

China Supported Black America's Civil Rights Struggle Part 1

(The following is an excerpt from the e-book [They Came Before Marco Polo](#))



China's Communist leader and founder, Chairman Mao Tsu Tung.

Chairman Mao Addressing Black America's Struggle in 1963:

American Negro leader now taking refuge in Cuba, Mr. Robert Williams, the former President of the Monroe, North Carolina, Chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People, has twice this year asked me for a statement in support of the American Negroes' struggle against racial discrimination. I wish to take this

opportunity, on behalf of the Chinese people, to express our resolute support for the American Negroes in their struggle against racial discrimination and for freedom and equal rights.

There are more than nineteen million Negroes in the United States, or about eleven per cent of the total population. Their position in society is one of enslavement, oppression and discrimination. The overwhelming majority of the Negroes are deprived of their right to vote. On the whole it is only the most back-breaking and most despised jobs that are open to them. Their average wages are only from a third to half of those of the white people. The ratio of unemployment among them is the highest. In many states they cannot go to the same school, eat at the same table, or travel in the same section of a bus or train with the white people. Negroes are frequently and arbitrarily arrested, beaten up and murdered by U.S. authorities at various levels and by members of the Ku Klux Klan and other racists. About half of the American Negroes are concentrated in eleven states in the south of the United States. There, the discrimination and prosecution they suffer are especially startling. The American Negroes are awakening, and their resistance is growing ever stronger. In recent years the mass struggle of the American Negroes against racial discrimination and for freedom and equal rights has been constantly developing.

In 1957 the Negro people in Little Rock, Arkansas, waged a fierce struggle against the barring of their children from public schools. The authorities used armed force against them, and there resulted the Little Rock incident which shocked the world.

In 1960 Negroes in more than twenty states held 'sit in' demonstrations in protest against racial segregation in local restaurants, shops and other public places.

In 1961 the Negroes launched a campaign of 'freedom riders' to oppose racial segregation in transport, a campaign which rapidly extended to many states.

In 1962 the Negroes in Mississippi fought for the equal right to enroll in colleges and were greeted by the authorities with repression which culminated in a blood bath.

This year, the struggle of the American Negroes started in early April in Birmingham, Alabama. Unarmed, bare-handed Negro masses were subjected to wholesale arrests and the most barbarous repression merely because they were holding meetings and parades against racial discrimination. On 12 June, an extreme was reached with the cruel murder of Mr. Medgar Evers, a leader of the Negro people in Mississippi.

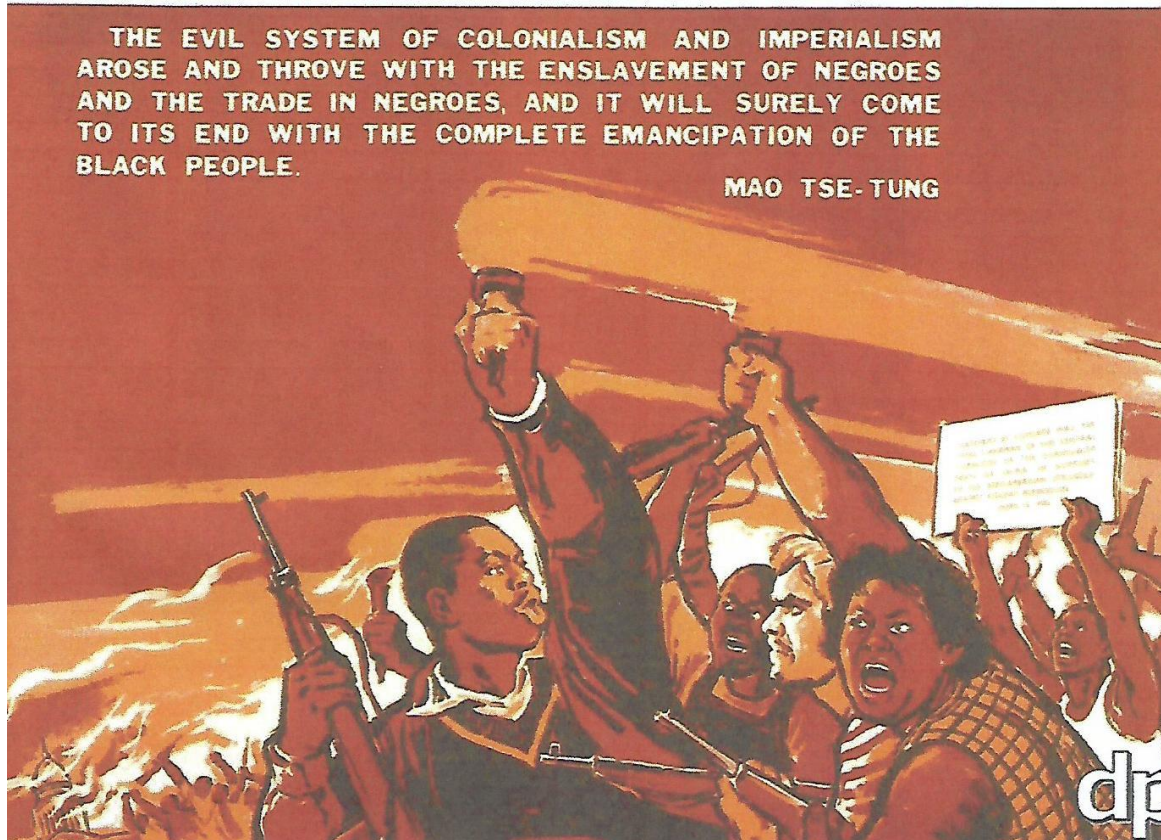
These Negro masses, aroused to indignation and undaunted by ruthless violence, carried on their struggles even more courageously and quickly won the support of Negroes and all strata of the people throughout the United States. A gigantic and vigorous nationwide struggle is going on in nearly every state and city in the United States, and the struggle keeps mounting. American Negro organizations have decided to start a 'freedom march' on Washington on 28 August, in which 250,000 people will take part.

The speedy development of the struggle of the American Negroes is a manifestation of the constant sharpening of class struggle and national struggle within the United States; it has been causing increasingly grave anxiety to the U.S. ruling clique. The Kennedy

Administration has resorted to cunning two-faced tactics. On the one hand, it continues to connive at and take part in the discrimination against and persecution of Negroes; it even sends troops to repress them. On the other hand, it is parading as an advocate for the 'defense of human rights' and the 'protection of the civil rights of Negroes', is calling upon the Negro people to exercise 'restraint', and is proposing to Congress so-called 'civil rights legislation' in an attempt to numb the fighting will of the Negro people and deceive the masses throughout the country. However, these tactics of the Kennedy Administration are being seen through by more and more of the Negroes. The fascist atrocities committed by the U.S. imperialists against the Negro people have laid bare the true nature of the so-called democracy and freedom in the United States and revealed the inner link between the reactionary policies pursued by the U.S. Government at home and its policies of aggression abroad.

I call upon the workers, peasants, revolutionary intellectuals, enlightened elements of the bourgeoisie, and other enlightened personages of all colors in the world, white, black, yellow, brown, etc., to unite to oppose the racial discrimination practiced by U.S. imperialism and to support the American Negroes in their struggle against racial discrimination. In the final analysis, a national struggle is a question of class struggle. In the United States, it is only the reactionary ruling clique among the whites which is oppressing the Negro people. They can in no way represent the workers, farmers, revolutionary intellectuals, and other enlightened persons who comprise the overwhelming majority of the white people. At present, it is the handful of imperialists, headed by the United States, and their supporters, the reactionaries in different countries, who are carrying out oppression, aggression and intimidation against the overwhelming

majority of the nations and peoples of the world. They are the minority, and we are the majority. At most they make up less than ten percent of the 3,000 million people of the



Communist China propaganda poster. Photo courtesy of IISH/Stefam R. Landsberger Collections.

world. I am deeply convinced that, with the support of more than ninety per cent of the people of the world, the just struggle of the American Negroes will certainly be victorious. The evil system of colonialism and imperialism grew on along with the enslavement of the Negroes and the trade in Negroes; it will surely come to its end with the thorough emancipation of the black people.

