

**Includes economic, political power**

# Black Power is self-determination

by P. M. White

Black power is a political phenomena with certain racial overtones. These overtones are applicable in a white capitalist society where black people are in the minority politically, economically and with regard to population.

One may ask the question, "Where do racial aspects come from?" In viewing Western society we find that a few whites hold the political and economic power and are thus able to control social mobility; i.e., they are able to determine the destiny of the rest of the population in terms of how far they go in the system.

I emphasize the words 'a few whites' for the simple reason that a large number of whites are not well seated in the economic stream of Western society.

There are white minorities as well as other ethnic minorities. Nevertheless, it is much easier for this white minority to achieve social mobility once they enter the competitive field, than for others. In this society, where racism is institutionalized, the ethnic has (as the slogan goes) "a snowball's chance in hell" to make it to the top, even if all the avenues are available. The white powerholder will see as well as set limitations on the ethnic minorities' social mobility.

Black power advocates or black organizations for the liberation of black people in Western areas can use these societies as a base for planning and organizing. They may introduce these methods into underdeveloped areas where there is black manpower or where blacks make up a population majority.

As Garvey puts it, unless Africa and her inhabitants are free, Africans the world over will not be free. This does not mean that black organizations in Western societies cannot be of any help, but by no means

will they ease the exploitation and suppression of the black race.

They may help them to fit into the system in order to enjoy better living conditions. The rest of this article will deal with those areas where blacks are in the majority and where black power is more of a political phenomena with little, if any, racial overtones.

Before viewing or analyzing the situation in the Commonwealth Caribbean (my main area of interest) I will take time to define the most often used connotations of Black Power. One connotation refers to black political and economic power. In my opinion this definition means "black capitalism" and will not by any means terminate the present system which condones and assists the exploitation of the masses.

A second definition of Black Power is black political and economic power enabling the masses of people to participate in the means of production and have control over their own destiny. This definition may be interpreted as "socialism" and it is also my accepted definition of black power as "state control".

Socialism is the system which the leading nations of the world are heading towards. They may refer to themselves or their political systems as welfare states, but they are all being forced towards socialism as a result of their own scientific inventions and economic bankruptcies.

We are usually told by those who benefit most from the system in the Caribbean, that there is no place for black power in the islands: all our political representatives are native people and all our

businesses are operated by native people. The premise is that we do have political power and as a result, have control over our economy.

Actually, the Caribbean is a breeding ground for Black Power according to my second definition. All we really have in the Commonwealth Caribbean are puppet governments with no real power whatsoever. This is made evident by one of the men in office, but not in power. Here is Doctor Williams' own painful lament in a rare moment of truth:

"It was found that national planning had little meaning, when major decisions about investment, production and employment in a host country like Trinidad were being made in the head offices of international corporations beyond the jurisdiction of the Local Government." (Trinidad Guardian, July 1, 1969, page 1).

This statement indicates who holds power and controls the destiny of the people in the Commonwealth Caribbean. Power lies with foreign investors and western political leaders.

To overcome these forms of exploitation and suppression, total political unity of the Commonwealth Caribbean with Cuba to collectively seek their political independence is necessary. As many scholars in the Caribbean and abroad have contended, it is only through unified political independence that we can solve our problems.

Political independence is the vital prerequisite for the economic and human development of all people. Only through this inalienable right of self-determination to conduct one's own internal and external political and economic affairs that one can hope to be free.



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