revolutionary struggle; otherwise there will be no real consciousness of the effects of racism and concrete efforts to change the racist nature of the United States. This point must be clearly understood by all black revolutionaries. This is not a racist point on and I do not feel compelled to defend it but I am only delineating its dynamics and interrelationship. This is absolutely necessary for we must know the type of world in which we wish to live.

Naturally, a revolution for socialism cannot end racism in the United States overnight once state power has been acquired and won by armed struggle. But racism cannot ever be eliminated unless one has the power to control the means of production. As you know, there are some leading personalities in the black movement who think our problem is only one of racism. These people have not yet acquired sufficient understanding of the economics of the world or either their class positions and material rewards resulting from the advocacy of this position makes them unable to understand that we have both a class and a racial fight and that it is not simply a question of race.

Quite often the dynamics of racism in the United States makes it difficult for some black intellectuals to understand the question of class. They are perplexed about what to do about white people. This is a legitimate question and must be understood from the point of view that we have suffered at the hands of white people and it is impossible to ever imagine that there will be white people who will fight imperialism in the United States. The record, however, does not bear out this conclusion and the recent bombings in New York which may have been committed by some whites stand as proof against this argument. Then, too, it is necessary to realize that our revolution is indeed many years off and it is my contention based upon certain experiences that there are and will be whites who will clearly understand the theoretical implications of the black vanguard leading the fight for world socialism in the United States. Indeed we will have a material and ideological struggle, but that is all a part of the revolutionary process.

In the final analysis, the distribution of power in the United States is yet to be decided and it will not be our generation which will decide that, although we have a responsibility to state our position, clearly and without reservation. As you know, I do not run from the ideological struggle and my ideas are out there for the world to judge.

I am in Martinique precisely because I believe that the ideological struggle is most important and that Frantz Fanon has much to say to those of us who are colonized in the United States. More than that, if we do not arm ourselves with sound theoretical concepts we will not survive the severe period of repression which is upon us. We all know of too many people and leading personalities who have abdicated the struggle inside the United States for various reasons, but one of them comes from not understanding the long term nature of the struggle and a sound theoretical position that our fight is against racism, colonialism, capitalism and imperialism and that world socialism is the only permanent answer to our economic and political exploitation.

Personally, while I believe that ultimately the fight is for world socialism, I am not opposed to short-term objectives. For instance, the issue of Pan-Africanism is going to hit the stage inside the United States. This will be an advancement over many concepts, but it will be not enough if it does not speak to the economic framework of that Pan-Africanism. For inside Africa today there are many bourgeois nationalists running African governments and exploiting the people in the name of Pan-Africanism. We have the right to at least demand that people not regress from Dr. W.E. B. DuBois who in his last years was pleading for Pan-African Socialism. I am for Pan-African Socialism if it means taking all the wealth of Africa away from the imperialists and using it for the disposition of all oppressed people. This will lead to world socialism.

Our ideological position must lead us to the position that it is the poor, the working class among black people who must have power. During the sixties we concentrated too much on the middle class. Most of the gains except the long range political consciousness have resulted in the middle class of the black community entrenching itself further. Our failure to actively work with black workers is a serious indictment of our movement as well as the abdication of our bases in the rural south. We made a great mistake when we did not understand the long range importance of holding the power we had acquired in the rural south and using those as revolutionary bases which they were.

I cannot stress too much the importance of our working with poor unorganized urban black workers. Many of them will be employed and most of them will be off and on jobs. As you know, I willingly worked for the Black Panthers because I saw in them an extension of Frantz Fanon's concept of the lumpen proletariat as being the most revolutionary force in a colonized situation, but since most of the black workers face employment off and on and many are unemployed. I think it is much better to talk in terms of black workers, but keeping the accent on the young black workers.

In 1960 I felt that the greatest contradiction inside the United States rested in the deep south where black people were denied voting and public accommodation rights. I felt that a struggle could be waged there which could develop in time into a very revolutionary struggle once the contradictions inside the United States became popular issues. The support we are getting from revolutionaries around the world proves that was a correct decision and analysis. But I must repeat that we made a serious tactical mistake in abandoning those bases of support that we had won through struggle in the deep south.

In 1970 the greatest contradictions are to be found in the urban ghetto. Black workers are essential to those ghettoes, which really should be called urban black communities, especially those cities where black workers are strategically situated near the centers of mass production of the essentials of any industrialized society, steel, coal, automobiles and oil.

We must carry with us the dynamism that we took into the deep south, coupled with our analysis of racism, colonialism, capitalism and imperialism. We must learn from the Black Workers and they must become the leaders of the revolutionary movement. There are some of us who are already and have been working in our viewpoint and ideology, for we must not forget that during the early sixties we worked with the poorest class of Africans in the United States, the tenant farmer and the sharecropper and the workers of cities in the deep south. Our abdication of leadership and shift to the urban north left a vacuum that is now being exploited by certain middle-class elements.

Hence, my own activity in the seventies will concentrate upon waging the ideological struggle and creating bases in urban black communities centered near the essential means of production. I shall try to get organizers back into the rural south and I shall try to force a new unity between workers, farmers, students and street brothers. My own ideological thinking has developed tremendously in the last ten years and much of this is due to the writings of Frantz Fanon. As a people we must try to make him and his ideas popular to black people in the United States and the world around.

In 1970 one may correctly ask what were the weaknesses and strengths of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. I am in the process of writing my sutobiography in which I deal extensively with this question. As you know, I have finished one half of it and now I am in the process of writing the second half. But it is essential to state in this public letter that with all its strengths of organizing the rural south and generating a revolutionary thrust around the concept of Black Power, further internationalizing the struggle of black people in the United States, one of the essential weaknesses was that it kept the poor people, the working class people removed from the center of decision-making in its own ranks. It never made the shift from a cadre organization to a representative mass movement, although there were several opportunities to do that. It is my contention that this is rooted in the class nature of the organizers especially after its frontal assault on the racism and exploitation of the Democratic Party in 1946. The power in the organizing ranks of the cadre shifted from a rural base to an urban middle - class orientation and this introduced all the conflicts around power and method of operation.

The problem of the class nature of the organization which I treat extensively in my autobiography is not just a problem isolated to us in the United States. It is the fundamental plague upon the houses of all revolutionary movements in the colonial world, for most of them have been started by the Western-educated elite who have failed to understand that any revolutionary movement cannot succeed if the power of that movement is not in the hands of the poor. The class composition of most of the African governments is middle-class or petit bourgeois, as well as liberation movements in colonized situations. Until this is changed, one will not see much of revolution in colonial territories. Therefore the problems I raise with regard to SNCC have their relevance to the world around, I am convinced. Basically, the class nature of the organization made it impossible to organize street brothers and carry forth the implications of its raising the Black Panther as a symbol of the political process that black people should carry forth. That is why it was left to others who understood the streets of the urban black communities to organize the Black Panther Party, although the role of certain members of SNCC in that process cannot be minimized.

Armed with a correct ideology--the fight against racism, colonialsm, capitalism, and imperialism and for world socialism--and rooting all efforts to make sure that black workers and poor farmers have power and lead the revolutionary struggle, trying to develop all forms of popular struggle and buildings a network of unknown revolutionaries, preparing for the long range armed struggle inside the United States and uniting workers, students, farmers, and street brothers into a disciplined, centralized, mass political party or workers organization--there can be no doubt that our struggle will advance in the seventies. We will be carrying on the work of the late Dr. W. E. B. DuBois, Patrice Lumumba, Frantz Fanon, Malcolm X, Sammy Younge and all the other sons and daughters of Africa who have died from the whip lash of racism, colonialism, capitalism and imperialism.

In Brotherhood. Remember Lumumba.

Jim

End

Brother James Foreman is no stranger to the Black struggle. He was a leading organizer for SNCC and founder of the Black Economic Development Conference. He is the author of the biography of Sammy Younge, Jr. and is presently working on a study of Frantz Fanon.