

CARTON 6:41

STRONG IN THE STRUGGLE

ALEXANDER, KENDRA

CIRCA 1993

2017/193



Kendra Claire Harris Alexander was born June 28, 1946, to Marjorie P. and Sidney E. Harris in Los Angeles, California. The family relocated to Compton, California, when Kendra was four years old and she attended 139th Street, Enterprize Junior High and Centennial Senior High School. She was an excellent student and was well liked by her peers and teachers.

She began her political activity as a teenager with the Congress for Racial Equality in the summer of 1965, working to register Black voters in the community of Jonesboro, Louisiana. Returning to Southern California that fall, she registered at Los Angeles State College, where she joined the W.E.B. DuBois Clubs of America, a socialist youth organization. With that, she began a lifelong commitment to socialism.

She met and subsequently married Franklin Delano Alexander, like herself, a member of a longtime activist family, in 1966. Their only child and the joy of her life, Jordon Winston Harris Alexander, was born on November 24, 1975.

Elected to the CPUSA Central Committee first in 1972, Kendra was re-elected at Party conventions in 1975, 1979, 1983 and 1987. She was active in labor, peace, anti-racist, anti-apartheid movements, and local electoral politics.

As differences grew within the CPUSA, Kendra was one of the leaders of The Initiative movement to democratize and renew the Party. In July of 1992 she was elected as one of the five co-chairpersons of the Committees of Correspondence. She was also elected chair of the northern California body of the CoC. Kendra was recognized both nationally and internationally as a leading left activist.

At the time of her death, she was legislative aide to Berkeley City Council member Maudelle Shirek.

She is remembered as a mother who cared deeply for her son, Jordon, the sons and daughters of others, and the future in a society that devalues and isolates young African American males in particular. She is also remembered for her caring partnership with her husband, Franklin. She was a selfless friend and a loving family member. She was above all a humanitarian. Everything she did was marked by a fervent commitment.

She is survived by her husband Franklin, son Jordon, mother Marjorie Harris, sister Patrice Sewell, brother Sidney Shired, and host of nieces and nephews, in-laws and friends.

She is loved. She will be missed.

labor donated

COPY

*In loving memory of*

*Kendra Claire Alexander*

*June 28, 1946 - May 23, 1993*



*First Congregational Church of Oakland*

*2501 Harrison*

*Saturday, May 29, 1993, 3:00 p.m.*



A public memorial for Kendra Alexander will be held at 3:00 p.m. on Sunday, June 27, 1993, at the Oakland Scottish Rite Center, 1547 Lakeside Drive (between 15th and 19th streets -- parking is difficult; however, the 19th Street BART station is nearby.)

\* \* \*

*If you would like to assist Kendra's family or make a donation in her memory you may do the following. If you have photos of Kendra or her family which you are willing to donate, please call the CoC office at 415/863-6637. If you have furniture or other household items, call the office as well. If you would like to make a donation, please make checks payable to California CoC and send to 522 Valencia Street, San Francisco, CA 94110. If you want your donation to go directly to Kendra's family, please indicate on the check or on an enclosed note.*

\* \* \*

*The family wishes to express its heartfelt thanks for the great outpouring of love and support from Kendra's many friends and comrades through this difficult time. Your warmest and generosity are very much appreciated.*

## *Program*

### *Music*

#### *Invocation*

*Rev. Dr. Lorenzo Carlisle*

#### *Song*

*Freedom Song Network*

#### *The Family*

*Patrice Sewell*

#### *Remarks*

*Lee Brown*

*Helen Lima*

*Maudelle Shirek*

*Christopher Blackwell*

#### *Song*

*Angela Eisa Davis*

#### *Eulogy*

*Angela Davis*

#### *Poem*

*Bettina Aptheker*

#### *Song*

*Vukani Mawethu*

#### *Open Microphone*

#### *Benediction*

*Rev. Dr. Lorenzo Carlisle*



## Kendra Alexander, Longtime Socialist, Dies In Blaze

Kendra Alexander, National Co-Chair of the Committees of Correspondence, a left activist organization, died Sunday evening in a tragic fire which destroyed her South Berkeley home. She was known and loved by progressive activists throughout California and the entire nation as a friend, companion and political thinker.

Alexander, 46, was born in Compton, California. She began her political activity as a teenager with the Congress on Racial Equality in the Freedom Summer of 1965, working to integrate lunch counters and register Black voters in the community of Jonesboro, Louisiana.

Returning to Southern California that fall, she enrolled at Los Angeles State College, where she joined the W.E.B. DuBois Clubs of America, a socialist youth organization. With that, she began a lifelong commitment to socialism and a 26 year marriage to Franklin Alexander, like herself, a member of a longtime activist family.

During her tour of duty with the DuBois Clubs, she joined the Communist Party, USA, and helped to form a nucleus of Black revolutionary activists in South Central Los Angeles that developed as the Che-Lumumba Club. In a March, 1992 interview in



Kendra Alexander

the *East Bay Express*, Alexander recalled that her political development followed naturally from her experiences in the South. "We'd been integrating restaurants in the South, but where we lived most of the people couldn't afford to go to the restaurants once they were integrated. So it made sense to me that you had to do something more than just civil rights — that you had to change the economic system, because of the poverty and the conditions that African Americans live in. So

I joined the Party."

While the Che-Lumumba Club led struggles against police brutality and organized anti-war activity in the Black community, it also attracted activists who were seeking a connection to Marxist theory. Among those who joined were Angela Y. Davis. Alexander and Davis traveled to Cuba together in 1969 to work in the heroic 10 million ton sugarcane harvest on that Caribbean island of socialism. When they returned Davis had become the subject of a witchhunt by California Governor Ronald Reagan because of Davis' academic appointment at the University of California at Los Angeles. Alexander led the efforts to defend Davis' right to teach as an open member of the CPUSA.

When Angela Davis became the focus of another Reagan attack, the frame-up member and conspiracy charges following a courtroom incident in San Rafael, Alexander moved to the San Francisco Bay Area to work as a legal investigator and to coordinate the political defense efforts in Northern California. The successful campaign to Free Angela Davis established Alexander in the ranks of the Northern California District of the Communist

Party, and led to her being named Organizational Secretary of the District in 1973.

Elected to the CPUSA Central Committee first in 1972, Kendra Alexander was re-elected at Party conventions in 1975, 1979, 1983 and 1987. Party members were active in labor, peace, anti-racist, anti-apartheid movements, and local electoral politics. Special attention was given to the broad movements assaults on the racially oppressed and working peoples, and for peace and solidarity with countries in revolution.

At a press conference just a week ago, she remarked, "My reasons for leaving the CPUSA are complex. But my political convictions remain much the same as they always have been. I do not regret that I belonged to the Communist Party nor do I regret that I left it. The struggle to make our community a better place to live will always remain my life's work."

At the time of her death, she was Legislative Aide to Berkeley City Council Member Maudelle Shirek.

Friends remember Alexander as a mother who cared deeply for her son, Jordon, the sons and daughters of others, and the future in a society that devalues

and isolates young African American males in particular. She is also remembered for her 26-year caring partnership with her husband, Franklin. And, to many, she was a selfless friend, always ready to offer support and assistance.

"Kendra was above all a humanitarian. Everything she did was marked by a fervent commitment, whether to her family and friends, or fighting for equality and against racism. She had especially deep feelings about democracy, for achieving it in the United States or in the CPUSA," recalled Charlene Mitchell, a national co-chair of the Committees of Correspondence, and Alexander's sister-in-law.

In addition to her husband, Franklin, and son Jordon, Alexander is survived by her mother, Mrs. Marjorie P. Harris of Los Angeles, her sister Patricia Sewell of the Los Angeles area, and many nieces, nephews, aunts, uncles, comrades and friends.

Contributions in memory of Kendra Alexander may be sent to the Committees of Correspondence, 522 Valencia, San Francisco, CA 94110. A memorial service will be held at a date to be announced. For information, call (415) 863-6637.

Dr. Charles T. Deliver



benefit the people, we will act upon it. The idea of "better troops and simpler administration" was put forward by Mr. Li Ting-ming,<sup>5</sup> who is not a Communist. He made a good suggestion which is of benefit to the people, and we have adopted it. If, in the interests of the people, we persist in doing what is right and correct what is wrong, our ranks will surely thrive.

We hail from all corners of the country and have joined together for a common revolutionary objective. And we need the vast majority of the people with us on the road to this objective. Today, we already lead base areas with a population of 91 million,<sup>6</sup> but this is not enough; to liberate the whole nation more are needed. In times of difficulty we must not lose sight of our achievements, must see the bright future and must pluck up our courage. The people are suffering; it is our duty to save them and we must exert ourselves in struggle. Wherever there is struggle there is sacrifice, and death is a common occurrence. But we have the interests of the people and the sufferings of the great majority at heart, and when we die for the people it is a worthy death. Nevertheless, we should do our best to avoid unnecessary sacrifices. Our cadres must show concern for every soldier, and all peo-

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ple in the revolutionary ranks must care for each other, must love and help each other.

From now on, when anyone in our ranks who has done some useful work dies, be he soldier or cook, we should have a funeral ceremony and a memorial meeting in his honour. This should become the rule. And it should be introduced among the people as well. When someone dies in a village, let a memorial meeting be held. In this way we express our mourning for the dead and unite all the people.

NOTES

<sup>1</sup>The distinguished surgeon Norman Bethune was a member of the Canadian Communist Party. In 1936 when the German and Italian fascist bandits invaded Spain, he went to the front and worked for the anti-fascist Spanish people. In order to help the Chinese people in their War of Resistance Against Japan, he came to China at the head of a medical team and arrived in Yenan in the spring of 1938. Soon after he went to the Shansi-Chahar-Hebei border area. Imbued with ardent internationalism and the great communist spirit, he served the army and the people of the Liberated Areas for nearly two years. He contracted blood poisoning while operating on wounded soldiers and died in Tanghsien, Hebei, on November 12, 1939.

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### Kendra Alexander, state chair, Communist Party of California

During the Freedom Summer of 1965 I spent 4 months in Jonesboro, Louisiana. Together with hundreds of young people from throughout the country and thousands from the South, we marched, rallied, sat-in and went to jail to break down the legal segregation system in the South.

While we fought the racist barriers in the South the Black community in Watts, California, exploded in rage and frustration against poverty and racist discrimination. The U.S. government dramatically escalated the war in Vietnam.

These rapidly moving events left me confused and disoriented and I found myself thinking that there must be something else I could do.

After my return to California I met young Communists who introduced me to Marxism, the ideology of the working class. It was like a light at the end of the tunnel. Suddenly I had found the answer. In order to solve the problems which confronted Black people we had to change the whole rotten, racist economic system of capitalism.

I joined the Communist Party in September of 1966 and I have never regretted it.





COPY

Lee Brown  
810 Fulton St.  
S.F., 94117, Ca.

Sept. 5, 1990

People's Daily World  
239 W. 23rd St.  
New York, N.Y. 10011

Letters To The Editor:

My Views On Kendra Alexander's Article: " Socialist Upheavel  
and the U.S. Left."

I, Lee Brown, a member of the party for 50 years, as I read Kendra's articles and particularly: " Socialist Upheavel and the U.S. Left" of August 1990, I encourage our comrades not only in California but nationally to read the article. I also encourage everyone to read these additional articles by Kendra: 1. the report of Jan. 27 and 28, 1990 at the two day conference, and 2. the article from " Conference On Equality In the 1990's" (Oct. 6-7, 1990, Winston Unity Center).

I got a lot out of these three articles. They encouraged me to move forward amongst the masses. After reading these articles, it encouraged me moreso to get involved in more mass organizations, working with retired and senior groups and national healthcare and housing. And that's the reason I encourage other comrades to read and study Kendra's writings because it's very encouraging.

It is extraordinary work that comrade Kendra is doing during this period. And my opinion of her today---to me in my views of her--- that she is a Harry Tubman and Elizabeth Gurley Flynn and I will always remain a brother to her in the struggle.

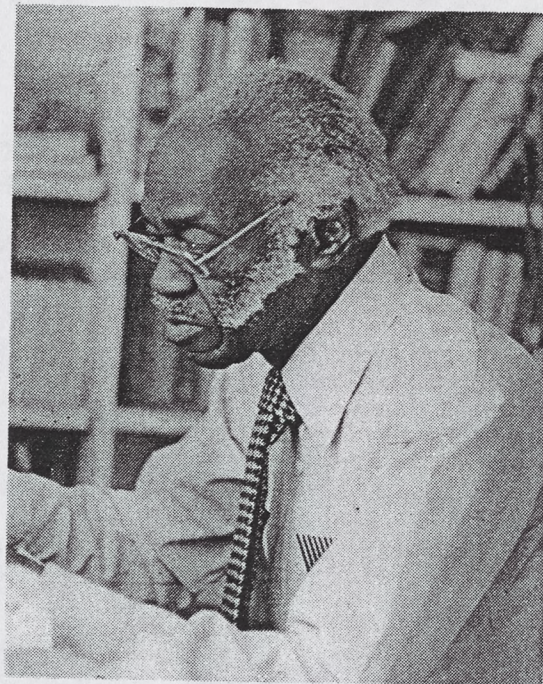
Keep up the good work!

Mark well!

Lee Brown

*Lee Brown*





**Ted Bassett, chairman of the Afro-American Equality Commission of the Communist Party.**

*I joined the Communist Party 52 years ago during the height of the Depression. I have never regretted that decision.*

*My decision to become a member of the Party springs from the conditions imposed upon me as a worker in this capitalist society, and the added dimension of an Afro-American subjected to all the indignities of racism. I reached the conviction that the solution to the increasingly pressing problems confronting the U.S. working class and people lies in the establishment of a socialist society.*

1989  
1966

26

**Kendra Alexander, state chair, Communist Party of California**

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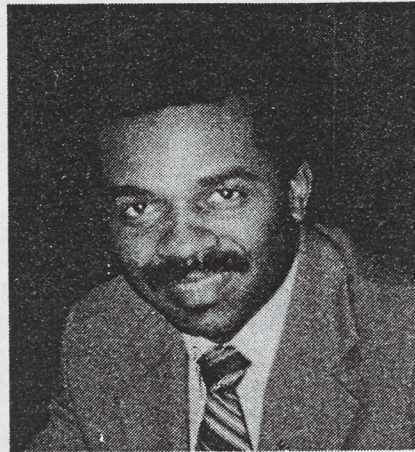
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*I joined the Communist Party in September of 1966 and I have never regretted it.*







### James Steele, member of the Political Bureau of CPUSA

*I come from a working class family. Growing up and seeing the tremendous struggles of the rubber workers, including long strike struggles, had a profound effect on my outlook. I could never forget the brutal exploitation to which the rubber companies subjected all workers regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, sex or political affiliation.*

*I found the answers I was searching for in Marxist-Leninist ideology. I found the organization with those answers—the Communist Party.*

*More than anything else the Communist Party has taught me how to combine the struggle against the oppression of my people with the struggle against the exploitation of my class, the working class. This teaching enables me to constantly grow as a fighter against the real enemy of the Afro-American people — the monopoly corporations, the Pentagon and the Reaganites.*



Mildred Williamson, right of center, carrying sign, "NO! to Racism, NO! to Apartheid," in the Communist Party contingent at the June 12, 1982, march for peace during the UN Disarmament Session in N.Y.C.

**Mildred  
Williamson,  
organizational  
secretary  
of the Illinois  
Communist  
Party**

*By the time I was 15 years old, my life course was set: I would always fight for freedom and equality. When I reached 18 my husband and I were already looking for an organization to join.*

*I checked out everything. I went to all the rallies, read literature of the civil rights movement, the Black Panthers and various left groups. The answer was not there.*

*I didn't find what I was looking for until I met Communists who were helping to organize the upcoming founding conference of the Anti-Imperialist Movement in Solidarity with African Liberation. It was then that I found the common source of apartheid in South Africa and racism in the United States: the system of US capitalism and world imperialism.*

*I became convinced to join the Communist Party when I saw for the first time white and Black people who were militantly involved in struggle. I knew something was different when I saw Black and white, Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, other national minorities, men and women, young and seniors—working people like myself—working together on a genuine principled level with common goals and outlook against a common enemy.*



# Kendra Alexander

chair, N. Cal. CPUSA

JANUARY - 21-28-1990 (WEST) 199

I want to wish you all a happy new decade, — happy, productive, new decade. I also welcome this discussion. I say that frankly, it is a long overdue discussion. We should have been having discussions like this in the National Committee for some period of time, and we have not. We have to look at this meeting and see — usually in these meetings people are out of their seats, talking way in the back. Everybody's sitting, everybody's listening, because they're listening to what people have to say.

That's an important development. We ought to recognize it for what it is, and people are — all of us are interested now in various points of view on questions, and that is what we have to come to grips with. I wish I could speak on the socialist countries, but I decided to limit my remarks to one point so I can really try to make the point. I am going to discuss the question of democratic centralism in the Party.

I have been in the Communist Party for 24 years this year. Seventeen of those years I've been a full-timer for the Communist Party. Do I need to give my working class credentials? I worked for a rug factory. My dad was a truck driver; my mom was a nurse. Does it mean that working for the Party no longer makes me working class? I don't think so. But I've got criticisms and questions.

I have gone through my own personal struggle on these questions. For six months I was very, very depressed, because I was trying to work out in my own head, trying to figure out what was going on, and why was I having questions and

problems, and so forth? It took me six months to begin to come through that depression. I'm not depressed now. It took me six months to come through that depression. Then I started reading everything. I started reading World Marxist Review, I started reading reports from other Parties. I started reading all this stuff. And I thought, my God, there is a worldwide discussion going on on these questions. Why aren't we discussing them in the Party? What's the problem? Then I started looking at how I functioned; not somebody else, but me, as a district organizer; clearly a large district, one of the largest in the Party. And I remember, comrades, in district committee meetings, if anybody questioned the line, I got so upset. I would react to it. I'd say, you know, you're being anti-Party, you're not supporting the Party, and so forth.

We can't do that in this period. We can no longer do that. We have got to listen to what people have to say — learn and give; that's the kind of period we're in. I fundamentally believe in democratic centralism. I've said it before from this platform. Let me say it again — I fundamentally believe in democratic centralism. If applied correctly it is one of our greatest organizational strengths. The united common action of communists throughout the country maximizes our effectiveness and influence beyond our actual numbers. My own personal experience with this was the campaign to free Angela Davis, where a small party, working in common, literally organized and mobilized millions in our own country and

recommended the removal of Stalin as General Secretary.

Stalin, after a bruising internal struggle over leadership, came fully to power and proceeded to put his stamp on policies of the Party and its organizational principle, democratic centralism. He legalized, codified his own interpretation of democratic centralism; making centralism prevail. And perhaps his greatest sin and disservice, that has had the longest, lasting affect, not only on the Soviet Party, but on all parties in the world, including our own, was the ossification of the organizational principle — ruling out the need for flexibility in relation between democracy and centralism, depending on changing times and circumstances.

The result has been 50 years of very little change in how we view democratic centralism, even though the whole world is changing. I want people to think about the points that I've made here. All of us have experienced a report coming into the National Committee meeting, a discussion for two to three days, and the exact same report

that went into the National Committee is what is issued to the Party and to the public. Discussion for discussion sake is not democracy. The essence of democracy is that the discussion has an impact on what in fact results in our line of policy. That's the question. Think about it. You've got to think about this question and not act as if simply because we have a discussion that that means there is full democracy in the Party. How does even this National Committee impact on line and policy? Very little, is my estimate.

I'm torn on whether to have a national convention at the regular date, going along with John Case's proposal, or whether we need one sooner. I'm frankly torn on that question. I don't know yet what I think about that. But I do know, that if we act as if this discussion in this National Committee is the conclusion of the discussion we're going to be in a world of trouble. We have to see this as opening the discussion and figure how to fully engage our entire membership in this process.



# an invitation to Afro- Americans



from the  
Communist Party...

Lee say  
Kandra  
write  
This



an invitation  
to Afro-  
Americans



from the  
Communist Party...





W.E.B. DUBOIS  
Letter to Gus Hall,  
applying for  
membership in the  
Communist Party  
October, 1961

*"On this first day of October 1961, I am applying for admission to membership in the Communist Party of the United States. I have been long and slow in coming to this conclusion, but at last mind is settled. Today I have reached a firm conclusion: Communism—the effort to give all men what they need and to ask of each the best they can contribute—this is the only way of human life. It is a difficult and hard end to reach—it has and will make mistakes, but today it marches triumphantly on in education and science, in home and food, with increased freedom of thought and deliverance from dogma. In the end Communism will triumph. I want to help bring that day."*



# The Communist Party Makes the Difference

We would like to extend a personal invitation to you to join the Communist Party.

This invitation is especially addressed to Afro-Americans—workers in industry, farmers, professionals, office workers, intellectuals, seniors—men and women. We extend it to you to help hasten the victory for equality, peace, democracy and the defeat of Reaganism.

You will probably ask, why join the Communist Party? There is no mystery about joining the Communist Party. As quiet as it is kept, the history and struggles of Afro-Americans are linked to the Communist Party and Afro-Americans have always joined in large numbers.

From the Communist Party's founding 66 years ago some of the most outstanding leaders of the Afro-American people have been and are now members of the Communist Party. Benjamin Davis, councilman from Harlem; W.E.B. DuBois, one of the greatest scholars and leaders this country has produced; Henry Winston, presently the national chairman of the Communist Party; James Jackson, internationally renowned Marxist theoretician and presently secretary of the Party's Central Committee; Angela Davis, vice-presidential candidate of the Communist Party in 1980 and 1984; Charlene Mitchell, outstanding leader against racism and political repression and the Party's presidential candidate in 1968; Claude Lightfoot, author and leader of the unemployed in Chicago; Ted Basset, former leader of the Communist Party in Harlem, to name just a few. Many great Afro-American academicians, singers, artists and writers have been or are presently in or closely associated with the Party.

Why do Afro-Americans join the Communist Party? Membership in the Party grows out of years of experiences as a worker in the shop who has to confront the boss day

after to day or is ruthlessly thrown out in the unemployment and hunger line; as a farmer who sees his property and life savings snatched by the bank; or a mother faced with the never-ending choice of paying rent or buying food from one month to another. For Afro-Americans these problems are compounded by the barriers of racism and discrimination, and the daily insults of white supremacy. It is the day-to-day experiences of growing up in the U.S. that lead to membership in the Communist Party.

Afro-Americans join the Communist Party because they see that what they want out of life are the very same things the Communist Party believes in and fights for. Communists have always been in the forefront fighting for jobs, equality, peace, solidarity and friendship with oppressed peoples throughout the world.

These struggles are deeply rooted in our traditions. Communists initiated and led the fight for unemployment insurance and Social Security during the 1930s. Communists took the battle against Jim Crow, poll taxes, discrimination, and lynching to the swamplands of segregation and racism and we won victories. It was the Civil Rights Congress, under the leadership of William L. Patterson, a Communist, who took the United States government before the United Nations and charged it with genocide against the Afro-American people.

## The Hand and Glove of Racism and Anti-Communism

You have heard many things about Communists. As a matter of fact, there are more things said about Communists than any other political organization. On the job, at school, or at home watching television, we are endlessly bombarded with stories of how



Communism is some great "evil which threatens everything this country stands for." Millions of dollars and endless amounts of time are spent slandering the Communist Party. But very rarely do you hear what the Communists have to say.

Consider for a moment the hatred that Reagan, Jesse Helms, Ed Koch, the Right-wing fundamentalists, the Ku Klux Klan and the ultra-Right have for the Communist Party. These are the same ones who preach racism, despise democracy and have contempt and hatred for Afro-Americans. These are the very same ones, who, through their control of the news media and television, tell Afro-Americans about "the menace of Communism."

American," as fighting for goals foreign to this country. The demands of the Afro-American people for affirmative action and real equality are also labeled as "foreign," a violation of the Constitution and the spirit of "individualism," which they say "made this country strong." The demands for free health care, job security for all, Social Security increases, a guaranteed income, child care and free tuition are all brushed aside as "Communist." Those who fight for peace and solidarity with the people of South Africa, Nicaragua, and El Salvador are vilified as working for some "foreign agent." Every renowned Black leader in this country, from Frederick Douglass to Paul Robeson and Martin Luther King has been accused of being "Communist."



Youth demonstrating for peace, jobs and equality at the founding convention of the Young Communist League in May 1983.

Wherever there is a racist you'll find an anti-Communist, and wherever there is an anti-Communist you most likely will find a racist. The lies that they use against Communists are the same lies they use against all fighters for equality, peace and justice.

They accuse Communists of being "anti-

nist" by the racist enemies of equality and peace.

The Reaganites, who have taken over the White House, and who wrap themselves in the Constitution while violating all laws of human decency, are the real anti-Americans. It is their interests that are foreign to this



country and its best traditions. Anti-Communism is their cover and justification for their crimes against the people of this country and the world.

They hate the Communists because they know that of all political organizations, the Communist Party stands in direct opposition to their interests. It provides the ideology, or

are in leadership and membership in the Party in greater proportion than they are in the general population. The whole history of the Communist Party is a shining example of a multiracial, multinational organization that has set the standards for others.

The reason we fight so persistently against racism and for equality is found in the



Table at the Cuyahoga County Fair in Ohio during the 1982 election campaign. Gus Hall, general secretary of the Party, and Angela Davis, member of the Political Bureau, ran for president and vice-president on the Communist Party ticket.

ganization and program that, once grasped by the working and oppressed people, would spell doom for all Reaganites and exploiters. They use anti-Communism to isolate the Communist Party from Afro-Americans, in particular, in order to hamstring the fight for equality. This is the logic of their hatred and the reason for their slander of the Communist Party.

### **A Party of the Working Class and the Afro-American People**

You may be concerned that the Communist Party is a party of "whites only." Nothing is further from the truth. Afro-Americans

nature of the Party itself.

Racism and oppression are promoted by the monopoly corporations in their drive for profits. These profits are produced by exploiting and oppressing working people. Just like parasites, the owners of these corporations, who never work, create or produce anything, live on the backs of working people, who create all the value in society. They will commit any crime, wallow in filth, even threaten the world with nuclear annihilation for the sole sake of profits. They cut wages, demand concessions in health benefits and safety, speed up workers, close shops, lay off millions, destroy the environment and dev-





**Benjamin Davis, Communist Councilman from Harlem.** Davis was a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party and an outstanding leader of the workingclass and Afro-American people.

astate cities and whole regions of the country to maintain profits.

They created the ideology of racism and white supremacy to justify slavery and oppression and lower wages for Afro-American workers—to reap extra profits for Big Business. This is the origin and the source of racism.

The monopoly corporations, in their drive for profits, are opposed to the interest of the overwhelming majority of the U.S. people. They own the wealth of the country, and control the media, cultural, social, and political institutions, including the Democratic and Republican parties, to protect their interests.

To fight the monopolies, the working class—which consists of white workers, Afro-Americans, Puerto Ricans, Chicanos, Native Americans and Asian Americans—needs its own political party. That party is the Communist Party, USA. It didn't come from afar or develop by some accident. It grew out of the demands of the working class for a better life and the need to fight for its own interests. The Communist Party is a working-class party, the only one in this country.

The working class is the most powerful force aligned against the monopoly corporations. It is the most organized section of the people's forces, whose interests contradict those of the monopolies. Whether the issue is



peace, democratic rights, job security, health care, education or police brutality, the labor movement is the main force necessary for victory. It, however, can not realize its strength if it accepts racism. Racism divides its ranks. That is why Big Business maintains and cultivates racism. It is their main weapon, along with anti-Communism, in the arsenal of divide-and-rule tactics. The Communist Party exposes racism as alien to the interests and morals of workers, and shows that the struggle for equality is a precondition for victory on any front.

We tirelessly fight against all influences of racism and show that it is a double-edged sword of the big corporations that strikes against Black people as well as white workers. It weakens the unity of the working class, saps it of its militancy and sets it up as

an easy prey of the offensive of the monopoly corporations against workers' wages and living standards.

In the building of the trade union movement in the 1930s, it was Communists who advanced the slogan "Black and white—unite and fight," which became the rallying cry for millions. Today it is the Communists who fight for the trade unions to lead the struggle against racism.

Communists call upon the trade unions to place affirmative action programs on the negotiation table, to organize the unorganized, to establish affirmative action committees in the trade unions, to make adjustments in the seniority system to compensate for lack of seniority of Black and other workers due to racism, and to begin a massive campaign for a national jobs program that incorporates affir-



The Daily World is the only daily workingclass paper in the country. It helps organize and mobilize workers in struggle.



mative action demands.

### **Get to the Root of the Problem**

By going to the root causes of racism the Communist Party gives hope, confidence and focus to the people's struggle. Lack of understanding of the root causes of racism and its connection with all issues leads some to downplay or delay the fight against racism.

Such attitudes also has influence some Afro-Americans. Some do not see the objective basis of unity with white workers, which leads to go-it-alone tactics, frustration and defeatism. They do not see the connection between the struggle for equality and the fight for peace and democracy.

### **The Danger of the Ultra Right**

You would probably like to know what the Communist Party does and what it offers the Afro-American people and you personally.

The Communist Party sees the ultra-Right and the fascist-tinged forces as the main danger facing the people of this country and the world. These are the representatives of the military-industrial complex, who have now embarked on a course of war, intervention and state terrorism. They make no secret of their hatred for the Constitution and democracy and their intention to destroy the trade unions, affirmative action programs and all the hard-won gains of working people of the past 50 years.

Once existing on the fringe of the political scene, and with views and policies that correspond to the Ku Klux Klan and assorted neo-nazi organizations, they now have wormed themselves into the highest seats of government, the mass media, and cultural and educational institutions. They are found throughout the Reagan Administration.

Afro-Americans are the first victims of the ultra-Right. They teach contempt and hatred for Blacks. Reagan came into office dismantling affirmative action programs, slashing social programs, and blaming the victims

for the problems of poverty and unemployment. They stand for lawlessness and have resorted to state terror, racist violence and police brutality to force Afro-Americans and the labor movement to accept the Reaganite assault on the living standards of working people. Though they carry the aura of respectability, they are nothing but the paid henchmen and strikebreakers for the military-industrial complex.

What contribution do Communists make in the fight against the Reaganites? The death-knell for Reaganism can only be sounded by the maximum unity of the people's forces. We therefore call for the building of an all people's front against Reaganism consisting of the overwhelming majority of the U.S. people and pivoted on working-class and Afro-American unity in the first place.

The defeat of Reaganism is not possible while a majority of the people are tied to and restricted by the organizations, politics and ideology of Big Business. This includes first of all the Democratic and Republican parties, which are controlled by Big Business. Therefore, we call for electoral, political and legislative action based on political independence of labor and Afro-Americans other nationally oppressed people, farmers, women, youth, seniors and professionals. At every level, from neighborhoods to cities and states, Communists and other forces are working to build coalitions and organizations which represent and fight for the people's needs for jobs, housing, against evictions and police brutality. We strive for the people's forces, consisting of the trade unions, Afro-Americans and other oppressed people, to run their own candidates committed against Reaganism in the 1986 Congressional elections, and vote the Reaganites and their supporters out of office.

### **With the People's Interest First, Every Problem Is Solvable**

We are not wedded to capitalism. Therefore, unbound by the parameters of





Communist Party contingent demonstrating for peace.

what is in the interest of monopoly corporations, we are able to make bold projections and offer bold solutions. Our answer to the decline of basic industry and deepening unemployment is the nationalization of all basic industries under democratic control, banning corporations from closing plants, a six-hour day with no cut in pay, and strong affirmative action programs. Instead of throwing money down the Pentagon rathole and distributing our tax monies to the corporations and the military-industrial complex, we call for a massive campaign to rebuild the infrastructure of our cities, better housing, schools, hospitals and public transportation. This will create millions of jobs. There are solutions once we take off the blinders of Big Business.

### The Communist Party and the Fight for Peace

"A blow for freedom anywhere is a blow against tyranny everywhere." These are the words of Frederick Douglass. From the days of slavery, Afro-Americans saw the link between the fight for equality at home and the fight for liberation of oppressed people abroad. This tradition of solidarity is deeply rooted in the Afro-American people.

The Communist Party carries on this tradition today. The fight for peace is the most important struggle facing the people of this country and the world. With the threat of nuclear war hanging over us, it is a question of life or death for the whole of humanity.



The Communist Party makes a special contribution to this fight. Whereas other forces are paralyzed by such Pentagon code-words as "national security," "national interest" and the "Soviet menace," we expose the source of the war danger, explain who benefits from the arms buildup, and how their interest is not only a threat to the real traditions and "national interest" of the people of this country, but to the future of life on this planet as well.

The transnational corporations and the military-industrial complex are the source of the war danger. Every single new nuclear weapon system has been initiated by them in their drive for nuclear superiority over the Soviet Union. They are looking for ways to fight a nuclear war and win, as with their Star Wars scheme.

They seek to hold in bondage the people of the developing countries and erase the gains of the national liberation movements and socialism. They are responsible for the survival of the racist apartheid regime in South Africa. All for the right to plunder and exploit the wealth of other countries and peoples.

Communists show the link between the fight for peace and the fight for equality, jobs and democracy at home, thereby bringing all the democratic and progressive forces into the fight for peace. The corporations which oppress people abroad are the very same ones that exploit and oppress workers, Afro-Americans, and other nationally oppressed people here. The monies for jobs, housing, schools, hospitals are being eaten up by the military-industrial complex.

These corporations, always talking about "national interest" and "patriotism," shut down plants in the U.S., leaving U.S. workers jobless, and open new plants in countries under oppressive regimes such as South Africa, South Korea and Chile, where they pay low wages and provide little or no safety or health protection. They set up military bases and stockpile weapons to intervene militarily



Playing volleyball at a Daily World picnic in New York.

if need be to protect their "interest." They must whip up racism, chauvinism and backward ideologies among the people to win support for their war policies. Therefore, a defeat for them in Nicaragua, the Middle East or South Africa is a victory for labor, Afro-Americans and all the democratic forces here at home.

The Communist Party led the solidarity fight with Ethiopia when it was invaded by fascist Italy in the 1930s, just as we played a leading role in the movement to end the Vietnam War. Today we are organizing against U.S. intervention in Nicaragua, El Salvador and anywhere that oppressed people are fighting for national independence.

The Communist Party has played an outstanding role in the fight against apartheid in South Africa, through the founding of solidarity organizations, petition drives, organizing



boycotts and demonstrations. We call for cutting off all military, economic, social and cultural ties with this racist regime. Furthermore, we work to bring the power of the labor movement, through the use of boycotts, strikes and refusal to unload products from South Africa, in the leadership of the solidarity struggle. A defeat for the racist and fascist regime of South Africa would represent a crushing defeat for racism worldwide and a victory for democracy and peace.

### **Things Don't Have to be as They Are**

The self-serving representatives of Big Business are always hollering about how this is the "best of all possible worlds." It is the best possible worlds—for them. We want, however, the best possible world for the majority of the people. What is the alternative?

In what is known as the "richest country in the world" it is possible to solve the problems of unemployment, poverty, lack of adequate housing, or any economic social or cultural need of the people. It can be done if we get rid of the monopoly corporations and end the system of capitalism.

W.E.B. DuBois, in his letter applying to join the Communist Party said: "Today I have reached a firm conclusion: Capitalism cannot reform itself; it is doomed to self-destruction. No universal selfishness can bring social good to all. Communism—the effort to give all men what they need and to ask of each the best they can contribute—this is the only way of human life."

The alternative to capitalism is a socialist United States of America. Under such a system power will rest with the multiracial, multinational, male-female working class and its allies. Promoting the interests of all the people will be the guiding principle. The bountiful wealth and resources of this country, which are enough to solve the problem of hunger and poverty of the world, will belong to the people. Exploitation will be eliminated, racism will be illegal and racists will be punished. In such a society there will be no place

for Reaganites, landlords, warmongers, and those who live on the labor of others. The dreams and longings of people throughout the centuries would become a reality under socialism.

### **It Begins With the Communist Party**

None of this, however, is possible without a big Communist Party. A strong Communist Party in the trade unions means a strong trade union movement that speaks and fights for Afro-American equality. A strong Communist Party in a tenants' organizations means a strong organization fighting against discrimination in housing and evictions and for quality, low-cost housing for all. A Communist club in your shop would add a new dimension to the pressing day-to-day questions such as shop grievances and contract negotiations. It would aid the fight for unity and militant trade unionism and give greater clarity in the fight against the boss. Communists bring a unique contribution to their civic, social or labor organizations.

What would it mean to you personally if you joined the Communist Party? It would give focus and direction to your daily struggles. Membership in the Communist Party creates confidence in yourself, your cause and your fellow workers. You become a conscious participant in creating and refashioning a better society.

Membership in the Communist Party does not require that you give up your civic, church, religious, social or labor organizations or affiliations. It adds clarity and political understanding to your efforts in every sphere of activity.

History has willed it so that the destiny of the Afro-American people is bound up with that of the Communist Party. Afro-Americans have never been content to sit on the sideline as the main battles are being fought. The best traditions of the Afro-American people are found in the Communist Party. If you are a firm believer in those traditions, then you belong in the Communist Party.



## Afro-American Communists Speak on Why They Joined the Communist Party



**Henry Winston, national chairman of the Communist Party**

*The demand for equality by an oppressed people and the fight for its advancement is necessary for the realization of full democracy.*

*It is inspiring to see Blacks in the forefront of this fight. This has been true historically and it is true today. The essence of the struggle of Afro-Americans for equality is the fight for the elimination of the shameful exploitation and racist oppression by the monopoly corporations which nets them an extra profit of \$100 billion annually.*

*The racist oppression of Black people is an attack on white workers as well. The monopoly corporations are able to use inequality of Blacks to set a ceiling on the wages of white workers and on their living standards in general. Therefore, success in the fight to end inequality not only advances the positions of oppressed Afro-American people but the entire working class. It strengthens the bond of unity, brotherhood and sisterhood, which enables the multinational, multiracial, male-female working class to achieve higher and higher goals.*

*Black and white workers and all racially and nationally oppressed people are the only creators of values. If they are united, they will be able to move forward to a state of society where the creators will become the masters, and private ownership of the wealth and resources this country and the oppression which it engenders will no longer exist.*

*What is equality? It is a national democratic slogan that is an indispensable part of the fight against oppression as well as exploitation and is always found in the forefront of the struggle for unity.*

*This is the uniqueness which Communists offer. Communists work to win the broad masses to successfully defend and advance their common demands.*

*Communists work to win the broad masses to successfully defend and advance their common demands.*





**Angela Davis,  
member of the  
Central Committee, CPUSA,  
co-chair of  
National Alliance Against  
Racist and Political  
Repression.**

*Growing up as a child in the Jim Crow South I developed an almost instinctive desire to assist in the process of ending that horrendous system.*

*Later I came to realize that racism was very much connected to the exploitation of the entire working class. But it was not until I came into contact with the program of the Communist Party that I recognized that scientific strategies could be developed that could lead us in the direction of emancipation.*

*I joined the Communist Party because it is the Party of the working class, the Party of African-Americans and of all racially and nationally oppressed people in this country and because it is the Party of women, youth, seniors. It allows us to address the immediate needs of our people within the context of the scientific long-range strategy of socialism.*





James Jackson, with Moses Mahbida (left), general secretary of Communist Party of South Africa.

**James Jackson,  
secretary of the  
Central Committee,  
CPUSA**

*The Communists believe that the people are the great makers of history; that the masses of the people undertake and accomplish great deeds. Social necessity defines these tasks; the necessity to be free from poverty and ignorance, from material deprivation and cultural darkness. The necessity to strive toward a social relationship making for maximum happiness wherein the family of human beings would dwell together as brothers and sisters, freed from oppression.*

*The Communists believe that in the course of the daily struggle to secure their urgent needs, the masses of the people will acquire a vista of the morrow's horizons as illuminated by the theory of scientific socialism and the program of the Communist Party.*

*The adoption by masses of the socialist goal will be born out of the necessity and lessons of the struggle for their daily needs, and, in due time, our countrymen, like the peoples of all nations, will act of that necessity, do away with the old and delapidated capitalist system and replace it with that historically-determined modern social formation—socialism.*





**Charlene Mitchell,**  
secretary, Afro-American Equality Commission, CPUSA

*Joining the Communist Party was the most important decision of my life and it has been most rewarding.*

*As I look back my whole life experience, each stage in my development, was a logical progression to the Communist Party. There were the rude awakenings to racism as a child, to landlord rip-off and boss exploitation as the daughter of a building trades worker. I realized early in life that the barriers of racism, which checks the hopes, dreams and aspirations of all Black people, could only be submounted in struggle and unity. This threads runs throughout the history of Black people. I knew that I would always fight against racism, oppression, and all indignities born of exploitation and white supremacy.*

*But it was when I was struck by the horrors of Hitler fascism that I joined the Communist Party. Black people saw the connection between fascism and racism. Those racists at home were saying the same things as Hitler was saying in Germany, and this was the terrain upon which Black people*

*fought: against racism here in the United States and fascism in Europe.*

*It was then that I came in contact with Communists, Black and white, who were leading the fight for all-out U.S. involvement in the defeat of Hitler fascism. Communists were the most committed and consistent fighters against Jim Crow, poll taxes, lynching, for fair employment practices and democracy—all of which were the concerns of Afro-Americans—and against Hitler fascism. Communists saw the common enemy. I also saw that it was the land of socialism, the Soviet Union, that was bearing the brunt of the attack against Hitler fascism.*

*Communists do not work alone in the movement or apart from other organizations in the fight for equality. We are with everyone who desires peace and equality. History has shown that Communists are a vital, indispensable part of the people's movement. Joining the Communist Party does not separate you from the Black community, or from your organizations. The hopes, dreams and aspirations of the Afro-American people are found in the Communist Party.*



1989  
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**Jarvis Tyner, chairman,  
N.Y. State Communist Party**

I come from a workingclass family. My father was a factory worker, my mother was a beautician. Growing up was difficult. We were a family of five. Most times were hard times for us. I can remember not having coal to heat our house in the hard winters. I can remember running out of milk and basic foods; never having a real family vacation; having to lie to the rent man and bill collectors. This was not the depression. This was the "prosperous 40s and 50s."

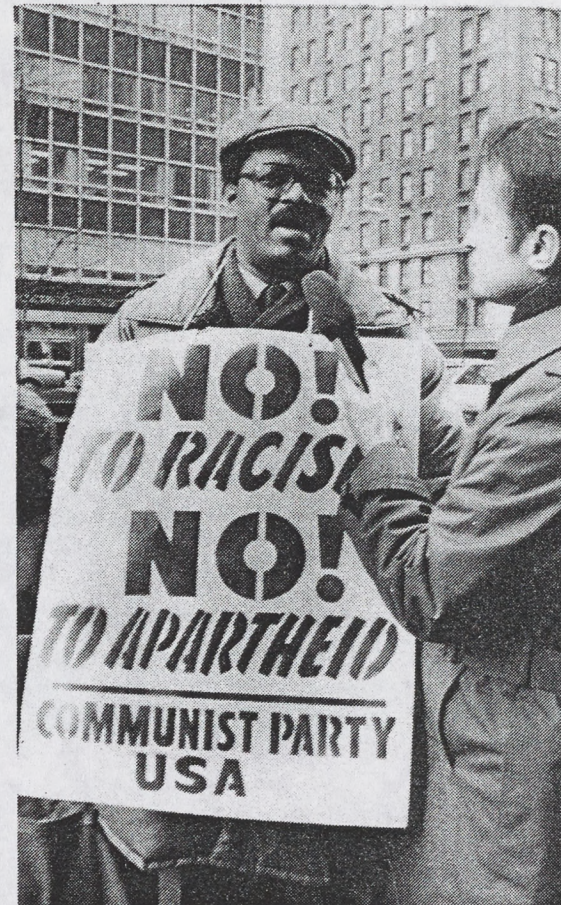
After much difficulty finding a job, I learned a trade and became a member of a union. It wasn't long before we had a strike. I learned much about class struggle. I grew to appreciate the trade union movement. After a slight business slump I was laid off. I learned that good job performance and talent do not guarantee job security under capitalism.

I began marching on picket lines in solidarity with those facing racist violence in the struggles in the South. It was here that I met members of the Communist Party. They were the best fighters against racism. They were the most sincere multi-racial group of people I had ever met. Little in my life experience had shown me that Black and white could unite. But there it was right before my eyes and when they were red baited I instinctively defended them and it made me more committed. I had seen what anti-Communism had done to the best of my school teachers during the 50s. I remembered the fate of the Rosenbergs. Red baiting made me more angry. It was a total lie.

In the fight against anti-communism I learned why we were taught to hate and fear the Soviet Union. The USSR was the living example of real socialism. If the U.S. people learned the truth about real socialism they would surely reject U.S. capitalism.

I was discovering the heart of the matter of life under capitalism. The problem wasn't just the racism of a Woolworth five and dime. Racism was deeply rooted in the capitalist system itself and a basic part of class exploitation. I realized that it was necessary and possible to end oppression and racism. Unity was possible and with unity the working class could win.

Socialism brought it all together for me and it



was a goal worth fighting for and possible to achieve. One third of the world was living under socialism. Despite problems, the world was more and more moving towards socialism and I wanted to be an active part of that motion.

I joined the Communist Party, the most important decision in my life. The Communist Party had the ideology—Marxism-Leninism—the courage, energy and the experience in its leadership and membership to do its part to lead the working class and people to our socialist destiny. And it has gotten stronger and we have entered a new accelerated phase in our development.

I am more and more proud to be a part of this great Party and I invite others to join us and share in the rich and rewarding experience that is the Communist Party, USA.