

The essence or the heart of the contradiction Black people have with the U.S. white ruling class is colonialism, an imperialistic tactic for exploiting foreign workers and nations. However, colonialism in the U.S. is different, in one aspect, from colonialism as we know of it in the past. In the U.S. Black people were transported from another land. Traditionally colonialism has occurred when foreigners dominated a people on the land of the colonized. This difference cannot, however, eliminate the main characteristics of colonialism wherever it occurs in the world, and these characteristics, stated simply, are the direct political and economic domination of a group by foreign exploiters.

Therefore, although it is correct to say the Black liberation struggle in the U.S. is a struggle against imperialism, it must be understood that imperialism reveals itself as colonialism in its attack on Black people in the U.S. To the peoples of Iran, Portugal, South Vietnam, and the Middle East it reveals itself differently and must be struggled against differently. Would we say the struggle of the Palestinian people is a struggle for socialism or the struggle of the people in Zimbabwe is a struggle for socialism? NO. Likewise it is incorrect to term the struggle for Black liberation in the U.S. as a struggle for socialism. The struggle for Black liberation in the U.S. is a struggle for political independence. It is an anti-colonial struggle. It is a struggle for self-determination. It is, first and foremost, a struggle to free the people from oppressive and exploitative foreign domination.

RACISM COMPLICATES STRUGGLE

A complicating factor in the U.S. Black liberation struggle is what is generally termed "white racism". White racism is a generally antagonistic, often unseen posture, adopted by the majority of whites in the U.S. against Black people. What makes white racism so complicating for some leftists is the fact that this posture can most often be observed in white workers, who themselves are also engaged in a struggle against imperialism in the form of monopoly capitalism, which exploits U.S. workers primarily at the point of production. The complications derive from the correct understanding that both Blacks and whites suffer from imperialism, a fact which would provide the objective basis for some unity on the one hand, while racism, antagonistic to Blacks, often prevents such unity on the other.

Because colonialism does manifest itself as domination by a foreign power, it is more difficult to hide or obscure basic contradictions from Black people. Consequently, although the people may not immediately understand colonialism as a political phenomenon, they do understand that our basic problems have to do with foreign domination, usually translated by the masses as "white people". In the past, when Baraka understood that "white people are the enemy," he was simply echoing the general understanding that Black people have of foreign domination. To that extent he was correct.

Because of this popular understanding by Black people that we are dominated and oppressed by foreigners, the white ruling class is hard pressed to maintain order and