

Unity
Statement
of
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Organization

Freedom Road Socialist Organization
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Black Bolshevik

Autobiography of an Afro-American Communist

by Harry Haywood

700 pages, paperback

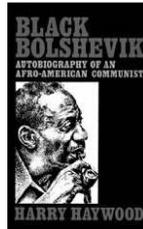
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This book, published in 1978 by Liberator Press, tells the life story and political experiences and analysis of Harry Haywood, a Black communist who was influential in his decades in the Communist Party, as well as after leaving the CP and continuing his life-long commitment to revolution by joining one of the New Communist parties of the 1970s. This book gives an invaluable first-hand perspective on nearly all the major events in the struggle for Black liberation and human liberation in the 20th century.

From the back cover of the book:

BLACK BOLSHEVIK is the autobiography of Harry Haywood, the son of former slaves who became a leading member of the Communist Party USA and a pioneering theoretician on the Afro-American struggle.

The author's first-hand accounts of the Chicago race riot of 1919, the Scottsboro Boys' defense, communist work in the South, the Spanish Civil War, the battle against the revisionist betrayal of the Party, and other history shaping events are must reading for all who are interested in Black history and the working class struggle.



Interview with the FARC-EP

16 page pamphlet

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This interview with a representative of the FARC-EP is originally from *Fight Back!* newspaper in 1999. The interview asks and answers many of the important questions about US intervention in Colombia, the Colombian revolutionary movements, the drug problem, and much more. Common questions and misperceptions about the FARC-EP (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia—People's Army) are dealt with head-on. In this interview, you can hear a representative of the FARC-EP tell in their own words why they are fighting and what they are fighting for. Now more than ever it is crucial for people in the US to learn about and stand in solidarity with the forces fighting for national liberation in Colombia, as the US is now sending over a billion dollars of military aid in an effort to defeat them.



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Introduction

This is a statement of the principles which unite the members of the Freedom Road Socialist Organization. This statement represents our best understanding at this time of the important issues facing communists in the United States. To some degree, this is a work in progress. It will be more fully developed by our comrades, and by the rich experience of struggle for a socialist world without a ruling capitalist class.

The last decade of the twentieth century was a period of challenge for the communist movements in a number of countries. We saw the downfall of governments in Eastern Europe and the former USSR, and the rise of the United States as the sole superpower. This had a profound impact on movements for National Liberation and Socialism all over the world. Despite these setbacks, revolution, and the struggle for socialism advanced and a new generation of workers and peasants continue the struggle.

In both positive and negative ways, our organization was impacted by these changes. We set forth on the next century with a clearer vision of Marxism-Leninism and the tasks ahead because of those experiences.

We believe that capitalism threatens any hope for social justice, peace, and human dignity. We look out on a worldwide crisis of capitalism with mass hunger, disease, environmental destruction, poverty, and economic collapse. Imperialism threatens the survival of all life on this planet. Nothing short of revolution and socialism can answer this threat.

Now is the time to build revolutionary organization; to rebuild the struggle for revolution and socialism in the US, and to fuse Marxism with the working class movement. The challenge is ours to apply the lessons that we have learned in the last decade to the body of Marxist knowledge; to build a better socialist movement that can carry us through the next century.

A Brief History

The roots of our organization emerged originally out of the tremendous social ferment and revolutionary struggle of the 1960s and 1970s, as oppressed nationalities, women, and young people sought to bring genuine equality, justice, and peace to the United

States. Our organization, and its immediate forerunners, arose in that section of the new revolutionary movement which looked to the People's Republic of China and Mao Zedong's theoretical contributions to Marxism-Leninism for inspiration and guidance.

FRSO grew out of an initial merger of the Proletarian Unity League and the Revolutionary Workers Headquarters, in addition to later mergers with the Organization for Revolutionary Unity and the Amilcar Cabral/Paul Robeson Collective. FRSO's roots are primarily in the labor movement, the African-American struggle, the gay and lesbian movements, anti-intervention movements and the student movement. FRSO merged with the Socialist Organizing Network, (SON) in 1993. SON emerged initially out of the dissolution of the League of Revolutionary Struggle (LRS), which itself was formed by the unity of the August 29th Movement, I Wor Kuen, and the Revolutionary Communist League. SON included members who were not part of the LRS. SON's roots are primarily in the liberation movements of oppressed nationalities and national minorities (Chicano/Latino, Asian American, and African-American), and the labor movement.

In 1999, a social democratic grouping left to pursue a strategy the splitters call "left refoundationism." "Left refoundationism" rejects Leninism in favor of the goal to build a "mass socialist party" While they continue to use the name of our organization to build a social democratic project, we continue to build FRSO as a Marxist-Leninist organization.

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newspaper

Fight Back! / *¡Lucha y Resiste!* is a bilingual (English / Spanish) quarterly newspaper that provides coverage and analysis of some of the key battles facing working and low-income people.

The writers and staff of *Fight Back!* are activists and organizers – in the trade unions, low-income communities, oppressed nationality movements, on the campuses, and in the people's movements.

Over the past 4 years, *Fight Back!* has been on the front lines of the people's struggles. From the battle for decent schools in Los Angeles, to the picket lines in Alabama and the demonstrations against police brutality in Chicago, *Fight Back!* has been there. Our correspondents around the U.S. bring you accurate and clear coverage of the fights for justice, peace and equality.

We believe that *Fight Back!* is especially important right now. The Bush Administration, along with the rich and powerful that stand behind it, has launched a war on the world. There is no other way to describe it. Working people and oppressed nationalities in this country are catching hell, and so are the people of Afghanistan, Palestine, and nearly every other place you can think of. And we all share a common enemy – the White House and Wall Street. Every issue of *Fight Back!* drives this point home.

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What We Stand for

We Exist to Organize for Revolution and Socialism. We are Marxist-Leninists who believe that capitalism—as a system centered on private accumulation and profit—is inherently a system of inequality, injustice, and war. We want a social system where social wealth is not in the hands of a few billionaires, but is controlled by the people. We seek both economic and political democracy. However, genuine democracy is not possible unless the multi-national working class holds the reins of society. Human needs cannot replace profit as the driving force of society unless the people control their workplaces, their schools, their neighborhoods, and the institutions of government.

We support socialism in the existing socialist countries and believe that socialism is the only solution for the future of humanity. However, we recognize that major contradictions exist in building socialism. We continue to look to both the summations of socialists around the world and to our own practice to deepen Marxist-Leninist theory and practice to guide us in making revolutionary change here in the United States.

Marxist theory guides our participation in the people's struggles. We know that it is as alive today as it was 150 years ago. The primary theoreticians of Marxism-Leninism are Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, and Mao. We also value the contributions of other socialists such as Amilcar Cabral, Fidel Castro, and Ho Chi Minh who applied Marxism to their own conditions. We seek to learn from Marxist-Leninists in the United States, such as William Z. Foster and Harry Haywood. Communists can also learn from revolutionary nationalists such as Malcolm X. Theory derives from social practice. We seek to grow from every new lesson our activism in all social movements teaches us.

As Socialists, We Make Our Home in the Working Class. The multinational working class has an objective interest in ending capitalism in this country. The working class looks somewhat different today than it did when

large-scale manufacturing was the dominating relations of production in the US economy. Nevertheless, workers are just as exploited and alienated from the wealth they produce as ever.

To combat exploitation, the working class needs to struggle for its own interests. We organize in the trade unions to fight for workers' rights, higher wages, and for an end to racist, sexist and homophobic discrimination in the workplace. Our main task in the trade unions is to place them on a class struggle basis. We believe in the organization of all workers, including the unemployed, the homeless, undocumented immigrants, and prisoners. We organize in neighborhoods and communities of working people to struggle for a better life, for better housing, schools, and health care. We support the fight for welfare rights as an important struggle within the working class. In all of this work, socialists fight for the organization of oppressed nationality workers, to fight for self-determination and working class unity.

We Seek Unity with All Forces who are in Struggle against Imperialism. We seek to build a united front against imperialism. This united front consists of all forces aligned against imperialism with the strategic alliance of the multi-national working class and oppressed nationality movements at its core and the proletariat in the lead.

To that end, we seek unity with a variety of progressive and revolutionary movements in the US. The main way we do this is by building mass movements that bring people into progressive activism and introduce them to socialist politics and organization. We seek organizational unity with other socialists where possible but we see it as a secondary task in this current period.

Capitalism is the Enemy. Our main enemy is capitalism. In order to fight the enemy and win, we have to understand the enemy.

Under capitalism, a handful that own the factories, the mines, corporate farms, and the banks control the wealth that the majority produces. We are fighting this system.

Conclusion

Without revolutionary organization, we cannot advance the revolutionary movement. As working people, we need our own party to fight for our interests, to help unify our struggles, to broaden our leadership, and to enable us to bring about socialism. We intend to build a new communist party. We need to build a party of the working class, which can someday contend for power. This party is democratic centralist. Its leadership needs to reflect the composition of our struggle. The leadership will be predominantly oppressed nationality members and predominantly women, with Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual and Transgender representation as well.

We cannot predict the exact road to socialism but history teaches us to expect that the capitalist class will take harsh and repressive measures against any and all challenges to their control of state power. Our enemies are organized; we must be organized, too. In the spirit of Malcolm X, all serious revolutionaries should affirm the necessity to use any means necessary to bring about socialism and the liberation of the oppressed nations and peoples in the US!

Capitalism organizes globally. Three blocs of capital compete intensely for growth and profits. Capitalists either destroy the competition, or are destroyed themselves. This drive sends the giant corporations around the world, seeking cheaper raw materials and corrupt local governments that will ensure a “friendly investment climate.” Capitalism continuously seeks cheaper labor costs.

The capitalist class rules this country. We are told that this is a democracy, where the people rule. It is, however, their democracy. It is not just that it takes millions of dollars to run for high office. The state, the government, and the legal system were set up and developed to serve the interests of capitalism, to uphold the rights of property over the rights of people. Capitalism is a system of violence. Poverty is built into its operation.

The capitalist class needs to maintain its grip on the levers of power. History has shown repeatedly that capitalists will stop at nothing to maintain their wealth and power.

Capitalist democracy is protected by the threat of force. We know that the US government does not just go to war to protect its profits overseas. It will also send the armed forces of the state out against its own people as well, to repress urban rebellions against injustice, militant strikes or student demonstrations.

Capitalism is a social system. US capitalism is not capitalism in the abstract: it is racist capitalism, based on white supremacy. The US was built on land stolen from indigenous peoples and by the labor of enslaved Africans. The capitalist class has kept the working class of this country divided along racial lines since colonization. The racist view of the world promoted among white people is constantly reinforced by the institutional racism of US society.

An important element in structural or institutional racism is the imposition of a differential in the treatment of white people over people of color. This system allocates real privileges to white people. To the extent that this system is either protected or ignored, real unity within the multinational working class and between the working class and the national movements cannot be sustained.

Due to institutional racism and national oppression, oppressed nationalities and national minorities suffer politically, socially and economically. The white supremacist world-view is internalized among oppressed nationalities/national minorities,

producing self-hatred, and self-destructive behavior. White workers need to be educated to the fact that racism and white supremacy ultimately hurt all workers.

While the majority of white workers do not significantly benefit from the oppression of people of color, racism has been used to successfully divide and weaken progressive social movements throughout US history. This is just one example of how racism functions to the detriment of workers. Racism intensifies and prolongs the oppression of oppressed nationalities and national minorities. It is also a particular danger because, should fascism come to power in the US, it will do so by exploiting racial fears and divisions. A socialist revolution will require the unity of the working class with the revolutionary movements of oppressed nationalities, and this united front will be the primary social force to lead the charge and usher in socialism.

We Must Conduct a Consistent Struggle against Racist and National Oppression.

For five hundred years, capitalism has everywhere rested on colonization without and racist oppression of its minority nationalities within its borders. In turn, the freedom struggles of the African-American, Chicano, Native American, Pacific-Islander, Asian American, and Puerto Rican peoples have been the driving force of the people's struggles in the US. These revolutionary movements have led the fight against national oppression, and struggled for complete equality and national freedom. One consistent demand in the liberation struggles of the oppressed nations has been the demand for self-determination: the rights of oppressed nations to control their land and determine their national destiny free of imperialist domination. We stand in complete defense of this right and the ability of the oppressed nations to exercise it.

The course of struggle in the US forged a new nation among African-Americans based in the Black Belt agricultural region of the US South. Since before the Civil War, African-American fighters for liberation have asserted the demand for land and justice, as well as the demand for complete equality throughout the

superpower, to oppose any military, economic or political domination and to support national liberation struggles.

We stand for peace, independence, and the fight of all oppressed nations to self-determination, including the struggles of indigenous peoples. In the post-Cold War era, the US has weakened as an economic power, but remains a dangerous, aggressive military power. We oppose the US government's imperialist wars wherever they are fought. We oppose the new imperialist push to re-divide the world. We stand in solidarity with people's movements in the third world in struggle against this "New World Order." As socialists, we have been and are actively involved in supporting many revolutionary and national liberation struggles around the world. We have been particularly active in supporting national liberation struggles in Central America; the struggle to free and unite Ireland; the battle for the Palestinian nation; and the revolutionary movement of the Philippines. We support Colombia's struggle for national liberation and support Iraq in its struggle for self-determination and to resist sanctions.

Electoral Politics are an Arena of the People's Struggle.

Our organizations have extensive experience in electoral campaigns, having worked in the Jesse Jackson Presidential campaigns, in the Rainbow Coalition, and on local campaigns and issues. Electoral politics has been and will remain an important realm of political struggle for working people, to improve their daily lives, to gain a greater measure of political power (especially for oppressed nationality and national minority communities), and to win important reforms.

In recent history, we have pressured elected officials around legislation on military aid and attacks on welfare; and we have organized community campaigns to oppose racist ballot initiatives. We have no illusions about the nature of the bourgeois parties. However at times we work with these parties to advance the people's interests. We furthermore support progressive, independent third party efforts.

Our survival necessitates public control of technology and production and the elimination of the blind consumerism that causes us to squander so many of the world's resources needlessly.

The environmental movement has been on the cutting edge of struggle here at home and in many parts of the world. The environmental section of the anti-globalization movement has a correctly anti-capitalist stand. It should be an important part of our work, with special attention to the issues of environmental racism. These issues have caused oppressed nationalities / national minorities to suffer disproportionately from environmental destruction, as well as to be skeptical of an environmental movement that has often ignored their concerns, input, and leadership.

Unfortunately at times, some socialist countries have imitated capitalism in their environmental policy, paying little attention to the issue of protecting the earth for current and future generations.

On the other hand, socialist countries such as Cuba have developed innovative and forward looking environmental policies and programs to conserve natural beauty and resources while creating alternative models of development that don't destroy the earth. It is clear that capitalism's need to continually expand and consume more resources is a threat to the ability of the Earth to continue to sustain life. Only conscious socialist planning by all of society can make this a reality.

We Are Internationalists. The world situation has changed dramatically in the last several years, especially with the collapse of socialism in the USSR and Eastern Europe. The rise of revisionism paved the way for the end of socialism in the Soviet Union. Where the US and USSR used to be the major world powers, we now have Japan, the US and Western Europe led by Germany as three imperialist rivals, all trying to expand their markets and power internationally. One thing remains constant: the overwhelming majority of the world's people live in the Third World and are suffering because of imperialism. The aspirations of those peoples for national liberation, self-determination, democracy and social justice will ultimately assert themselves with decisive force on the world stage. We have a special responsibility, as Marxist-Leninists living in the last remaining

United States. We stand in that tradition. We support self-determination for the African-American nation. As this struggle gains momentum, this may eventually include the establishment of an independent African-American nation based in the South. We defend the right to independent African-American organization necessary to achieve this liberation, including the right to separate African-American revolutionary parties.

As a result of historical developments since the annexation of Mexican land by the United States, there emerged an oppressed Chican@/Mexican@ nation of Aztlan. Since annexation, there has been a continuous struggle for land and justice (tierra y libertad). We support the right to self-determination up to and including secession for that nation. We defend the right to independent Chican@ / Mexican@ organization necessary to achieve this liberation, including the right to separate Chican@ / Mexican@ parties.

We support struggles of national liberation for all other nations brutalized by imperialist oppression whose homelands are within the borders of the United States, such as the Native American nations of the US, the Hawai'ian nation and the Puerto Rican struggle for national independence.

The national liberation movements in the US include many different classes. In each movement, however, the overwhelming majority is from the working class. We support the whole national movement in the democratic struggle for self-determination. We recognize, however, that only under the leadership of the working class will the broad united front for liberation realize equality among nations.

Marxist-Leninists must be Leaders in the Fight for Women's Liberation and against All Forms of Male Supremacy.

The oppression of women predates the rise of capitalism. Capitalism, together with male supremacy, intensified the subordination and degradation of women. Capitalism also manipulated family life and sexuality to ensure its control over the working class.

The fight for women's genuine liberation and equality is one of the central components of the communist movement. Countries

that have had socialist revolutions have seen huge gains for women in terms of political representation and participation, as well as increased rights such as easier access to jobs outside of the home, easier access to divorce, and increased reproductive freedom.

The battle for women's equality is a long-term one that requires ongoing struggle before, during, and after revolution. Unfortunately, in some revolutionary movements and societies issues of women's equality have sometimes been on the back burner. Women's equality must be an integral, everyday part of our organization and the movement for social change. We place particular emphasis on the demands of working class and oppressed nationality women, including the right to welfare, decent housing, quality affordable child care and an end to the imprisonment of partners and children by the racist criminal justice system. In addition we support the demands of women which cut across class lines such as full reproductive freedom, an end to domestic violence and violence against women, affirmative action, and equal pay for equal work. We believe that the women's liberation movement can only achieve its objectives through the full participation and leadership of working class women and oppressed nationality women.

Because women's oppression is entrenched in the class system, the struggle for women's liberation will surely continue under socialism. Male supremacy will not magically disappear when workers rule is established. We struggle now against patterns of male domination within revolutionary and progressive movements, including the Freedom Road Socialist Organization. We are committed to advancing women's leadership in our own organization as well as in the mass movements.

Marxist-Leninists Must Uphold Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Liberation and the Fight Against All Forms of Homophobia and Heterosexism.

The struggle for the rights of Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, and Transgender people is a struggle for basic human rights. It includes the struggle to extend all democratic rights to LGBT people including immigration, parenting, and the right to be free from violence

in society and for the opportunity to participate equally in all aspects of society.

The Right wing has mounted a full-scale assault on the rights of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people seeking to dehumanize in order to justify persecution and the denial of basic human rights. Rather than buying into narrow definitions of family, we must support full legal and social acceptance of all forms of family. We know that this benefits not only queers but also takes in social and economic reality of the working class as a whole. Furthermore, we recognize the majority of queers are working class. We must actively oppose homophobia and heterosexism in all of their forms, in society and within our organization. We must also stand with Bisexual and Transgender people against attempts to submerge their struggles within the Lesbian and Gay rights movement. We work for the construction of a socialist society that will continue to fight for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender liberation in all of its institutions.

The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender movement has effectively challenged social oppression and, by winning the freedom to come out, expanded the possibilities of human sexuality in this society. This movement has led the way in fighting AIDS, one of the most devastating health crises of our time. Throughout history, queers have also been front line fighters in both the workers and national liberation movements. It has inspired the entire progressive movement with its courage and militancy; this movement has fought for and won real gains and freedoms for all people. It is a progressive movement, and revolutionaries should encourage and help lead it. As in all the mass movements where we organize, we strive for the leadership and empowerment of oppressed nationalities and working class people within the Lesbian, Gay Bisexual, and Transgender liberation movement. Just as Lenin was the first to strike down anti-queer laws, so too will we fight to land a crushing blow to anti-queer oppression.

Socialism Must Protect the Earth.

The struggle for a livable planet is a life and death issue. Corporate greed has polluted the air, destroyed the ozone layer, poisoned the waters, and drenched our food with dangerous chemicals.