

POLITICS AND BLACK LIBERATION

We live in a period of fundamental political realignment in American society. Nixon and Agnew have embarked on a Holy War to reconstitute the shape and ideology of American politics. Yet despite the most awesome ramifications of this development, Blacks have opposed it through oratory and little else. . .

The Origins of the Crisis

The economic crisis of the 30's produced a "Democratic" constituency which has dominated American politics since the New Deal. This coalition consisted of working class whites, blacks and "liberals" and its guaranteed base was the "Solid South." With the single exception of the Eisenhower years when the Republicans exploited Cold War hysteria to defeat Adlai Stevenson, this coalition has elected every American President.

In the 60's American imperialism and the grossness of American racism produced the Anti-War Movement, and transformed the Black Reform Movement to embryonic Black Resistance. These developments in turn pushed white middle America out of the political center into the political right, culmination in the Nixon victory in 1968. (Nixon's victory was a compromise.

It represented the momentum from Humphrey toward Wallace, from center to right. The essential similarity of white politics was reflected in the fact that all three candidates campaigned on Law and Order, with only stylistic differences distinguishing them.)

Now for the first time in 40 years, the Democratic Party is no longer the majority party in the land. It is a party in shambles without program or leadership and deeply in debt. It tries to capitalize on the War and on Nixon's abandonment of Civil Rights--but cannot--precisely because these are the very policies endearing him 1) to the South and 2) the national white working class. Traditionally "democratic" labor supports Rockefeller in New York, Nixon in Washington, and the War in Indo-China.

Nixon's strategy is quite apparent. He is trying to build a right-wing political movement based on the South, the white working class and the white petty bourgeoisie. He can thus ignore the liberals and the blacks in the urban centers and still carry the country. The cornerstone of his strategy however is the South. Without it as an anchor, he stands no chance at all. Wallace's re-election therefore poses the most severe threat to Nixon's sovereignty. He must either capture Wallace voters or pay Wallace enough to keep him out of the race. Whichever right-

wing course he takes, means further downgrading of black interests. But the danger is even more explicit. The only real way to organize a white political movement in this country is in opposition to blacks. That's what crime in the streets was and that's what law and order is--the politics of racism.

THUS, the contradiction of Black politics, at the present moment is that at a time when it has more registered voters than ever before, more blacks in political office than ever before, it has never been so powerless. Because these blacks are part of a system that increasingly views them as a liability and a threat. (The impotence of black officials is manifest. They investigated the Hampton/Clark slayings in Chicago and nothing happened; they went to Jackson State and were appalled - and nothing happened; they have been trying to meet with Nixon for two months without success. And this despite the fact that niggers are, in most places, still the balance of power. They defeated Wallace in the Alabama primary and came near to defeating him in the election itself. But the essential dilemma of black politics is reflected in the fact that they had no other choice than Brewer.)

THERE IS NO WAY OUT OF THIS BLACK POLITICAL DILEMMA WITHOUT BUILDING A BLACK POLITICAL MOVEMENT. Such a movement must avoid the error of the past: white or self-appointed Black political representation. And it must build accountability into the process.