



# **Who Fears the New Afrikan Queers?**

by Marte White





In this era of Gay Pride and Black Lives Matter, of rainbow flags and clenched fists, the question of the relationship between the struggle for queer liberation and Black liberation has taken on a great significance. Black people are not unique in having to wrestle with this. Black people in the United States constitute an oppressed nation subjugated by the U.\$., and our struggle is thus, in essence, a national liberation struggle joined by countless other national liberation struggles across the globe which also have to deal with this question. Queer people—who can be roughly defined as people who are not heterosexual, or people who are not cisgendered and do not fit within the gender category assigned to us at birth—exist everywhere, but those of us who are enduring national oppression and exploitation have had to wrestle with our relationship to the broader movements for national liberation and the struggle for socialism. Likewise, in national liberation and socialist struggles around the globe, those fighting for liberation have had to grapple with conflicting ideas on the proper conception of the situation of queer people within those broader struggles. Black people, or to refer to us by our nationality—New Afrikans—are much the same in this right.

Throughout history, queer New Afrikans have had to deal with discrimination and violence from the state, settlers, and our own people, and we have even had to deal with chauvinism from those of us who consider themselves “conscious” of our general predicament of bondage within the U.\$ settler-colonial empire. Likewise, those very people who consider themselves conscious have often not known what to make of queer New Afrikans. They have often been unable to conceptualize the role of queer New Afrikans within the liberation struggle or determine whether or not the particular struggle for the rights of queer New Afrikans is even important or progressive. Thus, queerphobia has run rampant throughout our movements and in our communities, causing divides between the masses of New Afrikan people and getting in the way of the general liberation of our nation. The remedy to this is the proper application of the theory of revolutionary Black nationalism, guided by the science of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, a science that is informing national liberation struggles around the world in the analysis of the relationship of queer New Afrikans to the broader struggle for New Afrikan liberation. It is only through concrete analysis guided by this methodology that we can come to the correct line that will forward the New Afrikan struggle

for land, independence, and socialism.

In an analysis of the relationship of the struggle of queer New Afrikans to the broader New Afrikan liberation struggle, it is best to start from a general analysis of the struggle of the world's queer people and move toward the particular situation of queer New Afrikans. The first step in doing this relies on situating the position of queer people within a systemic analysis. The former Crip turned New Afrikan revolutionary nationalist and communist Sanyika Shakur's definition of patriarchy is helpful in doing this. In his essay, *The Pathology of Patriarchy*, he wrote the following:

“Here's the thing, really, if people are being oppressed because of who they naturally are (and We know this to be true), which may not fit into a patriarchal gender box, then this is due to a ‘sex’ (or gender) issue. So We feel this still covers sex-ism. In other words, that patriarchy (male dominated systems of oppression) create categories for people to fit into in order to exploit and oppress.”

Here Sanyika Shakur makes it clear that patriarchy is based on male domination, and that it relies on socially constructed categories that people are forced into—genders—for the purpose of exploitation. Having determined what patriarchy is and how gender relates to it, it is then important to establish why and how patriarchy does what it does. The following quote from the text *Ideology and the Gender Question* from the Proletarian Feminist Research Collective explains this succinctly:

“If, as we argue above, the oppression of women generates superprofits for the bourgeoisie, it follows that the same bourgeoisie retain a vested interest in the maintenance of that oppression, particularly insofar as it is rooted in a particular set of relations integral to social reproduction; a challenge to the institutions which organize the forces of this oppression would therefore pose a threat to those same superprofits as well as the conditions of production themselves. The ideological function of patriarchy serves as the bourgeois answer to that possibility, reinforcing the economic base of women's oppression (the family) and perpetuating the subjugated position of women more broadly through social chauvinism and political/legal repression.”

In other words, the ideological function of patriarchy serves to maintain the possibility of bourgeois super-exploitation of women, (and I would add, non-men), and thus the continued accumulation of super-profits for the capitalists. Patriarchal ideology keeps this economic situation from being upset. Heterosexist chauvinism and the state's repression of women and queers through the law keep this economic situation intact. In addition to this, the institution of the patriarchal family is reinforced through this ideology. It is at the site of the patriarchal family structure that the material roots of the oppression of queers can be found, and its benefit to the bourgeoisie can be described. The following quote from the text *Toward a Scientific Analysis of the Gay Question* by the Los Angeles Research Group explains this:

“Our investigation leads us to believe that the material basis for the oppression of gays can be found in the role of the bourgeois nuclear family under class society in the maintenance and perpetuation of the division of labor. The bourgeois nuclear family is the economic institutionalization of personal relationships under capitalism. It is a socially isolated unit consisting of a husband, a wife, and their children. The husband works outside the home. The wife, whether or not she also works outside the home, works within it at invisible labor which maintains and reproduces the labor force. The purpose of the bourgeois family is to: 1. socialize children into understanding and accepting class relationships as they exist in this country today; 2. reproduce the class structure in microcosm; 3. privatize the maintenance and reproduction of the working class. Class society establishes/maintains, and perpetuates divisions of labor including sexual divisions. Sexual division of labor is of incalculable use to the bourgeoisie, dividing workers into two great camps, those in social labor and those in private labor; those in private labor can and have been called forward as a reserve army of labor according to the needs of the bourgeoisie.”

In essence, the bourgeoisie needs the patriarchy and the patriarchal family in order to teach children how to fit into a society of domination by the capitalist, but also to maintain a specific division of labor between the different genders within the masses—which justifies super-exploitation, and thus increases the profits of the enemy class.

In addition to this, the structure of the patriarchal family can also create a reserve army of labor of people who are functioning within gender roles that are traditionally tied to the domicile—typically women—which functions as a source of workers suitable for future super-exploitation at a given time. In order for this whole system to work, gender categories and sexuality must remain strict, or appear to be immutable, for if people move outside their assigned gender roles or outside heteronormativity, the traditional structure of the patriarchal family and the division of labor between the categories of men and women could be upset. Therefore, chauvinism against queer people, people who upset this ideological status quo of the immutability of gender or the normativity of heterosexuality, arises as a defense mechanism of sorts for the patriarchy—and thus for the bourgeoisie. A common objection to this understanding when it comes to comprehending the origins of chauvinism against queer New Afrikans is that the bourgeois nuclear family model described above is less prominent among our nation. This is true.

According to the article *Facts About the US Black Population* published by the Pew Research Center, the number of New Afrikans living in households headed by a married couple is thirty-eight percent, which is the largest percentage group of New Afrikan households, but not the majority. Thirty-two percent of New Afrikans live within households headed by a single woman, six percent by a single man, and twenty-four percent in what the article calls non-family households. However, Marxism-Leninism-Maoism teaches us to understand social relations in a totality, not just in part. When it comes to understanding the patriarchy as it relates to New Afrika, it is imperative to understand that our nation does not exist in a vacuum. New Afrika exists as a nation trapped within the broader U.\$. empire, and therefore, the patriarchal ideology dominant in ameriKKKa affects New Afrikans as well. There certainly is a dialectical relationship between the bourgeois family form and patriarchal ideology, but it is important that we understand that that ideology still affects people who did not come up within the bourgeois family form. In his essay, *On Contradiction*, the Chinese communist revolutionary and leader of his nation's national liberation struggle, Mao Zedong, explained that some people think:

“In the contradiction between the economic base and the superstructure, the economic base is the principal aspect; and there

is no change in their respective positions. This is the mechanical materialist conception, not the dialectical materialist conception.”

Likewise, some people may have the mechanical understanding that if the majority of New Afrikans aren't within a family structure with a married mother and father, along with their kids, then either patriarchy doesn't exist among New Afrikans, or patriarchy has no relationship to the nuclear family structure in New Afrikans. Both of these conclusions are incorrect. In that same essay, Mao goes on to write that:

“[...]while we recognize that in the general development of history the material determines the mental and social being determines social consciousness, we also—and indeed must—recognize the reaction of mental on material things[...].”

In New Afrikan society, patriarchal ideology has been ingrained in us because we are part of the broader ameriKKKan society in which the ideology of patriarchy is hegemonic and the bourgeois patriarchal nuclear family is hegemonic. Therefore, even for us—and in a particularly intense fashion—patriarchal and queerphobic ideas and practices are not only present, but rampant, and this is to the detriment of the well being of the broad masses of people.

All around the world the concrete manifestation of the social relations that result in the oppression of queer people are severe. The economic situation of queer people in the United States is evidence of this. A report titled *LGBT Poverty in the United States* published by the UCLA Williams Institute included the following findings: “LGBT people collectively have a poverty rate of 21.6%, which is much higher than the rate for cisgender straight people of 15.7%.” While the particular details of the economic standing of queer New Afrikans will be delved into later, the above statistics provide a general overview of the amount of destitution present among the general queer population in the U.\$. empire. Queer people in the United States often find themselves unable to find sufficient employment to support themselves outside of the most exploitative arrangements. For example Aveda Adara, a trans woman interviewed in an NBC news article about employment discrimination against trans people, said that she was laughed out of countless interviews because of her gender

identity. She was only able to make ends meet by finding two part-time jobs that did not provide her with any much needed benefits. These conditions can also lead to queer people being forced into the sex-trade, as described by the Boriqua, trans, co-founder of the Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries organization Sylvia Rivera in the following quote from her speech *Bitch on Wheels*:

“We don’t want to be out there sucking dick and getting fucked up the ass. But that’s the only alternative that we have to survive because the laws do not give us the right to go and get a job the way we feel comfortable. I do not want to go to work looking like a man when I know I am not a man.”

In addition to facing economic destitution, queer people also have to face chauvinistic violence. In a press release published by the aforementioned Williams Institute at the UCLA School of Law, the following statistic is provided: “LGBT people are nearly four times more likely than non-LGBT people to experience violent victimization, including rape, sexual assault, and aggravated or simple assault.” Patriarchal repression against queer people often takes the form of physical violence, which puts queer people at risk of death or injury simply for being who we are. This occurs alongside the intensified economic exploitation that queer people may face, and the combination of these two things, in addition to more petty forms of chauvinism on the interpersonal level paint the picture of an oppressed group within society that is forced to live in fear within the prevailing social conditions. All in all, it is an irrefutable fact that queer people in general are in an especially precarious position within capitalist patriarchal society, and are particularly subject to various forms of exploitation and subjugation. It is the task of revolutionaries to unify and mobilize the most immiserated and downtrodden masses of people in order to overthrow this wretched society and produce a new one in which no one will have to live in such misery any longer. The economic conditions of queer people in ameriKKKa shows us that this is a population that revolutionaries should mobilize in the struggle against U.\$. capitalism and imperialism, for oppression and economic misery can become revolutionary potential. Even comrade Huey P. Newton, a cisgendered straight man, in a speech concerning the gay liberation movement suggested that “a homosexual could be the most revolutionary.”

## **Those who have nothing to lose but their chains and a world to win are the true makers of history.**

The particular conditions of queer New Afrikans are even worse than the average within the empire. Queer New Afrikans are forced to face the brunt of national oppression, class exploitation, and gender oppression, and the consequences of this is shown in statistics surrounding the subject. In the realm of general impoverishment, the aforementioned article on LGBT poverty in the United States had the following to say about poverty in the queer New Afrikan population: “30.8% of Black LGBT people live in poverty, whereas 25.3% of Black cisgender straight people live in poverty.” This particular statistic only goes so far as to compare the poverty rates among New Afrikans ourselves, but even in comparison to queer Euro-ameriKKKans, queer New Afrikans actually have a higher poverty rate. In the full report by that same institution, the poverty rate among queer Euro-ameriKKKans is found to be just 15.4%, almost half that of queer New Afrikans. The queer New Afrikan population also has a particularly high rate of homelessness. For example, an Ebony article regarding the conditions faced by trans New Afrikans states that there is a whopping forty-one percent rate of homelessness among that sector of the population. The economically depressed status of the New Afrikan nation as a result of settler-colonial oppression plus the economically depressed status of queer people in the U\$ in general leads to a great many queer New Afrikans facing an impoverished existence.

This is still only part of the picture, however. Queer New Afrikans are also threatened by a high amount of physical violence and harassment. Take the New Afrikan trans population, for example. The aforementioned Ebony article about trans New Afrikans compared the statistical likelihood of violence against New Afrikan trans women with that of their Euro-ameriKKKan counterparts in the following quote: “transgender women of color are nearly twice as vulnerable to violence as their white counterparts.” In addition to this, the article goes on to provide data on school and workplace harassment faced by trans New Afrikans: “50% of Black transgender individuals face harassment at school and 15% are physically assaulted at their jobs.” The article also provides data on direct state violence endured by trans New Afrikans. It says: “According to studies, 38% of Black trans

people indicate that they have been harassed by the police. Even worse, 20% state that they have been physically or sexually assaulted by police.” To top it all off, an article by Sophie Drukman-Feldstein about a radical queer organization fighting for the rights of queer prisoners provides the following statistic on incarceration rates in the trans New Afrikan population: “The 2011 National Transgender Discrimination Survey found that 16 percent of transgender people, and 47 percent of black transgender people, had been incarcerated.” Behind bars, the violence against trans and other queer New Afrikan people only intensifies. In aforementioned *Pathology of Patriarchy* essay, Sanyika Shakur (who spent a great deal of time behind bars himself), describes patriarchy in prisons as being “on steroids.” He further describes the conditions faced by incarcerated queers as so:

“They are treated as ‘abnormals’—as less than human. They are usually ‘neutralized with violence and ostracized.’ Groups forbid their members from aiding any such person. And even tho’ the prisoners are placed with nationals from oppressed and colonized nations, oppression and prejudice of gays and transgender prisoners goes on uninterrupted as patriarchal ‘morals’ are imitated and replicated across the board.”

Just looking at the rates of state violence, workplace violence, prison violence, and other forms of chauvinistic violence against the trans New Afrikan population reveals the truth that the queer New Afrikan population is especially at risk for being harassed, attacked, or even killed in this capitalist patriarchal empire. Queer New Afrikans live with the boot of reactionary society upon our necks, and some of us find it impossible to go on. The Trevor Project provides some numbers from their 2020 study on mental health in queer youth in an article titled *All Black Lives Matter: Mental Health of Black LGBTQ Youth* that describe the epidemic of suicidality among queer New Afrikans. The article states: “44% of Black LGBTQ youth seriously considered suicide in the past 12 months, including 59% of Black transgender and nonbinary youth.” The epidemic of suicidality among queer New Afrikans must be analyzed in a materialist manner. Mao Zedong demonstrated this type of analysis of suicidality in his article *Miss Chao’s Suicide*, in which he wrote: “A person’s suicide is entirely determined by circumstances. Was Miss Chao’s original idea to seek death? On the contrary, it was to seek life. If Miss Chao ended

up seeking death instead, it is because circumstances drove her to this.” Queer New Afrikans do not have an astronomically high rate of suicidality merely because they are queer. It is not true that queer New Afrikans are just naturally more prone to suicide. Queer New Afrikans have a high rate of suicide because of the horrific material conditions that we must endure. It is those material conditions that drive us to suicidality. The material conditions queer New Afrikans face are killing us, and forcing us to pull the trigger.

Queer New Afrikans face chauvinism that comes from many directions. Within our own nation, we face chauvinism from other New Afrikans, in part because within the complex situation of colonial bondage that we face, patriarchy in the New Afrikan nation manifests itself as a defense of the manhood of some New Afrikans against perceived threats to it—threats including New Afrikan queers. In his aforementioned essay on patriarchy, Sanyika Shakur says the following regarding this phenomenon:

“In this era of neocolonialism the main homophobes are the masses themselves. Where it used to be the state, the church and other rabid ideologues of patriarchy, now it’s athletes, rappers and the idiot down the tier who somehow feels as if his so-called ‘manhood’ is threatened by how or who another person lives and loves. The unconscious shock troops of patriarchy become the gatekeepers for their oppressors. That’s why patriarchy can feel so comfortable with putting the colonies on auto-pilot. The inmates have assumed control of the asylum and all is well on the Western front. Never mind that the very culture of oppression that they are holding up by becoming little oppressors themselves is the actual threat to them.”

Sanyika Shakur rightly explains that those within our nation that continue to uphold and act on these queerphobic ideas are basically perpetuating patriarchy on the behalf of the oppressors of us all. This ultimately benefits capitalism and settler-colonialism and actually hurts the New Afrikan masses. The fear that queer people are somehow a threat to New Afrikan manhood is a false one, and it must be cast aside to maximize the unity of the toiling and immiserated masses of our nation against our real enemy. It cannot be stressed enough that real violence among New Afrikans comes with this tendency. New Afrikan

trans people like Kendall Stephens or Iyanna Dior have gotten jumped by cishet New Afrikan men acting on queerphobic ideology, and some New Afrikan trans people like Dominique Fells have even been killed in such violence. On top of this, queer New Afrikans face chauvinism from Euro-ameriKKKkan queers. In their essay, *Sites of Resistance or Sites of Racism* (which can be found in the book *That's Revolting!*), the author Priyank Jindal describes the chauvinism present in a “play-party” set up by Euro-ameriKKKkan queers in the following manner:

“Instead of discussing how queer desire in this country is literally and figuratively policed, making links to communities of color and our daily lived experiences of police brutality, the customers and owners of the play party reproduced the racist and classist actions hurled against working-class communities of color. And as a way to top it all off and make their political stance crystal clear, the venue put out gay pride flags, leather pride flags, and of course, Amerikan flags.”

Priyank Jindal's interactions with the Euro-ameriKKKkan queer community reflect a common tendency of this particular sector to retain connections to the settler-colonial capitalist society that dominates oppressed nationals such as New Afrikans. By doing this, they pave over the divisions in class and nation that exist among queers, and reproduce the very bourgeois ideology that plays a large part in keeping the masses in bondage. Queer New Afrikans have to deal with reactionary sentiments like this from Euro-ameriKKKkan queers all the time, and this also comes coupled with physical violence. Take the case of Ed Buck, for example, a Euro-ameriKKKkan settler bourgeois who murdered multiple New Afrikan gay men in his home by injecting them with crystal meth. Ed Buck was in the business of exploiting New Afrikan gay men by producing racist pornographic films of them replete with the very fetishization of New Afrikan men that is all too familiar to New Afrikan queers who have interacted with their settler counterparts. These disgusting murders illustrate that the relationship between oppressed and oppressor nations, and the relationship between exploiter and exploited classes puts working-class queer New Afrikans at the very bottom when it comes to our relationship to White settler and wealthy queers.

The position of queer New Afrikans is dire, and the only way for us

to be liberated from these conditions is through revolution. It was established above that patriarchal and thus, queerphobic structures in society are inextricably linked to capitalism and imperialism, and the logical conclusion of this is that the only way that queer New Afrikans can be free from the oppression we face is by joining the struggle to overthrow capitalism and imperialism. For us this means joining the revolutionary struggle of the New Afrikan nation for land, independence, and socialism. In their aforementioned essay *Ideology and the Gender Question*, the Proletarian Feminist Research Group puts forward the only path to the liberation of queer people in the following manner:

“The family form—the true source of women’s exploitation and oppression, and of the oppression of transgender people—can only be smashed under the dictatorship of the proletariat over the course of a cultural revolution to root out its base.”

In order to destroy the root of oppression for queer New Afrikans, a revolution for socialism is needed. As socialist society moves toward communism—a society free from all forms of oppression—multiple cultural revolutions will be needed to smash the base of patriarchy and root out queerphobic ideology once and for all. A new culture will have to be established, and new social relations, ones in which people can live and work together freely no matter their gender expression or sexual orientation, and one in which poverty and exploitation are ultimately abolished for good. However, in order to achieve that, it is necessary for queer New Afrikans to unite with the masses of our nation and make revolution to bring such a society about. The reason for this is described in an article from a particularly advanced liberation struggle on the other side of the world. In the article *The Revolution Has No Gender* published in the *Liberation* publication of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines, it is established that: “the influence of the bourgeois culture and society that looks down and discriminates on lesbians, gays, bi-sexual and transgender (LGBT) is strong,” but the article goes on to say that:

“combating the debased culture of this bourgeois society we were born into and initiating change would [come into] fruition from the collective struggle of the gays, lesbians and straights in the national democratic revolution. Party documents are available to

enlighten gays and lesbians that they are not divorced from the oppression and exploitation suffered by other genders. Thus, it is important that they take an active role in the people's revolution."

The strength of patriarchal ideology and structures within New Afrikan society today is no match for the combined might of the masses of our people in our struggle for complete liberation from the White supremacist U\$. empire and ultimately from all forms of oppression. Ultimately, the class rule of the bourgeoisie, White supremacy, settler-colonialism, and patriarchy are not actually separate from the problem of queerphobia, and the masses of New Afrikans from the exploited and immiserated classes and strata of our society are—queer and cishet alike—oppressed and in need of liberation. It is imperative to understand that there is no peaceful way for queer New Afrikans, or any New Afrikans to be free. There will have to be a revolutionary struggle in order for us to attain our liberation because as Sanyika Shakur says in his *Pathology of Patriarchy* essay:

"[...]until gays and transgender prisoners, and people at large, take their lives and existence into their own hands, organize and defend their reality, they'll continue to be victimized and exploited and that goes for any form of oppression. The oppressed have the responsibility to get free. Freedom is not given or granted—it's taken! The federal government is not going to legislate your safety into existence."

The liberation of queer New Afrikans is integral to the broader struggle for the national liberation of New Afrikans, and likewise, the national liberation of the New Afrikan masses is integral to the struggle for the liberation of queer New Afrikans. Following this, it is necessary for queer New Afrikans to put forward demands in the general liberation struggle, that when realized would bring a society free from capitalism and patriarchal chauvinism closer to fruition. The Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries, or STAR, a revolutionary organization founded by oppressed-nation queers put forth a list of demands that can be found in an essay on the organization that is part of the *Gender Variance Who's Who* collection. The demands serve as a fantastic example of the kind of goals queer New Afrikans must fight for as part of the liberation struggle. They were:

“1. We want the right to self-determination over the use of our bodies; the right to be gay, anytime, anyplace; the right to free physiological change and modification of sex on demand; the right to free dress and adornment.

2. The end to all job discrimination against transvestites of both sexes and gay street people because of attire.

3. The immediate end of all police harassment and arrest of transvestites and gay street people, and the release of transvestites and gay street people from all prisons and all other political prisoners.

4. The end to all exploitive practices of doctors and psychiatrists who work in the field of transvestism.

5. Transvestites who live as members of the opposite gender should be able to obtain identification of the opposite gender.

6. Transvestites and gay street people and all oppressed people should have free education, health care, clothing, food, transportation, and housing.

7. Transvestites and gay street people should be granted full and equal rights on all levels of society, and full voice in the struggle for liberation of all oppressed people.

8. An end to exploitation and discrimination against transvestites within the homosexual world.

9. We want a revolutionary peoples’ government, where transvestites, street people, women, homosexuals, puerto ricans, indians, and all oppressed people are free, and not fucked over by this government who treat us like the scum of the earth and kills us off like flies, one by one, and throws us into jail to rot. This government who spends millions of dollars to go to the moon, and lets the poor Americans starve to death.”

Demands such as these can function as goals for queer New Afrikans when fighting for our collective rights within the New Afrikan liberation struggle. It is no coincidence that the final demand on

STAR's list is the formation of a revolutionary government, which is the very structure through which the goals that came before can be achieved. STAR knew that revolution was the only way queer people could attain our rights. With that established, it must be understood that the struggle against queerphobia is not something that can be put off until the establishment of socialism. It is something that must begin here and now. Revolutionaries must struggle against queerphobia and patriarchal ideology in our own ranks first. What that takes was described in the following manner in the aforementioned essay by the National Democratic Front of the Philippines:

“The growing number of gays and lesbians in the Party necessitated thorough studies, ideological remolding and a policy guide for the proper attitude towards members who have expressed their sexual preference. Said efforts are aimed at mitigating if not all together effacing gender discrimination.”

In the Communist Party of the Philippines, the vanguard of the ongoing Filipino revolution, discrimination against queers was combatted through political education, proletarian remolding, and revolutionary policy against queerphobic chauvinism. The same process should go on in any New Afrikan organization that claims to be revolutionary. It should also be noted that the above quote literally starts with the fact that a large amount of queer Filipinos have been admitted into the revolutionary Party. This is also a part of combatting queerphobia in a revolutionary organization. As Sanyika Shakur puts it in his essay *On Correct Terminology and Spellings En Route to Conscious Development and Socialist Revolution*:

“To Us, any org claiming to be revolutionary or representative of the people, that doesn't actively recruit, promote and cultivate gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgender people/cadres, is not really pushing a revolutionary line for change and freedom—let alone socialism. They are perpetuating the backwardness of the bourgeoisie...”

In order to really be against any form of oppression of queer people, a revolutionary organization definitely needs to have active queer cadre working within it. It seems like a given, but there are countless organizations that talk the talk of being for the people,

without being willing to walk the walk. That is something that New Afrikan revolutionary organizations need to move past. If New Afrikan revolutionary organizations have the active participation of queer New Afrikans, and conduct thorough proletarian ideological remolding among their ranks, as well as implement concrete policy to combat queerphobia within the organization, then the unity of queer New Afrikans and revolutionary organizations will be guaranteed, and the backwardness of the bourgeoisie on this issue will be expunged. This is something that will be a constant struggle within New Afrikan revolutionary organizations, but it must be done.

Next, there is the question of combatting the effects of queerphobic chauvinism among the masses themselves. The very first step of this process is building unity between queer New Afrikan revolutionaries and the broad oppressed masses of New Afrikan people. The previously cited article from the Philippines describes this process as so:

“Ka Awra discovered after the revelation that there [is] much more he can do and contribute to the revolution—he can write, he can dance, he can strut his cultural prowess to spice up his organizing and instruction work. He had opened up to his comrades and the masses. He realized that the masses will accept and love you whatever your gender is for as long as you could help them with their problems; they see you at the people’s court resolving issues; they are enlightened and they learn from your instruction, be [that] of the Party courses or simply to read and write. For as long as you are with them in charting plans and programs that will serve their interests, they will wholeheartedly accept you.”

If queer New Afrikans unite with the masses of working and poor New Afrikan people—build with them, serve them, and struggle with them for the complete liberation of our people—the New Afrikan masses will come to love and accept us. Not only is this the only path toward liberation for the masses of New Afrikan people, but it is also one of the best ways to combat queerphobic ideology among the people, as it shows clearly that queer New Afrikans can be friends of the people, and are not a group to be hated or scorned. In addition to this, it is possible to organize for the safety and defense of the

queer New Afrikan masses. Revolutionaries should do their best to serve this sector of the people and politicize them so that they might become valuable participants in the revolutionary mass struggle. In the aforementioned essay regarding the STAR organization, a quote from Sylvia Rivera describes that organization's method of serving the poor queer masses in the following manner:

“We had a S.T.A.R. House—a place for all of us to sleep. It was only four rooms, and the landlord had turned the electricity off. So we lived there by candle light, a floating bunch of 15 to 25 queens, cramped in those rooms with all our wardrobe. But it worked. We'd cook up these big spaghetti dinners and sometimes we'd have sausage for breakfast”

By establishing the STAR House, STAR was able to address the homelessness problem among poor queers by giving them a place to stay. This actually protected these members of the masses from the horrors of life on the streets, including drug abuse. In an interview with the New Afrikan cofounder of STAR, Marsha P. Johnson, which can be found in the zine *Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries: Survival, Revolt, and Queer Antagonist Struggle*, Marsha explains that STAR tried its best to “reach people before they get on drugs, ‘cause once they get on drugs it's very very hard to get them off and out of the street.” In the same interview, she went on to talk about STAR's plans to offer legal defense for incarcerated queers, raise bail money, engage in demonstrations, host community events, and much more. STAR's work shows the efficacy of defending poor queer people through serving them, but revolutionaries should also take note of methods of defending queer people from physical violence. In an interview titled *Queering the Underground*, which can be found in *That's Revolting!*, the queer communist and former urban guerrilla Ed Mead described this kind of work in the context of prison. While in the Washington State Penitentiary, Ed Mead developed Men Against Sexism, an organization that combatted prisoner-on-prisoner rape, and the prison sex trade in which prisoners were literally bought and sold by one another for sex. Ed Mead transformed himself into a new type of queer, a “political faggot” in his words, who was dedicated to fighting against patriarchy and capitalism by any means necessary. He said:

“I was a pistol-packin’ faggot. It was whole new idea of what it meant on the inside to be a faggot. We can be tough. You think you can push us around? We’ll put an immediate stop to that.”

Queer New Afrikans and New Afrikan revolutionaries in general can learn a lot from both STAR and Ed Mead/Men Against Sexism. In order to combat the queerphobia inherent in bourgeois patriarchal society, it is necessary to both serve the queer sector of the poor New Afrikan masses and to cultivate the development of queer revolutionaries who are able and willing to combat patriarchal and queerphobic violence by any means, including force of arms. Whether it’s on the streets or in the prisons, New Afrika needs politicized queers guided by revolutionary theory as part of the general struggle against oppression of all kinds, brave souls that are willing to take their fates into their own hands, and fight tooth and nail for liberation.

Who fears the New Afrikan queers? Only the reactionaries, the bourgeoisie, the White supremacists, and those who refuse to free themselves from the depraved patriarchal culture of bourgeois society need fear us—for the place of the queer sector of the immiserated masses of New Afrikans is within the revolutionary struggle for land, independence, and socialism, and for the realization of a world free from any form of oppression of man by man. Today the situation of many queer New Afrikans is dire, today many of us are fighting for our lives or even considering ending them, but tomorrow, queer New Afrikans will join the masses of our nation in rising, and utilize our collective strength to grind capitalism-imperialism to dust. Who fears the New Afrikan queers? Only reaction does, because the revolution will welcome us. As the queer Maoist revolutionary Ka Princess said: “The revolution does not discriminate on gender. The gun has no gender.”

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