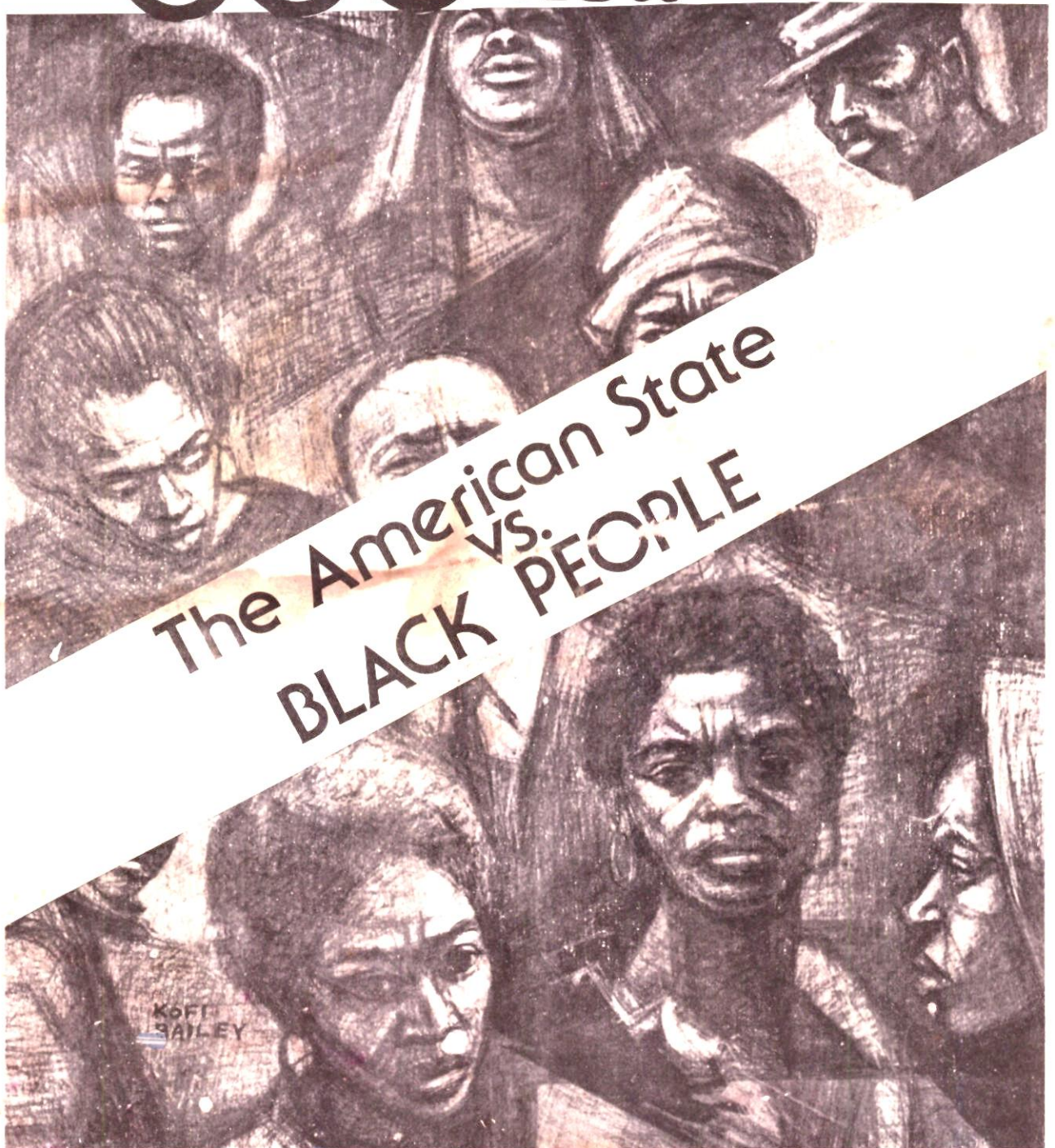


 **black-world-  
view**



BLACK STRUGGLE: THE OTHER AMERICAN REVOLUTION



## IN THIS ISSUE

The American Constitution was supposedly signed into law in order to (among other things) "establish Justice" and "insure domestic Tranquility." In actual fact, however, as concerns black Americans, America has always been more committed to insuring domestic tranquility than establishing justice. All too often these two concepts have meant constitutionally sanctioned violence against Blacks (in order to "insure domestic tranquility" for whites) and violent suppression of Black's struggles for freedom and justice, rather than the defense and support of the same. As Mary Berry has noted in *Black Resistance, White Law*, "Law and the Constitution in the United States have been a reflection of the will of the white majority that white people have and shall keep superior economic, political, social and military power, while black peoples shall be the permanent mudsills of American society." It is this American "justice" and its relationship to black people and the black struggle that is the theme of this issue of *Black-World-View*.

HAYWOOD BURNS' "A 200th Birthday 'Gift' of Death" opens this issue. Calling attention to the racist character of the July 2, 1976, Supreme Court decision that ruled that the death penalty is not unconstitutional (58% of the more than 600 persons on "death row" are black), Burns establishes, also, the relationship between this stand on capital punishment and America's racist criminal justice system.

VINCENT HARDING'S "White Compromise, Black Struggle: The Search for 'Our Country,'" is another excerpt from his forthcoming book, *The Other American Revolution*. It takes us back to an earlier period in our history when another branch of the American government declared open war on black people in order to blunt their quest for freedom and justice. In this instance, the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 was the weapon employed by the State but, as Dr. Harding reveals, black people's responses to these attacks led them (and us) to a deeper level of understanding of the relationship between the struggles of Blacks against American injustice and the larger struggle to transform American society.

ELDSON MCGHEE'S "From Vietnam to Prison: The Education of Eldson McGhee" concludes his essay of his encounters with American injustice at home as well as abroad. It reveals some of the more subtle ways in which this society supports and/or sponsors the dehumanization of black people in the military and in prison.

MICHELE RUSSELL'S "'Message' From Flint: The Case of Madeline Fletcher," is a study of the ways in which an arm of the State's domestic military apparatus (the Flint, Michigan, police department) wages officially sanctioned violence on black life and humanity. Madeline Fletcher, a black woman, joined the police force, hoping to curb its attacks on the black community. Her fellow officers rewarded her with a bullet in her chest. The

courts charged her with assault, even though *she* had been the person assaulted. Only the response of Flint's black community prevented her from becoming another victim of American "justice."

MANNING MARABLE'S "Thermidor: The Political Economy of the South in the 70's" focuses on the ways in which state-supported capitalistic ventures in the South since the 1960's have had a debilitating effect on the economic and political condition of Southern Blacks. In his analysis of the process of Southern black dispossession, exploitation and oppression, he suggests the degree to which American economic policies have taken up where segregationist political practices had left off.

WILLIAM STRICKLAND'S "The Government vs. Black People" concludes this issue. Focusing on the officially sanctioned, organized violence (code-named COINTELPRO) that was carried out by the FBI and other government agencies against the black movement of the 1960's, Strickland reminds us of the fact that America is at war with black people and black struggle. And, whether we like it or not, we are at war with America.

### INSIDE I.B.W.

The Institute of the Black World (IBW) is an independent center of research, analysis and advocacy based in Atlanta, Georgia. A non-profit, educational institution, IBW has been actively involved in the struggle to transform the character of black education since its inception in 1969. Through its programs of historical research, analysis, and publishing, IBW seeks to develop politically conscious print and audio materials for the arena of black education. Through its education programs, the Institute seeks to impart the philosophy, values, knowledge and skills needed to understand ourselves and the world in which we live and to change both. IBW places greatest emphasis on developing such understanding and competence within the black community, but its ultimate goal is to serve as an agent of social transformation for the total American society.

### ABOUT BLACK-WORLD-VIEW

BLACK-WORLD-VIEW is a periodical publication which explores the evolution of the black freedom struggle in America: its history, contemporary manifestations, and its future prospects. Although our focus is on the black American experience, that experience is viewed in the context of domestic and international change. Forthcoming issues will examine the racial, economic, political, cultural, and class dimensions of struggle; as well as the role that education, and personal and social transformation can play in building a new society. This year's theme, as indicated on the cover, is "Black Struggle: The Other American Revolution."