

NATIONAL ALLIANCE AGAINST RACIST & POLITICAL REPRESSION

A CHANGE OF DIRECTION

By James S. Tate Jr., M.D., Executive Director, NAARPR

At the September National Alliance Against Racist & Political Repression (NAARPR) board meeting in New York City, several decisions were made which will ultimately lead to a change in direction for the NAARPR; not in what we stand for, but in the nature of the work that we do.

The first decision was that yours truly was elected as the new Executive Director of the National Alliance Against Racist & Political Repression. I replaced a man who has done a yeoman duty for the last four years in terms of guiding the NAARPR and making sure that the day to day activities of the organization were carried out. In spite of the fact that he was paid at almost slave labor wages, his dedication to this organization and what it stands for allowed him to complete his mission.

The second decision was that the national office would be moved from New York City to Las Vegas. This decision to move to Las Vegas was very difficult and perhaps the most contentious in that it meant that

the organization would lose its East Coast flare i.e. New York flavor, and begin to take on the more cosmopolitan flavor of the Near West and Mid West. It was resolved to move the national office because the strongest chapters happen to be in Las Vegas, Detroit, Chicago and Louisville. While other city branches had bid for moving the office to their cities, the board, in general, felt that Las Vegas had the best resources to take on this task.

The third decision was for the NAARPR to take on a more pro-active stance. In the past, we have battled racist and political repression when it has reared its ugly head. However, we have not, per se, when taking on the task of deciding and defining the struggle in which we would participate, i.e. we know what we don't want, but we haven't articulated what we do want. This will change. We will now take a much more aggressive stance in terms of what we think America should look like going into the 21st Century.

We will continue the struggle with the issues that we have

always been involved with, such as prisoner's rights, abolishing of the death penalty, forcing the cessation of attacks on Black elected officials and the attack on Black voting rights, cessation of the attacks on Native Americans, and the creation of a civilian control board to oversee and control what police officers are allowed to do. These are the issues that we will continue the struggle around.

Because it is time that there

is another voice speaking up for the rights of all people in America, we will take on a pro-active stance. It is clear from the Million Man March that there is a lot of untapped energy and resources that no one has taken the time and effort to tap until Louis Farrakhan did on October 16, 1995.

Regardless of what one may have thought about the march and how it was organized, who participated, etc., the fact that it

took place is historic, but it would be tragic (even criminal) if we did not take advantage of the march and build upon the momentum that the march started.

The future articles in this column will reflect a more nation than local stature. This is not to say that the local issues are being ignored, but as the official column of the organization, it must broaden itself to include not only what the Executive Director thinks about what is going on in



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Las Vegas, but what the organization thinks about what is going on in the rest of the country.

La Lucha Continua! The Struggle Continues!

ALONG THE COLOR LINE

Pan-Africanism: Yesterday and Tomorrow

By Dr. Manning Marable

Exactly 50 years ago, in Manchester, England, black leaders from Africa, the Caribbean, Great Britain and the United States came together in pursuit of the liberation of the black Diaspora. In its manifesto, "Challenge to the Colonial Powers," they declared: "We are determined to be free. We want the right to earn a decent living; the right to express our thoughts and emotions, to adopt and create forms of beauty. We demand for Black Africa autonomy and independence..."

The 1945 Manchester Congress, led by black scholar W.E.B. DuBois, George Padmore and Kwame Nkrumah, was both the culmination of a historical process of black struggle which had begun a half century before, as well as a decisive political intervention to influence the events after World War II. Behind "Pan Africanism" was the idea that people of African descent the world over shared a common destiny; that our forced dispersal through the transatlantic slave trade, our common oppression under colonialism in Africa and the Caribbean, and under Jim Crow segregation in the United States, through the exploitation of our labor power under capitalism, and the denial of political rights, had created parallel contours for struggle. Our kinship was also cultural, social and historical, and we found within ourselves the genius and grace of being which was denied us by the racist standards of the white world. By renewing our connections, we forged a consciousness of resistance which could be felt across the globe.

The perspective of Pan Africanism was first advanced in the international context by barrister Henry Sylvester Williams of Trinidad and Tobago, in the London conference of 1900. It was at this gathering that the young scholar, W.E.B. DuBois, predicted that "the problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line." After Williams' death in 1911,

the Pan Africanist movement was continued by DuBois. The Pan African Congresses were later held in Paris in 1919; in London, Paris and Brussels in 1921; in London, Paris and Briston in 1923; and in New York in 1927. These Congresses created the context for black intellectuals, political leaders and reformers to challenge the prerogatives and power of white colonialism.

Last month, black scholars and activists from Africa, the Caribbean and the U.S. met in Manchester, England to mark the fiftieth anniversary of that historic Pan African Congress. I addressed the gathering on the challenges of Pan Africanism in the twenty-first century, and its continuing relevance to black Americans.

The future of Pan Africanism as a strategy for liberation depends upon our ability to bring together young people, workers, political organizers, trade unionists, women activists and intellectuals behind a common vision of black empowerment at a global level. The new Pan Africanism must first challenge the structures of patriarchy within black communities and black organizations, creating a more egalitarian relationship between black women and men. So long as we tolerate the oppression of our sisters, our liberation moment as black people will never succeed.

The new Pan Africanism of the twenty-first century must take a progressive stand on environmental issues and state of the world's ecology. We must address the utilization of the natural resources of the world; our reliance of petrochemicals and carbon-based technologies which foul the air and pollute our water; and the storage of toxic wastes which shorten the lives of our children. In the United States, three-fifths of all toxic waste dumps are found within a twenty-five mile radius of black or Hispanic communities. We need coalition strategy creating a dialogue with environmental organizations and green political parties, linking the struggle against racism to a safe, clean environment.

Pan Africanism of the next century cannot define itself in biological, genetic or racial categories, but in terms of its politics and social vision. Race is a category of anti-black exploitation, a product of slavery, white supremacy, and economic domination. But race today also attacks the humanity of an entire spectrum of people: The Hispanics of California who suffer under the recently implemented Proposition 187, which denies their children access to education and denies their families admission to public health facilities; the Turks in Germany who encounter rampant discrimination and neo-



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Nazi gangs. The struggle against racism must be fought on a global, international level.

Pan Africanism remains an essential democratic vision, to deconstruct and uproot the inequalities of racism; to challenge the unpopular capitalist "New World Order" represented by the IMF, the World Bank, and more recently by the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Pan Africanism remains vital as a political framework bringing together the collective perspectives of people of African descent in our eternal struggle to assert and to affirm all humanity. Our struggle for the empowerment of the African world is, as W.E.B. DuBois wrote, "the last great battle of the West."

Dr. Manning Marable is Professor of History and Director of the Institute for Research in African American Studies, Columbia University, NYC. "Along the Color Line" appears in over 275 newspapers and is featured by 80 radio stations nationally and internationally.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

It came to my attention at a meeting sponsored by the Black Panther Party some time ago that collectively among black churches in Las Vegas, thousands of dollars are raised in tithes and offerings per Sunday. Naturally, the question was raised, "Where does all that money go?" A better question, I believe, is, what do we do with this information? The obvious misappropriation of funds and lack of vision on the part of the local ministry is an embarrassment.

The churches are a tax exempt organization; they have the ability to create foundations and community development corporations to run and administer their own businesses. One of the many benefits to a non-profit community development corporation is that they can receive federal, state and city grants, as well as donations from private foundations and government subsidies, not allowed to profit organizations.

I believe the local pastorate is failing in its position to help raise a congregation of entrepreneurs, yet, for the church to have impact on the lives of today's youth, it must go beyond entertaining sermons and imposing feelings of guilt without offering financial opportunity for the redirecting of lives.

I think even established individuals would agree with the

drudgery of routine in working for someone else, not to mention imposed racism and lack of job security in this information age. This generation of gang bangers and drug dealers has exhibited a true capitalist and entrepreneurial spirit. Yet, the community at large suffers from it. To truly affect this generation you must heal the obvious wounds before declaring moral values.

As one who has chosen the straight and narrow, it angers me to see the truth of the gospel cheapened, in that beyond salvation and character building many of the local churches have done nothing along the lines of economic empowerment, leaving the youth without resources, and forcing them to fend for themselves. I, at one time, found myself tempted with the allures of drug dealing, but fearing the wrath of God, as well as the notion of being a race traitor, QUICKLY canceled that idea.

I also feel the drudgery of routine and racism in the working environment. But, I hope to find means, direction, and opportunity for deciding my own income. I hope local churches will do its part in providing creative outlets and resources to a frustrated and violent generation, eager for a sense of purpose and self worth.

Thankfully Yours,
Avery Kennard

POINTS TO PONDER

BY
PROFESSOR HARRIS

JUST AS GERMAN OFFICIALS WERE PUT ON TRIAL FOR CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY FOR WHAT THEY DID TO JEWISH PEOPLE DURING WORLD WAR II - WILL THEY DO THE SAME TO THE FORMER WHITE OFFICIALS OF SOUTH AFRICA FOR THEIR CRIMES AGAINST BLACK PEOPLE

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FOR ALL OF THE SWEAT AND EFFORT BLACK PEOPLE HAVE Poured INTO THE **DEMOCRATIC PARTY** — WHAT DO THEY HAVE TO SHOW FOR IT!!!

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