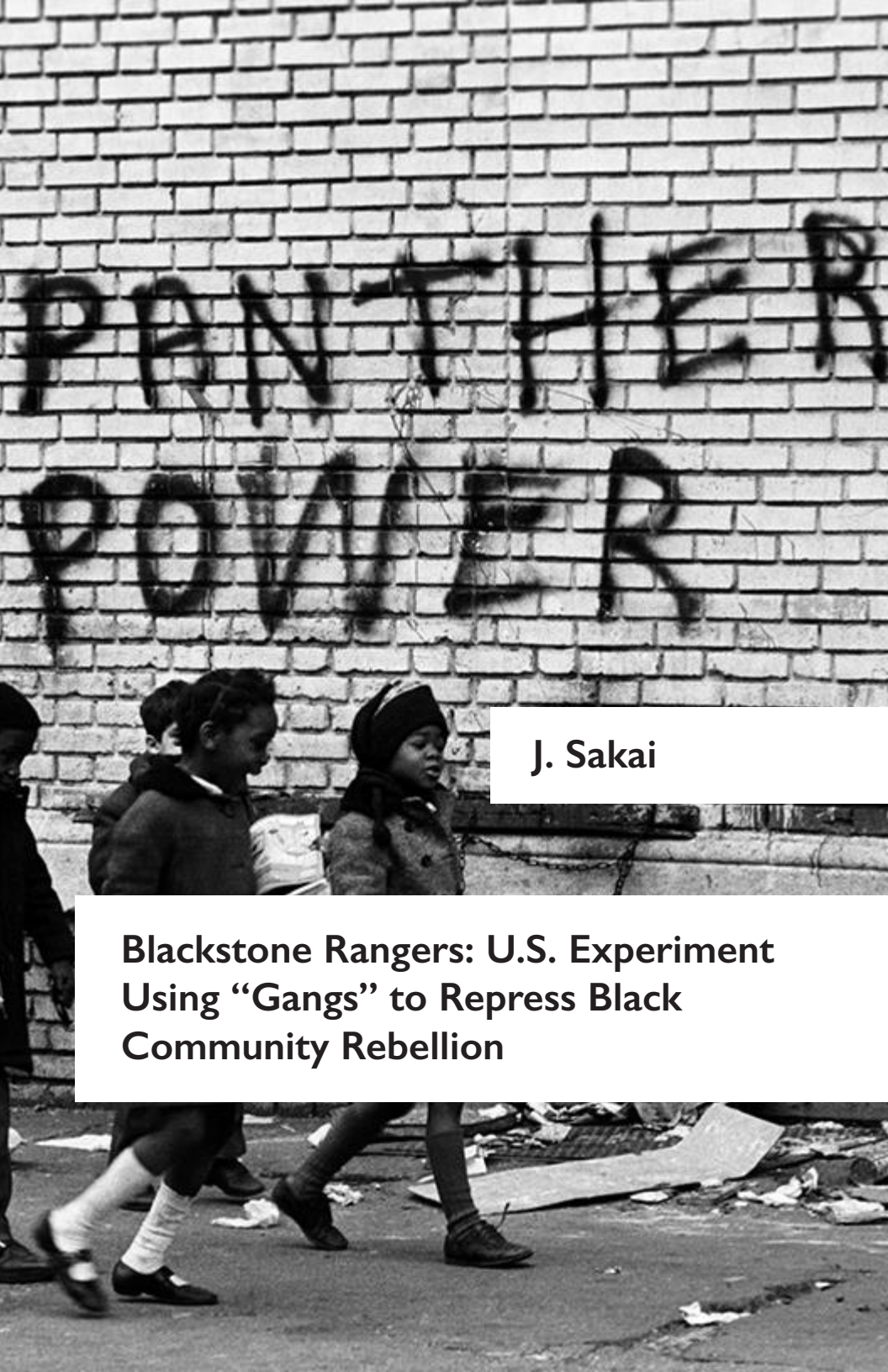

J. Sakai

Blackstone Rangers: U.S. Experiment Using "Gangs" to Repress Black Community Rebellion

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BLACKSTONE RANGERS:

The U.S. Experiment Using Gangs to Repress Black Community Rebellion

J. Sakai

introduction (IWE)

Our purpose in reprinting Sakai's piece is to share an often neglected episode of Chicago history as an entry point into theoretical and practical questions about local insurrectionary potential. The story he shares is the following: in the late 1960s, members of the city's Civil rights movement sought to ally themselves with the most powerful black street gangs in Chicago. Together they secured a $927,000 annual grant through the federal Office of Economic Opportunity. The Chicago police department eventually got involved and worked with liberal "community leaders" to use the gangs as a counter-insurgency force. Black gangs – especially the Black P. Stone Rangers – were regularly relied upon to suppress rioting and revolutionary organizing in their territories.

This history and the problems it poses are still with us insurgents at present. We've seen liberal leftists and gangs alike threaten fiercely anti-cop forces at demonstrations after police shootings through aggressive marginalization, snitching, and threats of direct violence. Leftists cynically consolidate political authority by constructing "the community" through the constitutive exclusion of the "Outside Agitator," whom they are always ready to hand over to the police. And gang leaders don't mince words about their willingness to shoot anyone who interferes with the territorial economy they operate for their individual aspirations of upward mobility in the capitalist system.

Theoretically, we do not follow Sakai's class analysis of the black lumpenproletariat (which is orthodox-Marxist by his own admission), save heuristically.[1] Its limits are evident throuhgout, though they are beyond the scope of this introduction to discuss in detail. To cite one example, the following text ultimately lacks a *political* analysis of late-60s Chicago, though one may catch a glimpse of it from time to time in peculiar, unexplained passages. At one point Sakai discusses how the

1 For Sakai's broader analysis of the lumpenproletariat, see: J. Sakai, *The Dangerous Class: Thoughts on the Making of the Lumpen/Proletariat*. (Montreal: Kersplebedeb, 2017).

gangs functioned to suppress riotous crowds and break up Panther organizing efforts. And then, pages later, he mentions that the Panthers themselves also prevented riots from breaking out (albeit in California). The politically strategic question of the insurgent value of the riot never arises, nor does the question of authority in moments of spontaneous revolt.

Practically, the problem for us, however, is a question of what strategy to take with respect to the triangular counter-insurgency apparatus made up of leftism, police, and gangs? How to navigate their counter-insurgent history while also recognizing that there are fragments of the left and the gangs that are irreducible to the existing order of things?

The past thirty years have seen the police pursue a strategy of "decapitation": going after shot-callers and watching like vultures as the gang hierarchies implode into organized disorder. The resultant genocide is the cheap price of the boost in police legitimacy, as citizens cry out for protection from the multiplication of gang wars. The civil rights campaigns and "community organizations" of the left, meanwhile, have fragmented and multiplied into an expansive N.G.O. network as its more revolutionary tendencies have retreated to abolitionism. We are familiar with peace-policing in the streets, but rarely do we reflect on how to organize ourselves vis-à-vis the aforementioned triangle outside of head-to-head confrontations with the cops. In general, we lack a contemporary political analysis of the counter-insurgent shape of power relations that has emerged through the Left-cop-gang triangle in Chicago. Despite its predominantly class-based analysis, we hope that the following text by J. Sakai can provide some orientation to that end.

preface (Sakai, 2017)

The following investigation in using class analysis to cut into current politics was written in the early fall of 1976. Even though the capitalist state is always running different trial projects in violently repressing the Black community, seldom can we document the political details. Often they are clandestine, of course. So this was a rare opportunity to do that.

My politics then were more standard Marxist on a theoretical level, and this paper reflects those primary criticisms of the lumpen/proletariat as a parasitic class easily bought off by capitalism against its own people. In practice, my political life was somewhat different even at that time; both in anti-war activity and in revolutionary working class organizing, i was simultaneously working closely with and also working against an assortment of lumpen guys both white and New Afrikan. My own theoretical view of the lumpen/proletariat has shifted its angle of vision since then, though much of what i analyzed in this situation in 1976 was obviously factually true. We decided to leave this writing as it originally was, as an example of that thorny period politically.

What hasn't been said is that on a personal level while writing, i was really pissed at the practice of street organizations like that. Their development was obviously brilliant, but also like a terrorism enforced on the Woodlawn community and the New Afrikan working people there. It was like a white supremacist fantasy come true. The final exasperating touch was that both the white liberal community and the white left in town were strongly pro-gang. Excusing every misdeed, hoping mostly to opportunistically cash in somehow on the paramilitary rise of the lumpen-led organizations. It wasn't such a nice time for families caught in the beat down, as the state happily experimented in using Black to step on Black. Woodlawn was also, coincidentally, where i had graduated from Wadsworth elementary school (my one academic degree), and where i went to the same secondary school as Jeff Fort, the founder and leader of the Blackstone Rangers.

One morning a co-worker who sat at the next desk at my job, came in obviously upset. Earlier that morning, while getting ready for school, her young daughter had glanced out the window only to see two Blackstone Ranger soldiers casually pull out guns and kill another youth right on the sidewalk outside. The daughter was completely terrified and refusing to leave their apartment for any reason. Her mom was equally frightened that the organization would somehow find out that her kid was a witness to it all. She was crying and not believing my assurances that even the street organization didn't have x-ray vision like Superman, or any magical means of discovering her daughter. That's the kind of fear that capitalism unleashes to disconnect people from their own strengths and mess up their lives. It was hard for me to romanticize that away as so many movement people were doing politically.

Lastly, I have to acknowledge the comradeship and practical assistance of the Chicago Repression Research Group, who skillfully managed to liberate from the U.S. government several file boxes of correspondence, grant applications, assorted documents and departmental reports. Again, my thanks.

blackstone rangers: the u.s. experiment using "gangs" to repress black community rebellion (1976)

A central confusion within the Movement ten years ago was the question of class. Who are the revolutionary forces? Who are the reactionary forces? Typical of that chaotic time of trying on different ideologies as one tries on clothes of different styles, was the confusion over the lumpenproletariat and the "street people."

The lumpenproletariat, long viewed by Marxists as an unstable and "dangerous" class, were suddenly praised by many revolutionaries. In 1969, when the Black Panther Party was explaining the forcible ouster of disruptive white leftists from their Oakland United Front Against Fascism Conference, the BPP defined the ouster as "lumpenproletariat discipline."[2] Eldridge Cleaver, acting as one of the chief ideologists of the Panther Party, acclaimed the "Black urban lumpenproletariat" to be "the vanguard of the proletariat."[3] This confused trend of hailing "the Lumpen" as the most revolutionary strata in U.S. society was widespread in various third world movements and the "New Left" Students for a Democratic Society.

In this study, we show how the capitalist state, in the form of a reform "poverty program," reached down into the very mass of the oppressed in one community in Chicago to recruit a force to keep a repressive order for it. It was the leadership role played by lumpen/proletarian elements within that organization of oppressed that gave the government its leverage. Further, the situation was both masked and confused by a split within the state, with certain police elements savagely turning on their newly-bought "Lumpen" allies. During this

2 "Lumpenproletarian Discipline Vs. Bourgeois Reaction," *Black Panther*, August 9, 1969.

3 Eldridge Cleaver, "On the Ideology of the Black Panther Party," *Black Panther*, June 6, 1970.

time the Movement was able neither to successfully intervene nor even to expose this deadly maneuver, because of our confused ideas about the "lumpen." This resulted in a situation where the *De Facto* public emphasis of the Movement towards this development was to support the repression. As startling as this may seem, it underlines the practical necessity of class analysis in guiding our immediate work. When radicals in the '60s spoke of "the lumpen" they were usually talking about what they also called "street people" as a whole. So that a high-school-age gang member, an unemployed veteran just back from Vietnam, and an aspiring pimp or heroin pusher might be classed together as "lumpen." Often, a personal involvement with violence and crime was regarded as immediate proof of high potential for revolutionary work. This confusion about class had tragic results.

Lack of a precise understanding about the lumpenproletariat is still so dangerous because it blinds us to a key factor in the development of repression against the oppressed. Marxists have traditionally made a sharp distinction between the poorest, most oppressed layers of the working class – who are propertyless and often jobless – and the lumpenproletariat. The latter, existing on the bottom edge of society, no longer have any relation to the means of production and distribution. The owe no loyalty save to their own personal interests, and, far from having solidarity with any class they are all too willing to live as parasites preying on their own people. At times this point is obscured since the "lumpen" are traditional victims of police activity.

In a famous passage in the Manifesto, Marx and Engels wrote: "The 'dangerous class,' the social scum, that passively rotting mass thrown off by the lowest layers of old society, may, here and there, be swept into the movement by a proletarian revolution; its conditions of life, however, prepare it far more for the part of a bribed tool of reactionary intrigue."[4] That analysis is still accurate, and helps us understand how organizations of "street people"are successfully used by the ruling class.

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4 Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, "Manifesto ofthe Community Party," *Selected Works*, International Publishers, 1972. Page 44.

a case study in chicago

In 1965-70, national attention was focused on the explosive political growth of Black youth gangs in Chicago, Illinois. Two Southside gangs in particular, the Black P. Stone Nation and their rivals, the Disciples, rapidly became empires; thousands of youth could be mobilized wearing either the red berets of the "Stones" or the blue berets of the "Ds." Immediately, both the Civil Rights Movement and the white liberal community saw these gangs as ready-made organizations to advance the interests of social reform. Both believed that police harassment of ghetto youth and the poverty of gang members opened the door to recruiting these gang structures en masse into the Movement.

The Black P. Stone Nation, the largest of the two youth gangs, was perhaps the most successfully publicized organization of its kind in the U.S. From its origins as a grammar school marching group for the Annual Bud Billiken Day (a traditional celebration sponsored by the Chicago Defender and participated in by tens of thousands of Chicago Blacks), the "Stones" soon grew into a local Woodlawn gang. In the early sixties that gang, the Blackstone Rangers, became the "General Motors" of Southside Chicago gangs. It found the key to growth by becoming a "conglomerate" of gangs by convincing local gangs to affiliate into the Blackstone structure. The local gang leaders were represented on the "Main 21," the leadership council of what later became known as the Black P. Stone Nation. At their peak the "Stones" had most of the gang youth on the Southside from 23rd Street to the City's southern edge, with additional affiliates in the Black suburbs, the Westside and Northside, and claimed membership was between 5,000-7,000.

The Disciples ("Ds") were generally conceded to be fewer in number, more of a "fighting gang" and less political than the "Stones." They were dominant in the Englewood area, West of Woodlawn. Their membership was generally put at around 1,000. In the Spring of 1966, Rev. Martin Luther King, James Bevel, Al Sampson and other S.C.L.C. staff started holding meetings with over thirty Chicago youth gangs. In May, Rev. Bevel addressed 400 "Stones" in the First Presbyterian Church of Woodlawn, stressing that a campaign

by all the thousands of gang youth against the white establishment could "immobilize" the city.[5] The alluring prospect of real power was repeatedly held up for gang leaders. That June 11th, S.C.L.C., and the A.C.L.U., the street ministers of the Urban Training Center, the Y.M.C.A. and other social agencies held an all-day conference for the leaders of eight major gangs in the swank Sheraton-Blackstone Hotel. Comically named, the "Turfmasters First Annual Convention," this meeting once again tried to enlist the gangs into the liberal movement.[6]

Although the Blackstone Rangers and the Disciples soon lost interest in the rhetoric of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, interest in them was far from over. Liberals and church progressives continued to view the gangs as important levers for social reform in Chicago. Rev. John Fry and the First Presbyterian Church encouraged the "Stones" to use the church as a center, and Fry himself became a controversial public defender of the gangs. Police harassment was countered by a well-financed defense program. Right-wing insurance-man Clement Stone, Charles Merrill, Jr. (of the founding family of Merrill, Lynch, etc.), Charles F. Kettering II, (who gave $260,000 out of GM profits) and other capitalists built up a sizable fund for bail and legal expenses.[7] The Illinois Black Panther Party was also trying hard to enlist the gangs, temporarily achieving a well-publicized alliance with the Disciples. The "Stones" and "Ds" were widely viewed as latent revolutionary organizations. This trend achieved its purest expression in the realm of literature, in Sam Greenlee's *The Spook Who Sat by the Door*.[8] In this best-selling novel, a Southside Chicago youth gang is secretly reorganized by a Black rebel who learned guerrilla warfare within the C.I.A. The novel ends in a powerful, but doomed, all-out armed assault by the gang against the U.S. Army.

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5 John Fry, *Fire and Blackstone*, J.B. Lippincott & Co., 1969. Page 5.

6 *Daily Defender*, June 13, 1966. *Chicago Sun-Times*, June 12, 1966.

7 *Chicago Tribune*, August 23, 1970. *Chicago Tribune*, September 24, 1970.

8 Sam Greenlee, *The Spook Who Sat by the Door*, Bantam, 1970.

In a recent interview, Greenlee confirms that his novel was a fictional vehicle for a "serious study of the revolutionary potential in the Black community." He says the gangs had "...the greatest revolutionary potential. All they lacked was orientation and leadership. I think they had more revolutionary potential than the Panthers, for instance."[9] Greenlee is only expressive of what many people believed a few years ago – and perhaps many still believe.

gang leadership not revolutionary

Contrary to the myth so often projected, the Blackstone Rangers and the Disciples were never "revolutionary," or even usually militant. The youth gang leadership openly and honestly looked to their own interest, bargaining and maneuvering with all sides to get the best "deal." Andrew Barret, Youth Director of the National Conference of Christians and Jews (and a former street worker with a "Stone" affiliate), summed it up very concisely:

> "The Rangers are becoming highly politically oriented. They are interested in getting a piece of the action, not tearing down the system."[10]

As Greenlee himself points out:

> "Most of street gang activity is antisocial, and it is and was a serious problem to the community. They weren't robin-hoods; they weren't robbing from the rich to feed the poor. Their rip-offs weren't taking place in Highland Park, they were taking place in Woodlawn and Lawndale. They were ripping off their friends, neighbors, mothers, fathers and daughters."[11]

While the Black liberation organizations have always had to fight the repressive police structures, to publicize their racist crimes and organize against them, the "Stones" and "Ds" leadership had

9 *Reader*, November 21, 1975.

10 *Chicago Tribune*, June 16, 1969.

11 *Reader*, November 21, 1975.

a policy of submission to the police. Time and again they hoped that cooperation with the police might earn them favors, particularly personal protection from arrests. What was the exact nature of that cooperation with the Chicago Police Department? The gang leadership, particularly elements of the "Main 21" of Blackstone, served the police as informers and enforcers, suppressing sparks of Black unrest. 1966, 1967, and 1968 all saw massive Black "riots," rebellions in the Chicago Ghetto. All three years the "Stones" leadership worked with the police to keep the Woodlawn community "quiet." In a grant application to the O.E.O., the Woodlawn Organization gave an example of this activity:

> "…Ranger activity during the widely publicized Westside riots in Chicago during the summer of 1966. At the time the riots were underway, the Rangers were under considerable pressure to join the rioters because of their alliances with Westside groups. "The Ranger leadership met and decided not to participate in the riots but, more importantly, decided to make an organized effort to prevent similar violence in Woodlawn. The following plan was developed and carried out by the Rangers in conjunction with the Chicago Police Department, the Woodlawn Organization, and the First Presbyterian Church.
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> "First, the Ranger leadership planned a twenty-four hour phone service at the Church during the time the riots were taking place in the Westside. T.W.O. workers and police offers were called into service every time there was any possibility of gang youth becoming involved in a disturbance. The Ranger leadership, in response to calls, went to the site of possible disturbances and dispersed the youth involved. There were over 30 such calls concerned with possible unilateral action by a member handled by the Rangers. Secondly, Ranger members were instructed to call if approached by anyone inciting them to riot. There was one such incident in which the person inciting to riot was identified and his name turned over to the Police…The Rangers' action was one of the most relevant reasons that the on-going riots were prevented from taking place in Woodlawn."[12]

12 Untitled grant proposal from T.W.O. to Community Action

Many Black organizations in various cities, fearing the destruction of these rebellions and viewing them as a futile direction, worked to "cool" their communities (the B.P.P. itself did so in Oakland, California, for example). But to these particular gang leaders this "riot prevention" took the form of close cooperation with the police, and was only the most visible tip of their submission to the state apparatus.

federal recognition of the gangs

On May 30, 1967, Theodore Berry of the Community Action Program, Office of Economic Opportunity (O.E.O.) formally approved a $927,341 Federal Grant to the Woodlawn Organization.[13] This decision funded an experimental project to give basic literacy and job-skill training to 800 Black gang members. The real point of this experiment, however, was that the leadership of the Blackstone Nation and the Disciples were in reality full partners in the grant, sharing in the money and the staff positions. Within a year this project was a national scandal, the subject of intense police repression and on the verge of closing down. The political *coup de grace* was delivered by Senator McClellan, who in July, 1968, held a Senate inquisition designed to stir up headlines and racist stereotypes.[14] This federal grant was the high-water mark of the influence of the Blackstone Nation and its best-known leader, Jeff Fort.

It is quite easy to evaluate the effectiveness of the grant. As of June, 1968, only 105 youth had been placed in jobs during the previous year, of whom 65 were still employed.[15] Microscopic results for a million-dollar project. The reason, of course, is that there is a

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Program, O.E.O., but clearly 1967. Page 10

13 "Two-Track Manpower Demonstration for 800 Unemployed Disadvantaged Young Adults," C.A.P. Project No. (G8734/A/0).

14 *Riots, Civil and Criminal Disorders*, Part 9-17. Hearings held by the U.S. Senate Committee on Government Operations, Permanent Subcommütee on Investigations.

15 "Two Major Issues (Charges and Answers)." Page 5. (This is an O.E.O. background paper, written in anticipation of the McClelland Hearings and given to Senators Muskie, Javits and Harris.)

shortage of jobs in the U.S. for Black youth. This is particularly true for youth with police records and a gang history. An internal O.E.O. memorandum, dated April 2, 1968, admitted that the lack of jobs was "the most glaring problem."[16] The only area where the grant showed practical results was in the reduction of gang violence between "Stones" and "Ds." Youth gang murders dropped 44% in the 3rd Police District between the Summers of 1966 and 1967, as gang leadership restrained fighting lest it endanger the flow of O.E.O. dollars.

It is important to understand that for the government, the success or failure of this project had little to do with how many Black youth found jobs, or didn't kill each other. This O.E.O. grant was a disguised Vietnam-style counterinsurgency program, an experiment in enlisting lumpenproletarian gang elements to help police the ghetto. In the early Spring of 1967, a quiet meeting was held at the Woodlawn Organization offices on East 63rd Street in Chicago. Six men, representing T.W.O., Chicago Urban League and the Office of Economic Opportunity, took part in this meeting. The Chicagoans wanted to make certain there were no misunderstandings about the proposed gang project. In particular, they wanted it understood in advance that the "Main 21" and the "Ds" leadership would use their power to "rip-off" funds from the project. There was no other way the project could work.

The senior O.E.O. representative replied that he understood quite well and that it posed no problems for Washington. He then went ahead to sketch out, "Off the record," the dynamics of the project. The real goal of the project was to help create a "Black Mafia." O.E.O. knew that the Blackstone "Main 21" had fantasies of becoming another syndicate, taking over control of drugs, numbers, prostitution, and protection in the Southside ghetto. O.E.O., by giving them hundreds of thousands of dollars, job patronage for their members, Federal "legitimization" and helping arrange police connections, would give them at least a chance at their goal. Since white ethnic groups had advanced themselves through organized crime, O.E.O. was willing

16 C.A.P. Memorandum from Dennis Porter to Donald K. Hess, April 2, 1968. Page 10.

to help Blacks do the same. All the participants agreed that the "Main 21" had poor odds for success, but that they owed it to the Black community to try and help them.

Many believe that promoting Black control of organized crime is an important step upwards for the Black community, but it's hard to imagine the government acting from that motive. It would make much more sense to assume that a large, stable criminal organization would be created by the government because they saw it as an important tool for social control. All the evidence bears this out. In his testimony before the McClellan Subcommittee in 1968, Jerome S. Bernstein, O.E.O. Project Manager for the Woodlawn grant, proudly cited the political fruits of funding the Rangers and Disciples:

> "These two youth gangs were responsible for preventing a Black Panther meeting on August 1,1967 which was to be held on the Westside of Chicago for the express purpose of forging a coalition of youth gangs to collectively 'take on the City' during the summer of 1967. These two gangs proclaimed that there would be no riots and that there would be no Black Panther meeting. There were no riots and there was no Black Panther meeting. On more than one occasion, these youth took over the streets of Woodlawn and prevented bloodshed and property destruction when police control over the situation had seriously deteriorated."[17]

What could be more clear? As one Disciple leader told a Black newspaper: "We can control and police our people better than the police and the Army."[18] Even more pointed was the private memorandum Bernstein wrote on his return to Washington from Chicago. In July, 1967. Bernstein had oriented the "Main 21" to their new role by bringing in as teachers three "Black Power Militants" from Watts who were working in O.E.O. Poverty Programs. These "Black Power Militants" were, of course very friendly to the government and "vehemently opposed to Black Nationalist movements.[19]

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17 Statement of Jerome S. Bernstein. Page 12.

18 *Daily Defender*, April 9, 1968.

19 Jerome S. Bernstein, "Memorandum For the Record. TW.O. Field

Bernstein soon got a report from Rev. Arthur Brazier, President of T.W.O., that their new pupils had learned their lessons quickly:

> "Rev. Brazier informed us that the meeting of the Rangers with the Watts group had a profound effect on both gangs. He stated that, whereas, on Tuesday, the day before, the gangs were ready to shoot it out in the street, the first thing Wednesday morning, the two leaders of each gang came into T.W.O. 'arm in arm.' They informed Rev. Brazier that they were opposed to any rioting in Chicago and that they would not permit any riots to take place in their 'hood'. They stated that they would not tolerate outside agitators coming into their community to provoke riots and that they would run them out of Woodlawn, and, if necessary, shoot them…
>
> "Rev. Brazier informed me that he had received a call from Commander Griffin who was concerned about a rumor that an agitator from Detroit had arrived in Chicago to foment riots and that he was operating in South Chicago. Commander Griffin stated that his men could not identify who this individual was nor could his men locate him. Rev. Brazier transmitted this information to the Rangers who later that day identified the individual and informed the police of his name and whereabouts, and he was subsequently apprehended and, I believe, sent out of the City (I do not know if this information was transmitted to Commander Griffin through T.W.O. or not)."[20]

This is what the government was paying for, and even at a million dollars a year it was a bargain. In Vietnam, the US. was paying much more for native counter-insurgency troops and not getting half the service. It should be clear that in return for government favors it was expected that the gangs would use the threat of violence to keep Blacks in their place. The defense of white business property-capital, in other words, was a top priority. This project was so important to O.E.O.'s own procedures it became the only project in Chicago funded directly from O.E.O. to the community, bypassing City Hall.

Trip of July 25-27, 1967," August 12, 1967.Page 3.
20 Ibid., 25.

A letter from Rev. Brazier to Jerome Bernstein on August 3, 1967, gives us a good example of this.[21] According to the letter and supporting newspaper accounts, the new Woodlawn grant passed a practical test of its effectiveness. The previous Tuesday, August 1st, Nicholas J. Nickolaou, owner of Big Jim's Cut-Rate Liquors at 67th Street and Cottage Grove, shot a Black man and killed him. The white merchant had accused a Black child of breaking his store window and had confiscated the child's bike. The child's father angrily came and confronted Nickolaou, who then shot him twice as he was leaving, claiming self-defense.

Since the killing was witnessed, community anger quickly rose as the news spread. Within 45 minutes of the killing, Leon Finney of T.W.O. received an urgent telephone call from George Collar, President of The Woodlawn Businessmen's Association. Finney went out to the scene to help police pacify the crowd of angry residents. Parents from the area refused to be dispersed and were talking about burning the white-owned liquor store out. Finally, Finney got Nick Lorenzo, a leader of the Disciples, to take action with 50 of his members. To quote Finney, "The Disciples walked up to the corner in a body and demanded to have the corner clean. In a few seconds, all the adults quietly dispersed and went home."

Lorenzo boasted to the *Chicago Daily News*: "The people in the neighborhood know our strength. They moved. Yesterday it was quiet and today it's quiet."[22] Brazier, whose organization was complimented by the police and the daily newspapers, was quite pleased over the incident. As he wrote to O.E.O.: "I think that without a doubt the constructive activity of the group in this situation can be traced directly to the O.E.O. Youth Grant."[23]

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21 Letter to Jerome S. Bernstein from Rev. Arthur Brazier, August 3, 1967.

22 *Chicago Sun-Times*, August 2, 1967. *Chicago Daily News*, August 4, 1967.

23 Letter to Jerome S. Bernstein from Rev. Arthur Brazier, August 3, 1967.

Instead of organizing protests against the white merchants or taking action against racists themselves or even just standing aside and letting some rough justice be attempted, T.W.O. and the gangs had to act as police auxiliaries and protect white business property. In both Brazier's letter to O.E.O. and Finney's statements to the press, the spotlight is on how the T.W.O.-gang combination prevented the liquor store from being destroyed; in both accounts one is struck by how unimportant the murder of a Black father seems. In the congratulatory newspaper editorials, statements by liberal politicians, memos to Washington, etc. the use of the threat of violence by a gang against community residents – clearly illegal by existing laws – is warmly applauded. This reveals the essence of capitalist "law and order."

Such cooperation with the police against the people was the condition of the grant, and built into the program. Every day project staff met with Sgt. Wilson, 3rd District Chicago Police Department to exchange information. Twice a month, Commander Griffin of the 3rd District met with Rev. Brazier and other project officials at a "monitoring meeting" at Regional O.E.O. offices.[24] T.W.O. was trusted sufficiently by the police to be given copies of the reports turned in by police informers inside the gangs themselves.[25]

the politics of gang leadership

It would be wrong to view the lumpenproletarian gang leadership as politically passive, a *tabula rasa*, willing to go in whatever direction the momentary advantage directed. On the surface that seems true, with the Rangers and Disciples flirting with both sides. They went to the Poor Peoples Campaign in Washington, they swelled the ranks of Rev. Jesse Jackson's campaign about job discrimination, they joined

24 "Two Major Issues (Charges and Answers)." Page 5. Monthly reports from Rev. Brazier to O.E.O. confirm these frequent meetings with the Chicago Police Department.

25 *Chicago Sun-Times*, March 15, 1972.

any temporary liberal cause or event that promised publicity and/or money. In a deeper sense, however, these gang leaders had several important points of political unity with the government.

First, the gang leaders had a strong natural orientation towards protecting white business in Woodlawn. They viewed the community – people and commerce and real estate – as a resource to be mined for its profitability. Every white businessman who left the area simply meant a source of potential income lost. When the liquor store incident happened the Rangers and Disciples met and assessed the situation. According to Nick Lorenzo, "We agreed that this community is ours and we're going to keep it."[26]

An interesting example of this attitude was the Red Rooster Super Markets, which had a large store at 62nd Street and Dorchester, in the center of Woodlawn. Red Rooster was infamous for its unrestrained consumer fraud tactics, and over the years gathered many slap-on-the-wrist violations for rigged scales, etc. A favorite Red Rooster fraud was soaking packaged meat in water, then freezing the whole mess. Result: with each package of meat the Black shopper also paid for as much as one-half pound of ice.

In March, 1969, Rev. Jesse Jackson's Operation Breadbasket started picketing Red Rooster over these abuses. The protest was soon settled by the Red Rooster chain hiring twenty-two "Stones," including Jeff Fort, Mickey Cogwell, and other "Main 21." The jobs appear to have been mostly a pay-off to let Red Rooster go on exploiting the Black community.[27]

In the same way, every time a major rebellion broke out in Chicago's ghetto, the "Main 21" would move to protect Woodlawn's white businesses with "do not touch" signs. Black homeowners were also important to the "Stones," since they could be encouraged to buy "window insurance." Small wonder that when the police accused the Blackstone Rangers of extorting protection money, both the Woodlawn Businessmen's Association and the Jackson Park Businessmen's Association held a press conference to defend and

26 *Chicago Sun-Times*, August 4, 1967.

27 *Chicago Tribane*, March 8, 1970.

praise the "Stones." At that meeting, Father Tracy O'Sullivan of St. Cyril Church said: "The youths really delivered, and this attack by the police was the thanks they got."[28]

While movements of the oppressed usually clash with exploitative business interests, this was not true with the gangs. We could say that white business interests and the gang leadership got along so well because they both viewed the Black community in the same way.

Secondly, the gang leadership shared with the government an opposition to grassroots Black organization. After all, a successful mass Black organization in Woodlawn would have crowded the "Stones," even recruited people away from them. So that as their troubles increased, as police arrests and court cases piled up, as Fort and others were indicted on federal charges of embezzling O.E.O. funds, the gang leadership was paralyzed. By 1968, the police repression was so heavy against the "Stones" as to be crushing. Fort himself was arrested one hundred fifty times in six months – almost once a day!

All the "Main 21" could do was to keep cooperating with the police, begging for favors. We know that members of the "Main 21" secretly kept the police informed about Black Panther Party activity, pointing out as they did so how useful they could be to the police if the police let them survive. It was only pathetic in January 1969, when Leonard Sengali of the Black P. Stones announced that the gang was starting a whole new program of protecting Blacks from crime. Sengali said that "Stones" would don green uniforms (the same color as the official Community Police Aides paid for by Model Cities Poverty Funds) and patrol the community, reporting all suspicious activity to the police.[29]

The Chicago Police Department was inexorably putting the "Stones" out of business, literally. Even then, the leadership was so submissive that the police could repress them and use them at the same time. In August, 1968, when Mayor Daley and his Machine were girding to put down the expected mass demonstrations at the Democratic

28 *Daily Defender*, Aprill7, 1968.

29 *Chicago American*, January 25, 1969·

National Convention, the police arranged to have bail suddenly lowered for a number of the "Main 21" who were in jail. The secret condition was that the "Stones" would forcibly stop Dick Gregory from leading an announced march through "Stones" territory. The Machine was frightened that Gregory's protest march might touch off mass demonstrations or "rioting" by Blacks. Once released, the "Main 21" threatened Gregory with death if his march entered their areas, and indeed, the march plans were hastily changed. Of course, once their usefulness was over, these gang leaders soon found themselves back in jail.

In April, 1969, Illinois National Guard were once again called out as the Chicago ghetto verged on open rebellion and once again, the "Stones" and the Disciples patrolled Woodlawn to help the police keep the lid on. By this time Commander Griffin of the 3rd District knew he could rely completely on the gangs. Each gang patrol had official 3rd District Police shoulder patches to wear on their jackets so that cops on the beat could identify them.[30] Naive people still wonder at how the Nazis could recruit Jewish police to control the ghetto for them.

the split over repressive strategy

The open police harassment of the gangs and their O.E.O. project was so obviously illegal that it became itself a major political issue. Church offices sympathetic to the gang youth were repeatedly raided to the background music of breaking doors and ripped-apart furniture. Youth Action, "a street-work project funded by the four most prestigious social agencies in Chicago" was raided three times. During the raid on their Auburn Highland Center, two staff members were "roughed up" and $2,500 property damage was done – although the police found no weapons or drugs and made no arrests. Gang members themselves were often arrested and rearrested

30 Henry De Zutter, "The Press: Loyal Troops in the City's War on Gangs," *Chicago Journalism Review*, June, 1969.

on any pretext. Fighting and retaliation raids between the "Stones" and "Ds" were carefully promoted and touched off by the police Gang Intelligence Unit (GIU).[31]

This open display of police power aroused many sectors of Chicago's liberal and Black communities. Youth Action, T.W.O., the Urban League, Chicago Theological Seminary, the A.C.L.U., the Better Boys Foundation, 5th Ward Alderman Leon Depres and 6th Ward Alderman "Sammy" Rayner (both anti-Daley independents), and many other liberal institutions and personalities protested these police activities. Many genuinely were infuriated at the police persecution of these Black youth from "poverty backgrounds."

Out of this clash came a mythology which has been widely accepted: the picture is of poverty-stricken gang youth trying to move away from "Anti-social behavior" towards constructive community concerns, being crushed by the racist machine of Mayor Richard Daley because the city couldn't tolerate any threat of independent organization. This familiar all-American scenario is incomplete and misleading. The full story of this living interplay between federal government, the local city machine, the police and the gangs is far richer in lessons, although more complex, than the mythology of good guys vs. bad guys.

It is widely assumed that Mayor Richard Daley viewed the O.E.O. grant and the gangs as a threat to his Machine and that he therefore used repression to crush them. On the contrary, Mayor Daley always appreciated how useful the gangs could be. In 1966, Jeff Fort was given a job at the City's Woodlawn Urban Progress Center. At that time, Denton Brooks, head of the City's "Anti-Poverty" program (Chicago Committee on Urban Opportunity) took Fort and other "Main 21" to lunch and suggested that the "Stones" submit a proposal for an "anti-poverty" grant.[32] Black youth gangs had previously been used by the Chicago Police Dept. in order to harass and drive out Black community organizers. In 1965, Chicago SNCC's attempt to

31 For a good liberal account of this police harassment, see *Chicago Journalism Review*, January, 1969 and June, 1969·

32 *Chicago Journalism Review*, November-December, 1968.

do "grassroots" organizing came under heavy attack from local gangs, with vandalization of the SNCC office, intimidation of children at the SNCC "Freedom School" and beatings of SNCC workers contributing to the death of the project. It was alleged that this conflict was caused by the police, who gave the gangs a "license" to commit crimes in return for attacking SNCC.

To be sure, Mayor Daley was enraged about the gang leaders floating their O.E.O. grant with T.W.O., rather than with the City's agency, C.C.U.O. (which would have poured part of those funds into patronage channels). But Daley never opposed that grant, despite what the liberals said. He was, among other things under heavy pressure from Washington to "OK" the grant.

As Jerome Bernstein pointed out to the MeClellan Subcommittee (a point that went studiously unreported in the Chicago media):

> "For the record, the Mayor did, in fact, concur in the funding of the program and did so in the form of a telephone call which he, Mayor Daley, initiated to Sargent Shriver, then Director of O.E.O. To be more explicit, the T.W.O. 'program' would not have been funded at all without the support of Mayor Daley. Sargent Shriver stated so on several occasions and held up funding of the program for two weeks pending communication of the Mayor's support for the program. The T.W.O. program in a sense was in reality as much the result of actions of Mayor Daley as those of T.W.O. and O.E.O. The Mayor's support for funding of the program is a matter of written record which is both known to the Subcommittee and the Acting Director of O.E.O."[33]

Washington Post columnists Rowland Evans and Robert Novak made the same point a full year earlier, as they revealed, "The deep split among the authorities over how to deal with the deepening riot problem."

> "Highly respected Police Superintendent Orlando Wilson (who has just retired) led the anti-gang faction in opposing the grant.

33 Bernstein Testimony. Page 19.

> He was joined by local Poverty Program officials, who view The Woodlawn Organization as far too radical.
>
> "Although anathema to Negro radicals, Daley happens to be a pragmatic politician…fearing a bloody summer, he was willing to give the liberals a chance at doing business with the gangs."[34]

Further, it turns out that the Chicago police themselves were split exactly as Evans and Novak discussed. Commander Griffin of the 3rd District warmly supported the grant. He communicated this support to O.E.O. and agreed that his men would take part in it. The 3rd District after all, had practical experience at how useful the gangs were in controlling the Black community.

Griffin was at odds with Lt. Buckney of the new Gang Intelligence Unit, who from the start was out to destroy the gangs. Buckney was so fanatical that his men twice took Jerome Bernstein of O.E.O. into custody. During a meeting with O.E.O., this disagreement within the Chicago Police came out:

> "At the mention of Buckney's name, Griffin threw up his hands and stated that Buckney did not understand his job, he did not know what he was doing, and that something had to be done about him."[35]

On August 9, 1967, Rev. Brazier and Leon Finney of T.W.O. met with Superintendent Conlisk and seven other Chicago police brass. According to Rev. Brazier, Commander Griffin argued that the police should take advantage of "the beneficial effects of the youth project on the gang youth in Woodlawn." Lt. Buckney, Gang intelligence Unit, disagreed and pointed to Jeff Fort as a problem (Fort had been arrested by G.I.U. for probation violation), Commander Griffin defended Fort, and then pointed out that, "At the time of Jeff's arrest, Commander Griffin was waiting to meet with Jeff in his office to discuss with Jeff and some of his associates ways and means of preventing riot agitators from circulating in the Woodlawn

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34 Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, "Inside Report," *The Washington Post*, July 5, 1967.

35 "Memorandum For the Record," August 12,1967. Page 24.

community." Superintendent Conlisk then promised that the police Dept. wouldn't oppose Fort's defense when they testified at his parole rehearing, and that the gang project would receive police "cooperation and support."[36]

It was Captain Edward N. Buckney (promoted a year after that meeting) and his Gang Intelligence Unit which initiated and led the campaign to repress the "Stones" and Disciples. This was the unit that led the raids, made the constant arrests, maintained informers inside the gangs and tried to get them to war on each other. Buckney did so not to carry out orders from Mayor Daley, but despite his orders. Again, it was Robert Novak who revealed that the entire Senate inquisition into the O.E.O. project by Senator McClellan had been initiated by Gang intelligence Unit "without authorization by the Mayor." And by helping Congressional reactionaries create a national scandal, Buckney and G.I.U. forced the Mayor into a position of open opposition to the gangs and the O.E.O. project.[37]

As late as May, 1968, Rev. Brazier and Mayor Daley were still trying to work out a deal over the O.E.O. project. At an April 22, 1968 meeting, Rev. Brazier was asked by Mayor Daley to keep the project going until at least next September, as Brazier was threatening to close it before the Summer. Daley asked Rev. Brazier if T.W.O. could "come under the C.C.U.O. umbrella." Brazier offered Mayor Daley the right to "pick the Project Director," but said that working under Deton Brooks and C.C.U.O. was unacceptable. Brazier then "reminded the Mayor that T.W.O. had never directly attacked the Mayor publicly." Mayor Daley ended the meeting by urging Brazier and Brooks to work something out.[38] All this maneuvering was, of course, torpedoed by the Senate investigation and its publicity.

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36 Letter to Jerome Bernstein from Rev. Arthur Brazier, August 15, 1967.

37 Robert Novak, "The Story Behind the Rangers Probe," *Chicago Sun-Times*, July 12, 1968.

38 "Memo to the Acting Director, O.E.O., from Community Action Program," April 29, 1968.

The question of why Lt. Buckney and his G.I.U. played such a role is an interesting one. It was true that the Black satraps of the Democratic Party Machine viewed the Black gangs as potential rivals too close to home, so as to speak.

Having more weight is the influence of the Syndicate. Some who worked within the O.E.O. project believe that it was precisely the Rangers' dream of a ghetto organized crime empire that led to their downfall. They believe that the Syndicate, seeing a powerfully organized rival, demanded that the police "deliver" some repression for all the protection money they were being paid. A reader who believes this is all an exaggeratedly cynical view of police-Syndicate relations has not factually studied this subject. To take just one publicly documented fact out of many: Commissioner Orlando Wilson's Chief Assistant, Paul Quinn, was demoted when it was revealed that he was one of the Syndicate pay-off coordinators within the C.P.D. There were clear channels of possible Syndicate influence on the policy of the G.I.U.

It is important to see that there was a sharp split in the white government over how to pacify the ghetto. The gang project, an advanced counterinsurgency program with certain real similarities to U.S. programs in Vietnam and the Philippines, brought this split out in the open. In Vietnam, we saw this split between the "civic action" programs of the U.S. Special Forces, which sought to use bribes/reforms to recruit ethnic minority native forces to fight the communist insurgency, vs. the conventional warfare of annihilation using massive levels of U.S. regular troops and firepower so clumsily wielded by General Westmoreland and his clan. The analogy lends insight to Chicago. The liberals wanted to use reforms to recruit "native" forces to pacify the ghetto, while the conservatives wanted to turn the police loose to repress anything Black that lifted its head. Some wanted to do both, which is what happened both in Vietnam and Chicago.

Evans and Novak commented in 1967:

> "The Negro slums of America today comprise a secret arsenal of firearms, zip-guns and knives ready for use at a moment's notice. Besides, police officers who practice diplomacy in making an

arrest in the Negro slums are just as apt to trigger a riot as their heavy-handed brethren.

"In fact, those who know the Negro slums best are pessimistic. They are sure only that the *sole force of discipline in those slums are the anonymous gang leaders* [our emphasis]. Thus, the split of the white establishment over how to deal with these gangs, as seen in Chicago, is still further cause for pessimism."[39]

This split in the capitalist government made for not a few ironies. Jerome Bernstein, the "Godfather" of the very successful gang project, was fired from O.E.O. by Sargent Shriver for having become too politically controversial. Bernstein was frustrated at, as he repeatedly explained, being fired for producing the only successful federal "anti-riot" program for the ghetto. He futilely pointed out how Woodlawn was kept from exploding, unlike Watts, Detroit, Newark, Harlem… and Chicago's Westside."[40]

Both liberals and conservatives (inadequate categories in this case) got to try their strategies for repression. This produces the irony of gang leaders having "delivered the goods" for the government, now serving time in a federal prison for "conspiracy to commit fraud" in handling O.E.O. funds. Of course, the government officials and Black community leaders who got the gangs involved in this project, who gave them informal approval to "rip-off" funds, who virtually set them up, walked away clean after the project collapsed.

The final irony came with President Richard Nixon's inauguration in January, 1969. During this triumphant celebration of Republican victory, the gangs weren't forgotten. Jeff Fort, already under Federal Investigation, received a formal invitation to Nixon's Inaugural Ball! Fort sent Mickey Cogwell and Bobby Jennings, complete with "white ties and tails," as Ranger representatives to the Inaugural Ball. The white public in Chicago was astonished. Veteran Black journalist Lou Palmer saw it as the Nixon Administration's recognition of the potential vote power: "Nixon squeaked into the Presidency with few Black votes. The Black P. Stones had campaigned to persuade Blacks

39 *Washinglon Post*, July 5, 1967.

40 *Chicago Tribune*, March 30, 1972.

to boycott the polls."[41] Naturally, vote boycotts of predominantly Democratic Black voters could only help Nixon and the Republicans, and Nixon had encouraged such campaigns.

conclusion

We should now be able to see clearly what Marx and Engels meant when they said that the lumpenproletariat **"…May, here and there be swept into the Movement…Its conditions of life, however, prepare it far more for the part of a bribed tool of reactionary intrigue."**

Groupings of the oppressed must be understood in terms of class. Black gangs are composed primarily of working-class youth, many of whose families are in what Marx referred to as the "Reserve Army" of the unemployed. These youths, because of their colonial and class oppression, are logically pulled towards rebellion. We know that some members of the Black P. Stones and Disciples participated enthusiastically in the defense of the literally besieged Black community of Cairo, Illinois. Some joined the Black Panther Party and other organizations. At least part of the leadership was at one time strongly motivated to drive heroin pushers out of the "turf." The gang structure effectively "locked up" this pull towards rebellion. The gang leadership not only used the power of their own organizations to "police" the ghetto, but, most importantly of all, neutralized within their organizations the critical strata of the most oppressed working-class youth.

There is, of course, no precise dividing line "on the streets" between the lumpenproletariat and the lower working class. Further, elements of the "lumpen" – angry, desperate – have always been drawn into the struggle, usually during its most militant or violent stages. All previous Marxist experience, internationally, has taught us to use these elements but not build primarily on them. Many organizers

41 *Chicago Daily News*, January 21, 1969, L.F. Palmer, Jr., "Behind the Inaugural Invitation."

here in the U.S. have long since come to a similar conclusion. The B.L.A., to take one example, has seriously taken up the discussion of this question:

> "It is clear to us that the so-called lumpen class cannot carry our liberation struggle forward on its own. This is because of their class nature: undisciplined, dogmatic, and easily prone to diversion. This class however will supply some of the most dedicated comrades to the struggle. But we must clarify our view of the lumpen class as a whole. The traditional concept of lumpen as a category of the lowest social strata in an industrialized society, unemployed, etc., is a description that fits not only brothers and sisters that hang out in the street all day long and survive in that fashion, but it also fits a great segment of black people who are marginally employed and who for various socio-economical reasons think essentially the same as the classical 'lumpen.' Therefore, we must make a clear distinction between the economic definition of lumpen (the relationship of that class to the means of production) and the attitudinal, behavioral definition which can readily apply to a larger proportion of our people. When we use the term lumpen we are using a broad definition."[42]

It is interesting to notice that the B.L.A., like much of the white "New Left," mistakenly defines the "lumpen" to equate to the unemployed and marginally employed. This blurs our class analysis, since it uses the word "lumpenproletariat" to include both that class and the lowest stratas of the working class "reserve army." Thus a teen-age "Stone" who joined out of group loyalty or friendship or survival protection would be placed in the same class as Mickey Cogwell on the "Main 21." Cogwell "joined" by bringing the gangs in the Robert Taylor-Washington Park Projects into the Blackstone Rangers – in return for $5,000. After the gang hustle collapsed he then went to work for the Syndicate's Hotel and Restaurant Employees and Bartenders Union. In 1973, Cogwell got an exclusive franchise for all Black areas in Chicago, and worked at extorting "dues" money out

42 Coordinating Committee of the Black Liberation Army, *Message to the Black Movement*, 1975. Page 10.

of Blacks to be split between him and the white Syndicate.[43] This is a classic lumpenproletarian career of preying on the working class. Clearly, the need for this class analysis is as acute today as a decade ago, and applies sharply to the prison struggle and proliferation of "militant" community organizations.

The other point that emerges is how liberals and conservatives, for all their antagonisms, remain united in the common defense of capitalism by repression against the oppressed. It was, after all, the activist liberals – Black as well as white – who promoted the use of youth gangs to strong-arm the ghetto into "peace." This is the bitter fruit of liberal social pacification. Only with a class understanding of the concrete situation can we effectively grasp who are the revolutionary forces.

43 *Chicago Tribune*, November 3, 1974.

postscript (2017)

This research paper was originally written only for other revolutionaries, working in oppressed communities, to better help rebels protect themselves from state repression. It was never thought of for any general distribution, even within the left. Published initially in a small anti-imperialist journal, its largest readership probably came when a Puerto Rican revolutionary group reprinted it as part of the study materials at a national anti-grand jury repression conference. At some point, a cheap pamphlet edition was done, solely for convenience in answering the occasional requests for copies. So this paper has remained largely unknown, just like the federal counterinsurgency project itself. A recent favorably reviewed book on the history of the Blackstone Rangers, by two Chicago African-American journalists, barely mentions the government repression project, while giving a false, "white-wash" impression of what it was.

In a number of ways, this novel but logically evil experiment in structuring pay-offs for street gangs in return for their crushing any anti-white rebellions, was a project built around the schemes of the Black bourgeoisie. This is alluded to in the paper, but hardly analyzed seriously in any depth. In retrospect, this is the weakness i find most glaring now.

T.W.O. – The Woodlawn Organization – featured prominently in our story as the main sponsoring community non-profit organization. It is closed down now. T.W.O. was first injected into a poor New Afrikan community as a highly-funded virus, designed by Saul Alinsky's Industrial Areas Foundation (I.A.F.). It was to be a spotlighted demonstration that the I.A.F's patented, pro-capitalist reform organizing could smother grassroots New Afrikan insurgencies. I.A.F. was, of course, where Barack Obama's white handlers sent him to learn the tactics of top-down "community organizing." Long led by Rev. Leon Finney Jr. and his wife, Georgette Greenlee, T.W.O. was always highly successful before its recent demise – at least for the Black bourgeoisie. Rev. Finney Jr. and his wife, for instance, were paid $293,000 in 2010 by the organization.

Plus an additional $190,000 paid to Finney-owned companies for providing rental space and food for T.W.O. The neighborhood is now steadily gentrifying while working class New Afrikans are being driven out, so T.W.O.'s historic pacification mission is now "mission accomplished." Although the non-profit organization's end was due to the State of Illinois's findings that T.W.O. recently defrauded the state of $689,000 in various no-show grants, no criminal prosecution is yet in sight. Business as usual for neo-colonial "democracy."

Perhaps the most interesting feedback I received on the paper came from the respected revolutionary theorist and teacher, Atiba Shanna. When we discussed it at length, he said that everything written in the paper was true, but the paper as a whole still wasn't true. In his opinion, so much had been left out about the street organization and the nature of his People's community that it was too unbalanced. In Shanna's view, in their powerless community where New Afrikans are tightly ruled but have no governing of their own, any self-organized New Afrikan body is positive, no matter how confused or off-course it may be at one time.

He spoke about his gang in its El Rukn stage, with the ex-theater building turned into a large "Moorish temple" where they would hold open court to settle disputes between community residents on the spot, from marital discord to auto accidents. Just as the Taliban does in Afghanistan villages despite the u.s.-backed government and its "legal" courts. Also important to the picture but largely left out, Shanna continued, was the fact that most of the street organization soldiers were simply poor working-class teenage boys, who have no chance of ever finding a real job. i agreed readily to the partial weight of his points, but stated that it was hardly my task to put together any overall understanding of the bloody contradictions of the street organizations. It was his movement's job, which they had largely avoided, in my belief. We parted with respectful snarls of disagreement.

Last words: that familiar cliché – "Those who don't learn from history are doomed to repeat it"-not true here. No, it won't be even that good.

"In April, 1969, Illinois National Guard were once again called out as the Chicago ghetto verged on open rebellion and once again, the "Stones" and the Disciples patrolled Woodlawn to help the police keep the lid on. By this time Commander Griffin of the 3rd District knew he could rely completely on the gangs. Each gang patrol had official 3rd District Police shoulder patches to wear on their jackets so that cops on the beat could identify them. Naive people still wonder at how the Nazis could recruit Jewish police to control the ghetto for them."