

February is

**BLACK  
LIBERATION  
MONTH**

**A Proposal for Black People**

A Proposal For Black People...

FEBRUARY IS BLACK LIBERATION MONTH!

March 1981.

Peoples College  
P.O. Box 7696  
Chicago, Illinois  
U.S.A. 60680

One Dollar, fifty

LETS BREAK BREAD TOGETHER

struggle sat at my table  
this morning  
ordered eggs  
resistance side up  
with hands browned  
from activity  
a cup of black commitment  
and two pieces of secrecy

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### 1. Proposal

Peoples College proposes to unify Black people around the task of changing Black History Month, as an evolution from Negro History Week, to Black Liberation Month. We propose that individuals and organizations focus their efforts in February on the many aspects of the Black Liberation Movement.

### 2. Why

We believe, based on our practice of the last ten years, that the masses of Black people recognize the continuing role of resistance to oppression that dominates our history. We believe that this period-February - should be used to teach people about the liberation struggle as well as to get them to actively take part in it as a living part of their history.

### 3. Background

Our popular recognition of Black history has evolved from Negro Emancipation Day (1863-1925), to Negro History Week (1926 to the 1960's), to Black History Month (1960's and 1970's), to the proposal for Black Liberation Month (since 1971).

### 4. Liberation References

In this handbook we have compiled a set of facts and some poetic reflections to demonstrate that the month of February is full of relevant historical events to enable organizations and institutions to plan full programs of activities. Further, we have examples of past material which we will send to any individual or group that is interested.

### 5. Action

Peoples College encourages everyone to get involved in this project. We have included here sample resolutions and a petition in order to have tools with which we can build support on a grassroots level for this important change in our grasp of political and educational culture for liberation.

## PROPOSAL

Peoples College puts the following proposal forward for full consideration by the entire Black community. We want to talk with:

Black Studies activists

Black intellectuals and artists

Black trade unionists

Activists in the Black liberation movement

Black leadership

Leadership of social, economic and political institutions  
in the Black community

1. We propose that the name of February be changed to Black Liberation Month.
2. We propose that all major events during the month have some theme relating to Black liberation.
3. We propose that a Black Liberation Month Coordinating Committee be formed in every city and on every campus so that a local calender of events can be published, that all available resources can be fully utilized, and that scheduling conflicts are minimized.

## WHY BLACK LIBERATION MONTH

### **Why Black Liberation Month**

Black Liberation Month is our attempt to unite with the founders and supporters of Negro History Week, and join their emphasis on study with our emphasis on struggle. Moreover, the concept of Black Liberation Month more accurately reflects the needs of our movement, particularly the need to build on the massive participation of people in the upsurge of struggle during the 1960's.

Carter G. Woodson, noted Afro-American nationalist historian, founded Negro History Week in 1926. In addition to the newspaper column of J.A. Rodgers, this was the major source of information that Black people had about their history. Every year in schools, churches, civic and political organizations, Negro History Week has been a time for historical reading and discussion.

We believe that Negro History Week has made a great contribution to mass awareness of Black History. Moreover, the recognition of Negro History Week has caught on, and has become an intellectual tradition in the 20th Century Afro-American experience. However, times have changed considerably since 1926. In political and cultural terms, the time has come to transform our orientation: from Negro to **Black**, from history to **liberation**, from week to **month**.

The revolutionary upsurge of the 1960's is our most recent historical experience of massive militant protest. It continues to be a rich source of lessons for current and future struggles. Black liberation month unites with Woodson's effort, but does so by raising it to a higher level based on the lessons of the 1960's.

In sum, our study of history must be linked with the revolutionary history of the Black liberation movement. Our goal is not simply to symbolically institutionalize a change in our yearly calendar of events, but to use this month as one more way to raise the consciousness of the masses of people about the historical nature of exploitation and oppression, to unite people around a correct political line, and to mobilize people to actively take up the struggle for Black liberation.

## BACKGROUND

Basically, the ritualization of Black history has been a national pattern for over 100 years. There have been three major stages in this development:

1. 1863-1925 Emancipation Day Celebration

It used to be customary to have a festive celebration on January 1st in recognition of the day set by U.S. President A. Lincoln in the Gettysburg Address for the slaves to be free. The main point was freedom from slavery.

2. 1926-1970 Negro History Week (Black History Month)

Dr. Carter G. Woodson and his Association for the Study of Negro Life and History began the process of popularizing the study of Black history. This was developed when the Black Belt South was at its height, as was overall Black National consciousness. This provided an intellectual focus for group identity and unity.

3. 1971 - Now Black Liberation Month

After initial developments, Peoples College began giving leadership to the struggle for recognition of Black Liberation Month. Black Liberation Month is a major ideological progression from a focus on national identity to national liberation struggle.

After the overall material transformation of Blacks from farmers into factory workers, the 1960's represent a decade of unprecedented political and ideological developments. Wave upon wave of people surged forward from one campaign of struggle to another. Now, from the vantage point of the 1980's, we must organize ourselves to consolidate, institutionalize, and protect as many gains as possible. We should never go back to the way things used to be (pre-1960's).

So, the specific focus of this proposal is to establish a living link with the freedom experienced in the 1960's (truly to be remembered as a glorious festival decade of struggle). we hope to make it normal for people for people to think, talk, research, and write about liberation. We want this recognized by everyone: Black liberation is the key focus of the history of Black people, and the focus of the history of Black intellectuals and artists as well.

There is always a danger in throwing out traditions, because they have been established by the lives of our people. There is also the danger of doggedly holding on to the status quo because the world changes and life goes on in new and different ways. The guiding principle we have used here is to avoid destroying tradition by consciously and carefully transforming it by replacing history (for national identity) with liberation (for united political action).

Black liberation is the essence of what we deal with in February. Lets call it by its name: February is Black Liberation Month.

We have been doing work on this project since 1971. Here's what we've been doing:

- 1971: The first calender was published in Nashville, Tennessee. Major historical events were included along with local activities in the Black community.
- 1972: The second Calender highlighted four Peoples College Conferences to explore the conditions for Black unity, held each weekend in February. The conferences focussed on the topics culture, youth, labor and politics.



- 1973: The main focus was historical events in February with suggested readings which discussed the struggle for Black liberation.
- 1974: The fourth year emphasized the need to develop a concrete basis on which to sum up contemporary political developments. This included a suggested study guide, the promotion of a Black history quiz on a local radio station, and a more focussed selection of dates for the calender.
- 1975-1977: No national calenders were published, but several local Black Liberation Month activities took place.
- 1978: The calender was published by the Organizing Committee for a New African Liberation Support Committee.
- 1979: This was the first Peoples College edition of Black Liberation Month News, with the calender as the center fold. The lead article took the character of a new year's editorial for Peoples College. Theme: "Fighting the Triple Oppression of Black Women".
- 1980: The Black Liberation Month News Theme: "Revolutionary Black Power in the 1980's" which included Peoples College 10 Point Program for Black liberation. Also included were articles on Iran, Zimbabwe and the 1980 Census.
- 1981: Theme: "Building Unity for the Revolution". Also included are a historical sketch of building unity in the Black liberation movement, and articles on Black Studies, African Liberation and thw the Black student movement.

## BLACK LIBERATION MONTH

A day by day reference for local community-campus action

The form for each day is:

1. The key historical fact(s) of events that happened  
on that day
2. Black poetic reflection on the fact(s)
3. Additional fact(s)

## BLACK LIBERATION MONTH

it takes more than seven days  
to expose cores of acts  
fighters are making  
because liberation has overtaken  
black history  
and the week's sprint  
is now  
a long distance run

FEBRUARY 1

1. Fact: In 1960 the sit-in movement was launched by four students in Greensboro, N.C. This sparked a new phase of militant black protest that exposed the national oppression of Black people in the U.S.A.

2. Poetic reflection:

they got up  
from intimidation  
and sat in defiance  
four students  
lit torches to rake brilliance  
on new phases of their hands  
the refracted echo  
shot militance into a generation  
sit-iners bluffed jim crows  
from existence  
and people walked forward

3. Additional facts:

- a) In 1902 Langston Hughes was born.
- b) In 1968 the Black community forced the firing of a white principal from Ocean Hill Brownsville school, in Brooklyn, on charges of racism. This action raised the issue of community control of schools.
- c) In 1810 the Black abolitionist leader, Charles Lenox Remond was born

FEBRUARY 2

1. Fact: Eduardo Mondlane, first president of Frelimo, was assassinated by a mail bomb. Frelimo led the victorious national liberation struggle of the people of Mozambique against the Portuguese.

2. Poetic reflection:

death never stopped them  
the common hands  
from pressing ever faster  
in their march to free man  
from man's exploitation  
the plot exploding  
to blast you into nothingness  
accelerated Frelimo's steps  
boomeranging against its perpetrators  
it transplanted your vision  
into Mozambican hands

3. Additional facts:

- a) In 1956 Autherine Lucy began attending the University of Alabama.
- b) Four Black mothers were arrested in 1962 after staging sit-ins at a Chicago elementary school.

FEBRUARY 3

1. Fact: Some 464,000 Black and Puerto Rican students boycotted New York public schools in sympathy with contemporary civil rights demonstrations(1964).
2. Additional Facts:
  - a) 700 Black children were arrested in 1965 during the voter registration drive in Marion, Alabama.
  - b) In 1965 the Selma-to-Montgomery March dramatized the fight for Black voting rights. It ended with a rally of 25,00 people in front of the state capital.

FEBRUARY 4

1. Fact: In 1961 the first armed action in the Angolan Revolution began in Luanda led by the M.P.L.A.

2. Poetic reflection:

every minute  
fought  
buys a future state  
the sands go AWOL  
from oppression  
and the people listen  
to movement riffing  
through their dreams  
when struggle begins  
in combat  
hands plant calenders of time  
beneath the oppressor's earth

3. Additional facts:

- a) Liberia, on the west coast of Africa, was founded by colonized Blacks from the U.S.A. in 1822.
- b) In 1913, Rosa Parks, the Black worker who sparked the Montgomery Bus Boycott, was born.
- c) There was a mass uprising in Ethiopia in 1974 which overthrew the U.S. backed government of Haile Selassie.

FEBRUARY 5

1. Fact: In 1967 Tanzania announced the Arusha Declaration.

2. Additional facts:

- a) Hank Aaron, outfielder for the Atlanta Braves, was born in Mobile, Alabama.
- b) In 1968 there was a demonstration in Orangesburg, South Carolina, to end segregation in bowling alleys in that city.

FEBRUARY 6

1. Fact: Melvin Tolson, poet laureate of Liberia and formerly mayor of Langston, Oklahoma, an all Black town, was born in 1900.

2. Additional facts:

- a) In 1937 there was a conference of Black organizations to stimulate unionization of Black steel workers.
- b) In 1961 the 'Jail-No-Bail' Campaign started in Rock Hill, South Carolina.
- c) In 1973 Native Americans unleashed armed resistance at Wounded Knee, South Dakota to protest government repression. Wounded Knee is a historic site of the 1890 massacre where federal troops killed over 300 Indians.



FEBRUARY 7

1. Fact: Negro History Week was founded in 1926 by Carter G. Woodson in honor of Frederick Douglass.

2. Poetic reflection:

he shook lies  
from the Black Man's past  
revolting with affirmations  
grooming despair with history  
his documents  
grew resistance and pride

3. Additional facts:

- a) A delegation of Blacks, led by Frederick Douglass, called on President Andrew Johnson in 1867 to urge the ballot for ex-slaves.
- b) Edward W. Blyden, champion of Pan-Africanism, died in 1912.
- c) In 1940 Richard Wright's novel Native Son was published.

FEBRUARY 8

1. Fact: Police shot 50 students of Claflin University and South Carolina State College during non-violent demonstrations against segregation. Four were killed at the Orangeburg Massacre after being shot in the back.

2. Poetic reflection:

at Organgeburg  
they gave a mini preview  
of Soweto  
murdering  
wounding  
when resistance knocked  
on their doors  
oppressors answered with violence  
trying to dampen acts  
raging in desire  
trying to prop up daylight  
sinking from their powers

3. Additional facts:

- a) Marcus Garvey, Black Nationalist U.N.I.A. President, entered the federal penitentiary in Atlanta in 1925.
- b) In 1964 Malcolm X founded the Organization for Afro-American Unity.

FEBRUARY 9

1. Fact: Paul Lawrence Dunbar, renowned writer of rural Afro-American dialect poetry, died in 1906. He wrote "I know why the caged bird sings!"

2. Poetic reflection:

that mellowed wail  
slipped from day  
into night silences  
the caged bird flew  
into eternity  
his song pleading against terror  
anchoring his people  
he flew away  
but we remember him into brass  
making a voice the amplifier  
speaking for our condition

3. Additional fact:

- a) In 1943, 4,000 Black and white youth led by the American Youth Congress march in Washington D.C. to protest government discrimination against Black servicemen and the U.S. war policy.

FEBRUARY 10

1. Fact: In 1929 Leontyne Price, Black Metropolitan Opera soprano was born.

FEBRUARY 11

1. Fact: In 1933 the first Black library was founded in Philadelphia. This is one of the many examples of Black peoples' struggle to build institutions and to develop culturally.

2. Poetic reflection:

was in 1833 in Philly  
that seeing men wiped soot  
from their dreams  
to reveal a Black library  
a meeting place  
where brains beat tambourines  
and shouted when knowledge  
tickled their palms

3. Additional fact:

- a) Robert Weaver was sworn in as Administrator of the Housing and Home Finance Company in 1961.

FEBRUARY 12

1. Fact: In 1793 the Fugitive Slave Law was passed which made it illegal to protect an escaped slave.

2. Poetic reflection:

it was merely a spirit  
in freedom's marathon  
because the Fugitive Slave Law  
woke John Brown to action  
and made slaves  
monitor the days for opportunities  
the time arose above ground  
in liberation columns  
anxiously swinging destruction  
on outmoded edifices

3. Fact: In 1909 the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People was founded at Niagara Falls, N.Y.

4. Poetic reflection:

meeting in opposition  
they backhanded racism  
with structured blows  
walls of their building  
beat back terrorism  
and from within them  
lynchers were hunted down  
ripe minds picked by opportunity  
voting rights excavated from tyranny  
and maps for tomorrow  
fashioned

5. Additional facts:

- a) Abraham Lincoln, so-called 'emancipator' who freed the slaves under pressure from Northern corporate capitalists, was born in 1809 in Hardin County, Kentucky.
- b) Black Sanitation workers in Memphis, Tennessee, went on strike in 1973

FEBRUARY 13

1. Fact: In 1960, Patrice Lumumba, leader of the national democratic revolution of the Congo, was assassinated in an action planned and funded by the C.I.A.

2. Poetic reflection:

when they offed him  
their treachery also aroused  
a decade from imperialism's hands  
because the oppressed  
broke from their graves  
into this century  
taking what was theirs  
Patrice, the collaborators  
stuck a gun in your life  
aiming at all the common hands  
but the trigger finger  
wasting you  
condemned its lackey and sponsor  
to a shorter breathing time

3. Additional facts:

- a) Frederick Douglass, ex-slave, abolitionist, and organizer for Black freedom, was born in 1817.
- b) In 1964 the first P.A.I.G.C. Congress was held in Guinea.
- c) In 1971 there was a World Day of Solidarity with the people of Congo-Kinshasa, who were fighting neo-colonialism.

FEBRUARY 14

1. Fact: Richard Allen, founder of the African Methodist Episcopal Church was born in Philadelphia in 1790. The development of the independent Black church made a major contribution to the formation and development of the Afro-American nation.

2. Poetic reflection:

in Richard a sense of wholeness emerges  
dry bones of seasoning connect  
to shape a mind  
unifying african fragments  
and the american reality  
in him is sown  
a nation's first step  
the trek from volcanoes of illusions  
to building  
to shaping a hostile world

3. Additional fact:

a) In 1968 Fort Jackson GIs revolted and  
Black GIs refused to do riot duty.



FEBRUARY 15

1. Fact: Black Abolitionists crashed a courtroom in Boston to rescue a fugitive slave in 1851.

2. Poetic reflection:

fighters crashed walls  
to free slaves fleeing bondage  
they pitched a tent  
on inhumanity  
to erect defiance  
mobilized consciousness  
and formed blow-links  
against slave owners

3. Fact: African nationalists disrupted the United Nations in 1962 to protest the murder of Patrice Lumumba, assassinated leader of the Congo.

4. Poetic reflection:

disruption is business  
for those protesting evil  
memory of resisters  
against slave owners  
actualize in outcries  
over Lumumba's murder  
pulling chaos  
over their oppressors's days  
so order  
might bloom from their efforts

5. Additional facts:

- a) Black nationalist Malcolm X Society met in 1968 to plan the creation of a Black nation in five southern states.
- b) In 1879 Blanche K. Bruce presided over the United States Senate.

FEBRUARY 16

1. Fact: In 1937 the National Negro Congress was founded in Chicago. It organized workers in the C.I.O.

2. Poetic reflection:

Common hands rode  
the NNC Express to unity  
Black workers taking the C.I.O  
on the big march  
toward victory

3. Additional fact:

a) In 1951 the New York City Council passed a bill prohibiting racial discrimination in city housing developments.

FEBRUARY 17

1. Fact: In 1865 the Klu Klux Klan, a facist organization that promotes white supremacy, organized in Pulaski, Tennessee.

2. Poetic reflection:

they came bloodying  
opportunities for ex-slaves  
violently galloping  
from the darkness  
bringers of fascist hate  
splitting hands into shades:  
making black ones bow  
and white ones boast emptiness  
they came  
like slew-footed Zorros  
willing crude KKKs  
on dreams

3. Additional fact:

- a) Huey P. Newton, Minister of Defense,  
Black Panther Party, was born in 1942.

FEBRUARY 18

1. Fact: In 1688 Quakers of Germantown, Pennsylvania made the first formal protest against slavery in the western hemisphere.

2. Additional facts:

- a) Black architect Paul Williams was born in 1894.
- b) In 1939 the University of Wisconsin refused a gift whose donor limited use of the funds to white students only.
- c) In 1965 Gambia became the 36th African country to regain its independence.

FEBRUARY 19

1. Fact: W.E.B. DuBois organized the first Pan African Congress which was held in Paris, France.

2. Poetic reflection:

first meeting  
Pan-African and defiant  
carved by DuBois  
his eyes lasering holes  
through colonialism  
preparing the way  
for Nkrumah Kenyatta  
Toure and Cabral

FEBRUARY 20

1. Fact: Frederick Douglass died in 1895.

2. Poetic reflection:

when the sun  
left his body  
sparks from his struggle  
reflected in his face  
like stars  
many slave-breakers  
had been tamed by his will  
the great voice  
poisoning his enemies  
and cleaning fear from brothers  
rested behind stillness  
yet from his presence  
anthems shouted hallelujahs  
to a bad-assed fighter  
gone

3. Additional fact:

a) In 1837 the earliest known meeting for political and civil rights was held in New York City by Blacks.

FEBRUARY 21

1. Fact: Malcolm X was assassinated at age 39 in the Audubon Ballroom in New York City.

2. Poetic reflection:

Big Red sank  
behind bullets and conspiracy  
they shot counter-revolution  
at common hands  
raising daylight from squalor  
and Malik Shabazz  
caught the volleys  
they aimed destruction  
but hit resistance  
because Malcolm tossed  
his flames  
to grass-rooted men  
and a nation grew up  
to challenge its bondage  
Big Red was dead  
but his spirit sicked fire  
on Babylon

3. Additional facts:

- a) In 1895 the North Carolina legislature, dominated by Black Republicans and white Populists, adjourned to mark the death of Frederick Douglass.
- b) Dr. Wendall M. Lucas, Black surgeon-urologist, was born in 1920.

FEBRUARY 22

1. Fact: In 1872 the National United Front of farmers, workers and city folk, in which the Colored National Farmers Alliance played a prominent role, formed a Peoples Party in St. Louis and tried to establish itself as a national third political party.



FEBRUARY 23

1. Fact: W.E.B. DuBois was born in 1868. He was a writer, an educator, and Fisk graduate, as well as architect of Pan Africanism, Secretary of the first Pan African Conference in 1900, organizer of the second in 1919 and key leader in attempting to bring the case against colonialism before the versailles Peace Conference.

2. Poetic reflection:

a geyser shot  
consciousness from the desert  
a deep well pirated fertility  
from chains  
making souls of black folks  
stand up  
to defy double-consciousness  
a geyser shot  
intelligence into chaos  
so that paths sprang up  
through sorrows  
broken spirits  
and ruins of bound men  
a mighty balm sprang resistance  
on african peoples

3. Additional facts:

- a) In 1929 the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters received its charter from the A.F.L.
- b) There were sit-ins and a race riot in Chattanooga, Tennessee in 1960.

FEBRUARY 24

1. Fact: Rev. Daniel Payne, who established Union Seminary near Columbus, Ohio, was born in 1811.
2. Additional fact:
  - a) Months after Otis Redding, popular recording artist, artist died, the Georgia State Senate unanimously passed a resolution honoring him for his contribution to the state and the world of music.

FEBRUARY 25

1. Fact: After stealing Florida from the Seminole Indians, the U.S. government shipped them and their African allies to the west from Tampa Bay, Florida in 1838.

2. Additional facts:

- a) In 1870, Hiram R. Revels of Mississippi, became the first African-American Senator in the United States.
- b) In 1870 the 15th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was ratified.
- c) In 1877 the Hayes-Tilden Betrayal was announced.
- d) The Black community of Columbia, Tennessee prevented lynching of a Black war veteran and his mother in 1946. The community was surrounded and its business section was destroyed and looted. Resulting charges against Black citizens of attempted murder ended in eventual acquittal.

FEBRUARY 26

1. Fact: Europeans ended the 'Scramble for Africa' at the Berlin Conference of 1884,

2. Poetic reflection:

remember Berlin  
welcoming thieves  
to carve Africa into shares  
conferees leeting humanity drift  
from their eyes like sand in an hourglass  
European predators  
wrapping nations in blindness  
remember 1884  
Berlin inviting imperialists  
to flip coins over Africa's parts  
world-plunderers  
convened to perfect vampiric dreams  
to expand man's exploitation  
of man

3. Additional facts:

- a) John Russworm became the first Black college graduate in the United States in 1826.
- b) Death of Mangaliso Sobukwe, founder of the Pan African Congress of Azania, in 1978.

FEBRUARY 27

1. Fact: Egypt, one of the oldest African countries, regained its independence from the British, in 1922.

2. Additional facts:

- a) Marian Anderson, Black opera singer, was born in 1902.
- b) In 1960 police arrested some 100 students in Nashville, Tennessee, following sit-in demonstrations.
- c) In Zimbabwe in 1980, elections began which signaled victory after years of armed struggle. This ended illegal white minority rule. The struggle was spearheaded by Z.A.N.U.

FEBRUARY 28

1. Fact: In 1946 Dr. Z. Alexander Looby was defense lawyer for Blacks arrested after demonstrations in Columbia, Tennessee.
2. Additional fact;
  - a) There were demonstrations at the Sojourner Truth Home in Detroit.

KEY QUOTES 1979-1981 BLACK LIBERATION MONTH NEWS

"I know why the caged bird sings!"

Paul Lawrence Dunbar

"Without struggle there is no progress."

Frederick Douglass

"There was one of two things I has a right to: Liberty or Death. If I could not have one, I would have the other, for no man should take me alive. I should Fight for my Liberty as long as my strength lasted..."

Harriet Tubman

"While it was true a thousand years ago, that human toil and energy was unable to feed, clothe and shelter all mankind, this has not been the case since the beginning of the nineteenth century; and today, with what we know of natural forces; with the land and labor at our disposal, with the known technique of processing materials and transport of goods, there is no adequate reason why a single human being on earth should not have sufficient food, clothing and shelter for healthy life."

W.E.B. DuBois

"Modern imperialism and modern industrialism are one in the same system; root and branch of the same tree. The race problem is the other side of the labor problem; and the Black man's burden is the white man's burden."

W.E.B. DuBois

"Of all our studies, history is best qualified to reward our research. And when you see that you've got problems all you have to do is examine the historic method used all over the world by others who have problems similar to yours. Once you see how they got theirs straight, then you know how you can get yours straight."

Malcolm X

"Capitalism can not destroy itself; it is doomed to self destruction...In the end, communism will triumph. I want to help bring that day."

W.E.B. DuBois

"Present organization of industry for private profit and control of government by concentrated wealth is doomed to disaster."

W.E.B. DuBois

"We can not talk of Dr. DuBois without recognizing that he was a radical all his life. Some people would like to ignore the fact that he was a communist in his later years ...Sean O'Casey was a literary giant of the twentieth century and was a communist. Pablo Neruda is generally considered the greatest living poet though he served in the Chilean senate as a communist. It is time to cease muting the fact that Dr. DuBois was a genius and chose to be a communist. Our irrational obsessive anti-communism has led us into too many quagmires."

Martin Luther King

"Revolution is like a forest fire. It burns everything in its path. The people who are involved in a revolution don't become a part of the system - they destroy the system, they change the system...Revolution changes the system, it destroys the system and replaces it with a better one."

Malcolm X

"Above all the Negro is poor by heritage from two hundred forty-four years of chattel slavery, by emancipation without land or capital, and by seventy-five years of additional wage exploitation and crime peonage."

W.E.B. DuBois

"Capitalism used to be like an eagle, but now it's more like a vulture. It used to be strong enough to go and suck anybody's blood, whether they were strong or not. But now it has become more cowardly, like the vulture, and it can only suck the blood of the helpless."

Malcolm X

"We must honestly admit that capitalism has often left a gut between superfluous wealth and abject poverty, has created conditions permitting necessities to be taken from the many to give luxuries to the few."

Martin Luther King

"All thinking people today who have been oppressed are revolutionary. This is the era of revolution."

Malcolm X

"We are not a social club, nor are we just any party. We are a socialist party committed to a scientific socialist ideology whose basic principles are clearly enunciated. We cannot be anything else and pretend to be for the people."

Robert Mugabe



## EPILOGUE

One of the basic themes of Black liberation poetry is in the symbol of "common hands". Common to Black people in the history of repression and resistance, common to working class people in the history of class exploitation and proletarian revolt. "Common Hands" refers to the masses, the true makers of history.

if you believe  
believe in the hands  
listen to their chains moaning  
listen to whips branding them  
listen to profits eroding them  
listen to their wills turning resistance  
up a little higher  
believe in them  
they put our future in the groove  
struggling against lynchings  
against submissiveness against bigotry  
listen to their music  
coming from necessity's lips  
blowing challenge on days  
knocking on the ears of power  
turning ever stale chords of yesterday  
listen  
the hands sing a new day

# DRAFT PETITION

We the undersigned individuals and organizations, fully support the proposal to change the name of February to Black Liberation Month. Our concern is that while Black history month was a meaningful slogan for our struggle as long as Black history was stolen from us or denied, now most people have access to basic facts, especially through the mass media. The banks and major corporations have taken Black history month, as has the federal government, and made it a vehicle for promoting their interests, products, and political line. We have to be clear why history, historical consciousness, and historical action are so important. We answer the question of 'history for what?' with the resounding cry of LIBERATION! So we propose to continue the tradition of Carter G. Woodson by changing the name of February to Black Liberation Month, and we call on every individual and organization in the Black community to join us in this effort.

[illegible]

## DRAFT RESOLUTION

WHEREAS the development of Black cultural resistance to oppression and exploitation is essential to the survival of Black people;

WHEREAS Dr. Carter G. Woodson and the Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History developed and maintained Negro History Week through its development to Black History Month for over 50 years;

WHEREAS Black people have access to the basic facts of Black historical experience now more than ever before;

WHEREAS the central theme of Black history is the struggle for Black liberation;

THEREFORE, Be it resolved that we have decided

1. To call February Black Liberation Month;
2. To contribute to the movement to have this accepted by the entire Black community; and
3. To concentrate our activities during February on Black liberation.

This resolution should be adopted by your organization and returned to Peoples College prior to September 30, 1981.  
Peoples College, P.O. Box 7696, Chicago, IL 60680

Sample copies of Black Liberation

Month News from

1979: Fighting the Triple Oppression  
of Black Women

1980: Revolutionary Black Power in the 1980's

1981: Building Unity for the Revolution

as well as addition copies of this pamphlet  
are available from

Peoples College Press

P.O. Box 7696

Chicago, ILLINOIS

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