world as his laboratory.

A final point on how to implement changes in your life concerns environment, both physical and social. You've got to consider both positive and negative influences on you. The first major point is that everything is political, even the air you breathe, the food you eat, the house you live in, and the friends you have. This means that all these things are the direct or indirect result of decisions and acts made by a group of men in their own interests. And the fact is that not much consideration is given to the interests of the wretched of the earth. So as a person now using the interests of our most exploited folks as a guide, you must constantly analyse everything in a political manner. Even the most insignificant thing might turn out to be of some political value if you are able to understand it correctly.

In the physical space you have to live in (eat, sleep, study, etc.) you should consider the political content of all your senses pick up: what do you see? what do you hear? what do you taste? what do you smell? what do you touch? You must examine all of these things and change them to the same set of priorities you are now using to reorganize your life. This is very important as support since the rest of your life will

be encountering negative force beyond your immediate control. Now I am not talking about personality posters as much as I am maps of different parts of the world. I am not so much concerned about the Motown sound (popular Black music) as I am a tape collection of important lectures and discussion for your study purposes. I am talking about basically healthy foods and not the excessive storing of expensive health food store items. In sum, your physical environment must have a high utility for what your life is going to be about.

One's social environment is to be dealt with in the same manner as his physical scene, although there is much more possibility of creative change. If you are to become a political person, then you must be prepared to lead a political life. Listen to Che' speak to this point:

"Revolutionary leaders are not often present to hear their children's first hesitant words; their wives must also share in their sacrifice if the revolution is to reach its goal; their friends are to be found only among their comrades in revolution. For them there is no life outside the revolution. If they are to sidestep dogmatic extreme, sterile scholasticism, and isolation from the people, they must possess a full measure of humanity and a sense of justice and truth. Theirs is a daily struggle to transform their love of living humanity into concrete deeds, into acts that will serve as a mobilizing force and an example."

(from *Socialism and Man in Cuba*)

This means that when we move to get ourselves together we must spend as much time as possible around people who are doing the same thing. We must understand that it is no longer about what we like, or what has pleased us up to this point. We are now acting as political agents making choices based on their political utility for struggle. So you have a revolutionary responsibility to help your friends move with you, or to cut them loose. It's as simple and cold as that.

STEP FOUR: Once you have established the political basis for your life, then and only then is it advisable to move to organize a new educational experience. Because only then will you be prepared to deal with even a small study group as a revolutionary undertaking that is vital for the struggle. Because only then will you be able to identify and attract other people who are also political rather than just people who don't quite know what to do with themselves. And because only then will you be able to perform "acts that will serve as mobilizing force and an example."

The basis for any new organizing effort is the corps of people who are primarily responsible. You must attempt to have as much rapport as possible. And for this it is necessary to share Steps one, two, and three so that you will be fully aware of where a person is and not make the mistake of taking something for granted that very well may not be true. No assumption is valuable unless you can back it up with evidence. If you are concerned with the peoples survival and triumph then you must understand the limitations of every-mans word and require a factual basis for everything. The truth is an objective reality to which everybody must submit his life for judgment.

We have now reached the point of discussing the movement from legitimate institutions and the community streets to the creation of new institutions based on revolutionary educational principles. The first and most obvious thing is to do a careful study of new independent educational programs. This must include some attempts that failed as well as those that succeeded, because only in that way can you figure out what went wrong. This Program of Study should not be limited to the Black community in the United States. We must begin to become knowledgeable about the revolutionary educational programs in all progressive countries, all over Africa, Asia, and Latin America. And if at all possible include educational programs from everywhere else as well. Ignorance is the most dangerous enemy of a revolutionary, and all

ideology that keeps a man ignorant is bad and ought to be discarded as bullshit!

And now that we have discussed some general guidelines to follow, it is important that we make clear what are some specific programmatic educational alternatives for most Black communities. Here are a list of four community programs that are ranked on a scale of increasing demands made on the community participants:

1. **COMMUNICATIONS MEDIA:** Every community ought to be informed of what is happening. Although most people get hold of major national news, frequently what is happening in the world, as well as in the local community, goes unreported. We must make our people aware of what is happening. Remember that both *Muhammad Speaks* and the *Black Panther* were mimeographed handouts before they became national newspapers. And also think about how effective the white underground press is for young radical white America. This is an important educational arm of struggle that must be developed before things start happening to us and there is no established way to get things out. In a fascist state the press of liberation is the first target of the state. We must have an effective communications system so that we can keep the people wise to what's going on. The Peoples News ought to be given away free to the people, or at absolute cost. All cadres who take this task must have an alternative way to make their living unless through advertisement (consistent with the papers policy) it is possible to raise additional funds.

2. **INFORMATION CENTER:** The most common form of info-center is the bookstore. We need to have one in every community so that material that is published elsewhere can be distributed to the people from a regular location. In addition to the relevant newspapers, magazines, and journals the information center should have a section on Africans in the West (Afro-Americans), Africa,

Revolution, and the Enemy. Again, the store ought to deal in the most inexpensive articles (editions of books) and attempt to keep the overhead costs to a minimum. Examples of this include Drum and Spear Bookstore in Washington, D.C., and Timbuktu in Atlanta, Georgia.

3. **STUDY GROUPS:** The formation of study groups must be based on the commitment of each individual involved. The weakest person defines the strength of the group. Material ought to be read for depth and comprehension, rather than to superficially treat a lot of material. A few books like, *Black Bourgeoisie*, *Neo-Colonialism: The Highest Stake of Imperialism*, and *Black Awakening in Capitalist America* can be well studied for an extended time and result in a very useful understanding of exploitation both external and internal to the Black community. In study group full participation of everyone must be required, and should include a lot of writing, short explanations, description of material from memory (if necessary including the definitions of words), and use of material in interpreting personal experiences. When a study group finishes with a book everyone in it ought to be able to teach what is in the book. The revolutionary saying is "If you don't know study, if you know teach."

4. **SCHOOL:** The creation of a school involves the highest form of participation because it not only involves several study groups, it also has administration and other programmatic activity. In fact, it is possible (and desirable) to think of a school as at least having the above three programs as parts of it. This last approach has a great many problems associated with it that requires another more lengthy analysis. All that we will say here is that Washington, D.C., Chicago, Detroit, and Philadelphia have Black independent schools that deserve much study if such schools are to grow and develop.

CONCLUDING NOTE:

This paper has attempted to develop a method for Black students (who must be a vital asset for Black struggle) to move forward in a revolutionary manner. It is hoped that those who read this paper will attempt to use it, will engage in revolutionary social practice.

The methods of USA oppression will move to a new level of fascist police control to subvert positive Black programs. We must respond by escalating our educational ideology to a new level, a level that will enable us to face this test of fire and put a death lock on the system that it will not

survive. It can only be done with thousands, but for that we first need ones, then tens, then hundreds. As we move forward let us be like rolling snowballs and build in size and momentum. Let us plant these seeds of freedom in the hearts and minds of young Black people throughout the land so that when the people move we will be able to meet their need for knowledge, their need for analysis.

1970 must be a new decade of struggle for the Black student. The Black student must make the Revolutionary act of Class defection and move for the interests of his people, the wretched of the earth.