

The Negro Revolution

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Despite increasing use of the term, it is doubtful that most Americans have come to recognize the Negro crisis as a revolution, possessed of all the typical characteristics and stigmata of a revolutionary movement and a revolutionary situation. Undoubtedly, Americans, when they think of “revolution,” only visualize some single dramatic act, as if they would wake up one day to find an armed mob storming the Capitol. Yet this is rarely the way revolutions occur. Revolution does not mean that some sinister little group sit around plotting “overthrow of the government by force and violence,” and then one day take up their machine guns and make the attempt. This kind of romantic adventurism has little to do with genuine revolution.

Revolution, in the first place, is not a single, isolated event, to be looked at as a static phenomenon. It is a dynamic, open-ended process. One of its chief characteristics, indeed, is the rapidity and acceleration of social change. Ordinarily, the tempo of social and political change is slow, meandering, inconsequential: in short, the typical orderly America of the political science textbooks. But, in a revolution, the tempo of change suddenly speeds up enormously; and this means change in all relevant variables: in the ideas governing the revolutionary movement, in its growth and in the character of its leadership, and in its impact on the rest of society. Another crucial aspect of Revolution is its sudden stress on *mass* action. In America, social and political action has taken place for a long while in smoke-filled rooms of political parties, in quiet behind-the-scenes talks of lobbyists, Congressmen, and executive officials, and in the sober, drawn-out processes of the courts. Outside of football games, the very concept of mass action has been virtually unknown in the United States. But all this has been changed with the onset, this year, of the Negro Revolution.

As in the case of most revolutions, the Negro Revolution began with a change in the ruling values and ideas of American intellectuals. At the turn of the century, and through the 1920's, most American intellectuals were fundamentally “racist,” i.e., they upheld two guiding postulates: (1) that the white race in general, and the Anglo-Saxon wing of that race in particular, are inherently superior, intellectually and morally, to other races and ethnic groups, and particularly the brown and black races; and (2) that *therefore* the superior races had the right and perhaps even the duty to exercise political power over the inferior. Although (2) does not at all follow from (1), few people, whether pro- or anti-racist, have seen that this political conclusion is a *non sequitur*.

In the 1930's and 1940's, an enormous change occurred among American intellectuals on the race question. Influenced partly by the racist excesses of Hitler and the atmosphere of World War II, American intellectuals, during the 1930's and '40's, swung around to almost the opposite position. In their anxiety to preclude a racist brand of statism, the intellectuals adopted the opposite brand of egalitarianism. Their two new guiding postulates became: (1) all races and ethnic groups are intellectually and morally equal or identical, and (2) that *therefore* no one should be allowed to treat anyone else as if they were not equal, i.e., that the State should be used to compel absolute equality of treatment among the races. Here again, few people noticed that another *non sequitur* was being employed.

It should be noted that this shift is by no means identical to the well-known shift (sometimes attributed by conservatives to a Fabian “conspiracy”) of intellectuals from *laissez-faire* liberalism to interventionism and socialism. *That* shift occurred decades earlier, and the racist postulates were as common among American socialists and progressives as among conservatives. This shift by intellectuals from racism to egalitarianism then began to filter down, inevitably, to the rest of the population. And this had two crucial effects: it inspired the Negroes to begin to struggle, at long last, for their rights as they saw them; and it disarmed the whites from offering any effective opposition to such a change.

Now the pattern of racism in America, of course, has been *political* and therefore enforced by police power in the South; voluntary and therefore much looser in the North. The focus of the Negro movement thus had to be the South. And even though the Negroes are a submerged minority in the South, the growth of education and therefore receptivity to intellectual influences, has led the white majority to agree that the Negroes are *right*, that morality, at least, is on the side of the Negro people. Here we have the indispensable condition for success of a *minority* revolution; for even though Negroes are a minority in this country, general white agreement on the righteousness of the Negro cause has provided the framework for majority support.

The first step, then, was an ideological conversion of the intellectuals and then the bulk of the people; the second was the stirring of the Negroes themselves against segregation and for egalitarian goals. Since the outstanding racist center is the South, the drive began there, and proceeded in the most “moderate,” non-revolutionary way possible: through the orderly, staid processes of the government and its courts. This was the way of the oldest and by far the most conservative of the leading Negro organizations, the NAACP. Financed largely by wealthy whites, the NAACP’s technique was to employ the power of the Federal Government—its courts and hopefully its legislature, to change conditions in the South. That the NAACP is moderate and non-revolutionary, incidentally, does not mean that it is less statist than more radical Negro groups. On the contrary, the hallmark of the NAACP technique has been to use the “courts instead of the streets,” i.e., to confine the Negro movement to State processes, instead of direct action by the masses. It is precisely action *outside* and against the State apparatus that forms the hallmark of a social revolution.

The NAACP went ahead, slowly and gradually, and its use of the Federal arm bore fruit; but the processes of gradualism and legalism, typified by the snail’s pace of school desegregation years after the Supreme Court’s decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*, began to make the Negroes restive, and understandably so. If they were indeed *right*, as almost everyone up to the Supreme Court was proclaiming, why shouldn’t right prevail quickly, even immediately? How long were the Negroes to wait for what nearly everyone, since the previous “revolution” in values, now conceded was their right and due?

There then began among the Negroes a series of sporadic, isolated, uncoordinated actions: beginning with the Montgomery bus boycott in 1955, and continuing with sit-ins, Freedom Rides, etc. The significant points about this third phase of the Negro movement are: (1) that they were direct *mass* actions, actions “in the streets,” voluntary actions by Negroes themselves, casting off dependence on the quiet and seemingly peaceful operations of the State; and (2) as such, they quickly went beyond the established NAACP framework. Because the NAACP was not geared for this type of revolutionary action, new, far more radical organizations began to replace the NAACP in the leadership of the demonstrations. As in the French Revolution, each succeeding wave of organizations able to capture the leadership of this dynamic movement is more radical than the one before: has to be, in order to gain and keep that leadership. And, as the process accelerates, each succeeding organization takes the risk of being tagged with that chilling label “Uncle Tom,” apologist for white domination. And, therefore, the older organizations, in this fierce inter-group competition for the loyalty and leadership of the increasingly radicalized Negro masses, themselves become more radical or claim to; thus the NAACP, until recently an opponent of mass demonstrations, now must take a stand in favor of them—or lose all standing in the Negro community.

The Reverend Martin Luther King brought to the Negro movement the truly revolutionary concept of non-violent mass action. The Gandhian concept of non-violent action had several advantages for the Negro movement, especially in that relatively early stage. For one thing, it imbued the movement with the prestige of a “philosophy,” however shaky much of the philosophy was; it was able to make use of the common Christianity of the country to appeal to the great Christian tradition of nonviolence; it placed a great moral advantage in the hands of the non-violent demonstrators as against their armed opponents; and, finally, it was the most practical course for an oppressed,

unarmed minority facing the armed brutality of the Southern police. Probably, the most important of these advantages is the moral: for, nothing could be more potent in mobilizing support throughout the country, among Negroes and whites, than the news or pictures of unarmed and helpless Negroes beaten or clubbed by armed whites. And this despite the philosophical fuzziness of the King concept of “non-violence;” for mass invasion of private restaurants, or mass blocking of street entrances is, in the deepest sense, *also* violence. But, in the generally statist atmosphere of our age, violence against property is not considered “violence;” this label goes only to the more obvious violence against *persons*.

As more and more Negroes participated in mass action, the ideology and especially the tactics of the Negroes became increasingly radical and militant. But in the main the King type of strategy prevailed. As this process grew, however, and as the non-violent strategy met defeats as in Albany, Georgia, a new and far different voice began to emerge—with a far different strategy. This newest and most revolutionary movement, as yet still waiting in the wings, is typified, in their different ways, by Robert F. Williams and by the Black Muslims. Essentially, men like Williams and the Muslims asked of the Kings a very intelligent question: why must only the *Negroes* exercise non-violence? Why may the white oppressors, whether in the form of Ku Klux Klan-type mobs or as armed police, be armed and violent, while only the Negroes must remain meek and disarmed? Why not preach non-violence to the whites for a change? In short, these radicals asserted the perfectly incontrovertible thesis: everyone has the right to defend himself against violence *with* violence; and therefore the Negroes have the right to defend themselves with violence against armed attacks. The views of Williams and the Muslims have generally been distorted in the press as advocating *aggressive* violence against whites; but they have been quite clear that they would only use violence defensively (although they, too, of course, would not consider such acts as sit-ins to be “violence”). The leading white advocate of this extreme left, Truman Nelson, cites as reflecting his views the following quote from William Lloyd Garrison’s review of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*:

“That all slaves of the South ought to repudiate all carnal weapons, shed no blood, be obedient to their masters, wait for peaceful deliverance and abstain for all insurrectionary movements is everywhere taken for granted, because the *victims are black!* . . . *They* are required by the Bible to put away all wrath, to submit to every conceivable outrage without resistance. None of *their* advocates may seek to inspire them to imitate the example of the Greeks, the Poles, the Hungarians, our revolutionary sires, for such teaching would evince a most un-Christian and blood-thirsty disposition. But for those whose skin is of a different complexion, the case is materially altered. Talk not to the whites of peacefully submitting, of overcoming evil with good when they are spit upon and buffeted, outraged and oppressed. . . . Oh no, for them it is, let the blood of the tyrants flow! Is there one law of submission for the black man and another law of rebellion and conflict for the white man?” ¹

Against *whom* would this militant revolutionary wing direct its defensive violence? Not, to be sure, against such private citizens as store-keepers or owners of golf courses; *their* rights are already invaded, in a “non-violent” manner, by the established Negro “Center.” The proposed revolutionary violence would be directed against two groups: (a) white armed mobs, of the Ku Klux Klan variety, and (b) the armed forces of (white) governments, specifically the Southern police.

By the spring of 1963, the “Negro liberation movement” had grown steadily, in numbers and intensity, with the dominant *motif* one of disciplined non-violence, but with advocates of defensive violence gaining in strength around the fringes. But the movement, though developing, was not yet a revolutionary one in the truest sense; its mass demonstrations were still sporadic, limited, and largely confined to a majority of students and other dedicated groups.

It is possible to pinpoint the time and place when the Negro movement became a revolution: the time, May, 1963, the place, Birmingham, Alabama. In the Birmingham struggle, the stories and pictures of masses of women and small children non-violently refusing “to be moved,” and being set upon by fire hoses and police dogs, galvanized the Negro cause throughout the country. This spectacle provided the spark for an amazingly rapid and thorough-going radicalization of the Negro

masses. Since that date, the Negro masses throughout the country have become revolutionized, are willing and even eager to demonstrate, sit-down, even fill the jails, and, in some cases, to fight back violently. Not only are the Negro masses eager to join in the fight, but they have since Birmingham exhibited a remarkable alienation and thoroughgoing disgust that is essential to the flourishing of any revolutionary movement. James Baldwin's words which so shocked Robert Kennedy, that the Negroes will not fight for "their" country against, e.g. Cuba, as long as they do not receive their full rights, typifies this growing, radical alienation.

But the Birmingham crisis-point needs to be analyzed in more detail. For the Birmingham struggle took place in two phases: the first phase, of the non-violent children, was on behalf of desegregation, and also compulsory integration of restaurants and forced hiring of Negroes in various jobs. This phase ended with the negotiated agreement of May 10. In retaliation for the Negroes' success, white gangs resorted to violence: to the bombing of a leading Negro motel and the house of the Rev. King's brother. It was this act that provoked an entirely different set of Negroes to action: to committing retaliatory violence on the night of May 11-12. These were not the sober, church-going, lower middle-class Negroes committed to the Rev. King and non-violence. These were the poorest strata of the Negro workers, the economically submerged who help to form that group which suffers from unemployment at a depression-rate, a rate twice the average for American workers as a whole. Interestingly and significantly enough, their aim was not compulsory integration, nor was their particular target the white employer or restaurant-owner. No, it was the police.

A reporter for the *New York Post* described these militants:

"They were not the fresh-faced youngsters who paraded so solemnly for justice last week. They were not those parents who stood proudly by as they saw their children off to jail. No, instead they are Birmingham's dispossessed, and the truth is that they will remain non-privileged even when the new day dawns. . . . They will not benefit from Birmingham's new deal because they will never be qualified, or acceptable, for jobs as clerks or salesmen. They have known only two kinds of white men—the boss and the cop. The boss is none too good. . . . But the cop is much worse. The cop accosts them at any hour and arrests them on any pretext. In every town there's gossip of what cops do in the back room. There was no need for a backroom in Birmingham. The cops often beat Negroes senseless in full public view on the street. . . . They had always cowered before the cops and held back their hatred—to protect their skulls. But suddenly, without forewarning, for they had been in no church rallies and ridden in no freedom rides, they saw Negroes defying the hated cop. So, the non-privileged decided to make it a fight of their own. . . ." ²

Demonstrating Negroes have taken to a favorite chant: "What do we want? Freedom! When do we want it? Now!" An admirable sentiment, but "freedom," at best a word of fuzzy meaning in recent decades, is a vague portmanteau, and hopelessly ambiguous word as used by the Negro movement. To some groups it means desegregation, to others compulsory integration, to yet others a racial quota system in all jobs, to still others, as we have seen, the ousting of the Southern police and the Southern sheriff from arbitrary rule over Negro citizens (and whites as well). And to still more radical groups, as we shall see, it means a "Negro nation" in the Black Belt of the South. But the very vagueness of the term adds fuel to the dynamics of the revolution. For it makes the goals of the Negroes open-ended, distant, ever-receding into the future. In short, the very fuzziness of the goal permits the Negroes to accelerate and increase their own demands without limit regardless of how many demands are met. No movement with strictly limited goals can ever become revolutionary; it is the very sweep and vagueness of the demands that make the movement insatiable, and hence ever-open to rapid growth.

Once the revolutionary crisis-point is passed, the revolution becomes almost unbeatable, because: (1) if the white governments yield to the stated demands, this adds fuel to the revolutionary movement and induces them to increase their demands; but (2) if savagely repressive measures are taken, as at Birmingham, this will make martyrs out of the Negro victims, multiply their

revolutionary fervor, and greatly intensify support of the revolution throughout the country, among white and Negro alike. Indeed, it was this treatment, as we have seen, that made the Negro cause a revolution. In short, the governments are now damned if they do and damned if they don't. With the Negro movement now in a revolutionary situation, it seems therefore *impossible* for the governments to stop or defeat it.

This does not mean, however, that the Negro Revolution will inevitably be victorious. There are two ways by which it might be crippled and defeated. First, the retaliatory creation of a white counter-revolutionary mass movement, equally determined and militant. In short, by the re-creation of the kind of Ku Klux Klan that smashed Reconstruction and the Negro movement in the late 19th century. Since whites are in the majority, they have the capacity to do this *if* they have the will. But the will, in my opinion, is gone; this is not the 19th century, nor even the 1920's. White opinion, as we have seen, has drastically shifted from racism to egalitarianism; even the Southern whites, particularly the educated leadership, concede the broad merit of the Negro cause; and, finally, mob action no longer has respectability in our society. There *have* been attempts, to be sure, at mass counter-revolutionary white action: the Ku Klux leader in Georgia told a rally that "we must fight poison with poison," armed conflict between white and Negro mobs has broken out in Cambridge, Maryland, and white hoodlums have repeatedly assaulted Negro pickets in the Bronx. But all this is a feeble replica of the kind of white action that would be necessary to defeat the revolution; and it seems almost impossible for action to be generated on the required scale.

There is a second, and far more subtle, method by which the Negro Revolution might be tamed and eventually crippled: through a "sellout" by the Negro leadership itself. It has happened time and again in the history of unsuccessful revolts that the masses, after having been indoctrinated and radicalized by their leadership, are then betrayed by the leadership itself, and left floundering and inchoate, finally to collapse from lack of direction or guidance. Betrayals occur for a variety of reasons, but usually from a combination of venality and timorousness; and because it is much easier for counter-revolutionaries to put pressure on the leadership, the few who stand out from the crowd, than on the broad base of the masses themselves.

There are very strong indications that this betrayal-process has already begun; for so radicalized were the Negro masses by the events of May that they have now outstripped almost all of the Negro leadership, even those considered the "crackpot" fringe only a year ago. In particular, we are seeing more and more the openly expressed fear on the part of *all* the established Negro organizations that the Negro masses will get out of hand, will pass beyond the safe-and-sane limits desired by the leadership, and begin to "resort to violence" against the government. Desperately fearful of violence and hence of genuine militancy, all these established organizations, from NAACP to CORE to SNCC, have banded together in the Council for United Civil Rights Leadership, heavily financed by equally fearful white Liberals, to keep the Negro masses "under control."

Of course, the Negro Establishment will not be able to dump their own revolution quickly and abruptly, else they would be totally repudiated by their followers. The strategy, on the contrary, appears to be as follows: to pressure for the "safe-and-sane" course of Federal intervention and civil rights bills, and, with the plum of this concession to the Negro masses, to keep the damper down on mass demonstrations.

The following quotes indicate the dimensions of this attempt to cripple the revolution and channel it into "safe," orderly statist directions:

"Administration and Negro leaders view the passage this year of the Kennedy civil rights bill, with the "public accommodations" section relatively intact, as absolutely essential to keep the fire under control.

"If we don't get the public accommodations section, the Negroes won't talk to us any more," said one important Administration figure. "If we can't talk to them, advise them, there's no telling what might happen."³

Why are white religious, business and civic leaders so anxious to deal with men like [the leaders of the Council for United Civil Rights Leadership]. . . . “You should see what’s waiting in the wings to take over, if these non-violent people fail,” said one influential white private citizen. . . .” 4

It seems clear, furthermore, that President Kennedy’s sudden decision for allout action on civil rights legislation and his intervention in general were caused precisely by the new revolutionary mood of the Negro people. It was immediately after the Negro violence of the night of May 11-12, that the President decided to send Federal troops to Alabama—causing Malcolm X, articulate young spokesman for the radical Black Muslims, to comment acidly that Kennedy only intervened after the onset of *Negro* violence. Nothing had been done by the Federal government, he added, when white (government) violence had been rampant in Birmingham.

Our prognosis for the Negro problem in this country depends on whether or not the Establishment strategy for curbing and containing the Negro Revolution will succeed. Success for this strategy depends upon two factors: (a) whether Congress will pass a “tough” civil rights bill this year, and (b) whether the Negro masses will find a leadership willing at least to keep up with the radical temper of the masses or even to go beyond it. *If* Congress does pass the civil rights bill, *and* no popular radical leaders emerge among the Negroes, then it is fairly certain that the Negro Revolution will be curbed, will be satisfied with limited concessions, and will finally simmer down or perhaps fizzle out. But *if*, on the other hand, the civil rights bill is stopped by a filibuster, *and* a popular radical leadership comes to the fore, then a full-scale Negro Revolution seems inevitable. Should one of the conditions hold and not the other, then the outcome becomes doubtful.

As to the second condition for the continuation of the Revolution, it is rare that a revolution has succeeded without truly radical leaders to constitute a vanguard. But as yet, the Negro Revolution has not found its Lenin, its Castro, or its Hitler. Who are the “extremist” groups “waiting in the wings”? So far, they consist largely of the followers of Robert F. Williams and the Black Muslims, with smaller groupings around the Trotskyites and the Maoist “Hammer and Steel.” There are also new and so far small groups of militants such as the *Uhuru* and GOAL movements in Detroit.

The Black Muslims have a substantial following, but largely limited to the poorer working class in the Northern cities. The Muslims are a highly interesting movement, which received favorable publicity years ago in the ultra-right-wing *Right* magazine. The Muslims have a far more libertarian program than the other Negro organizations, opposed to compulsory integration. Indeed, as a Negro nationalist movement, they favor voluntary segregation of the races, preferably in a Negro nation in the “Black Belt” of the South, or in a Negro return to Africa. The Muslims have also been able, paradoxically, to do a remarkable job in instilling the “Protestant ethic” into the most criminal groups of the Negro population. The Muslims, however, have not been able to attract any Negro support in the South; and, at the most, its Muslim religion would limit its mass base. Malcolm X will never be the “Lenin” of the Negro Revolution; at the most, the Muslims could be a co-operating but subsidiary organization in such a struggle.

Robert F. Williams had a substantial following in the South, but he fled to Cuba after being charged with kidnapping, and it is doubtful if he commands any organizational support at present. William Worthy is emphatically on the left of the Negro movement, but again, he is an independent journalist without an organizational base.

The fact that no over-riding leaders are in sight, however, does not mean that they will not emerge. For one of the main characteristics of a revolutionary situation is that change is unprecedentedly swift. As long as the situation continues to be revolutionary, a prominent radical leader and organization could emerge out of the blue in a matter of months.

Suppose that the Establishment strategy fails, and the Negro Revolution succeeds, what form might we expect it to take? Here again, prognosis is risky, but we might expect several developments. In the first place, there seems no doubt that a revolutionary leadership would be generally “leftist,” i.e., for some form of socialism at home, and opposed to the Cold War foreign policies of the United States. We can infer this from the fact that the current radical leadership, each in its separate way,

has a strong tendency to identify “white oppression” at home with “white American imperialism” abroad, especially against the “colored countries” of Asia and Africa.

As an example of this trend of thought, we may take the Negro journalist William Worthy. In a speech in Harlem on June 1, Worthy called for a Negro “third party” in America (toward which the Muslims and others are also sympathetic) to “co-ordinate . . . unsung local heroes into one gigantic effective national movement.” A Negro party, added Worthy, would wield the political balance of power, and upset the entire “white power structure” of the country. It would also “change the nuclear-racistcolonialist course of American history, and thereby the destiny of the entire world.”

A revolutionary Negro leadership would concentrate, as we have indicated, far more on direct opposition to all levels of *government*, especially the local police. That this would be true North as well as South is seen by the recent prominence of new, militant groups in protesting police brutality in Detroit. Protesting the killing of an alleged Negro prostitute by a white policeman, were none of the established organizations; only radical groups participated, including the Black Muslims, *Uhuru* and GOAL.

Another factor has already served to radicalize all sectors of the Negro movement. More and more reference appears, in the Negro literature, to the “white power structure;” Negroes were highly impressed with the fact that negotiations in Birmingham were conducted, not so much with the elected public officials, as with the leading businessmen of the community. This has caused many Negroes, of varying political stripe, to adopt the radical view that the “real rulers” of government are not the elected officials, but the big businessmen of the community or, in the final analysis, of the country. We can expect that many of them will draw Marxist conclusions from this premise; and the Marxists near and among the radical Negro groups will do their best to see to it that these conclusions are drawn.

Many conservatives are irretrievably convinced that the Communists are somehow “behind” the whole Negro Revolution. Paradoxically, however, in the spectrum of Negro organizations that we have outlined, the Communist Party can best be described as “moderately left of center.” Their main idol is the Rev. Martin Luther King, and they wax almost as hysterical over the possibility of Negro violence as do the most determined racists. Anyone considering this far-fetched is invited to turn to a lengthy article by the Negro editor of *The Worker*, James E. Jackson, on the Negro question. Jackson devotes a large part of his article to a savagely vituperative attack on the Black Muslims, calling them “ultra-reactionary forces . . . with the strategic assignment to sow ideological confusion . . . a leach on the Negro freedom movement—sucking its blood. . . .” Jackson is particularly bitter that Malcolm X dared to attack the Rev. King as an “Uncle Tom.” Jackson even goes on to denounce militant, revolutionary Negroes in general as self-glorifiers and ignorant egotists. The radical *Liberator* magazine is denounced for daring to criticize the Rev. King, and even Robert F. Williams is bitterly attacked for his “utterly irresponsible attacks upon . . . Negro leaders and their allies. . . .”⁵

In denouncing the Muslim proposal for a Black nation in the South, James Jackson carefully refrained from pointing out that this was the Communist Party line several decades ago. Still holding to this program, however, is perhaps the “furthest out” and most radical of all the revolutionary organizations in and around the Negro Left: Hammer and Steel. A Maoist splinter group of men formerly in the Communist Party, Hammer and Steel considers the Negro movement to be a “national liberation movement,” which “must be prepared to answer violence with greater violence directed at Wall Street and their agents.” Non-violence might have worked against relatively civilized Britain, says Hammer and Steel, but could not work against “brutal and genocidal” American imperialism. To have true civil rights, the “Negro nation” must have its “freedom” and self-determination in the South, and “special rights” must be granted the Negro minority in the North and West. “A Free Negro nation will determine whether its best interest lie [sic] in separation or as an autonomous part of the U. S.” As for the best means of attaining this goal, Hammer and Steel envisages a “national liberation front” in the South similar to the fronts in Viet Nam and Algeria. Hammer and Steel ends its discussion with a series of slogans for our time:

“Disarm the White Oppressors in the South!”, “Arms for the Negro People!”, and “Self-Determination, State Power for the Negro Nation!”⁶

To pass briefly from the analytical to the evaluative, what should be the libertarian position on the Negro movement? Perhaps the most important point to make here is that the issue is a complex one; the Negro Revolution has some elements that a libertarian must favor, others that he must oppose. Thus, the libertarian opposes compulsory segregation and police brutality, but also opposes compulsory integration and such absurdities as ethnic quota systems in jobs. The ethnic quota is no less objectionable than Hitler’s *numerus clausus*; if 25% of bricklayers must be Negro, must not the proportion of Jewish doctors be forcibly reduced to 3%? Must every occupation in the land have its precise quota of Armenians, Greeks, Montenegrans, etc. *ad infinitum*?

For his over-all estimate of the Negro movement, the libertarian must weigh and formulate his conclusions according to what he believes to be the most important priorities. In doing so, incidentally, he should not overlook a generally neglected point: some Negroes are beginning to see that the heavy incidence of unemployment among Negro workers is partially caused by union restrictionism keeping Negroes (as well as numerous whites) out of many fields of employment. If the Negro Revolution shall have as one of its consequences the destruction of the restrictive union movement in this country, this, at least, will be a welcome boon.

Notes

1 Quoted in Robert F. Williams, *Negroes with Guns* (New York: Marzani and Munsell, 1962), p. 22.

2 *New York Post*, May 13, 1963.

3 *New York Daily News*, July 26, 1963.

4 *New York Daily News*, July 25, 1963.

5 James E. Jackson, “A Fighting People Forging New Unity,” *The Worker*, July 7, 1963.

6 *Hammer and Steel Newsletter*, June, 1963.