

Black Panther Party Internationalism During the Cold War: Uncovering the Untold Story of Global Black Freedom Struggle

The Black Panther Party (BPP) is renowned for its pivotal role in the Black freedom movement in the United States during the 1960s and 1970s. However, what is often overlooked is the BPP's profound internationalism and their unwavering commitment to global Black freedom struggle.



Out of Oakland: Black Panther Party Internationalism during the Cold War (The United States in the World)

by Sean L. Malloy

★★★★☆ 4.8 out of 5

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During the Cold War, the BPP forged alliances with revolutionary movements in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. These alliances were not merely symbolic gestures but involved concrete forms of support, including political education, training, and material aid.

BPP Internationalism and the Cold War

The Cold War, with its ideological divide between capitalism and communism, provided a complex backdrop for the BPP's internationalism. The BPP saw the United States as a bastion of imperialism and oppression, both domestically and internationally.

In contrast, many revolutionary movements in the developing world saw the Soviet Union and China as potential allies in their struggles for liberation. The BPP sought to navigate this complex geopolitical landscape, forging alliances with movements that shared their commitment to Black freedom, regardless of their ideological orientation.

Alliances with African Liberation Movements

The BPP had strong ties with African liberation movements, particularly in Angola, Mozambique, and South Africa. The BPP provided political training to members of these movements and played a role in mobilizing international support for their struggles.

One notable figure in this regard was Eldridge Cleaver, the BPP's Minister of Information. In 1970, Cleaver traveled to Angola to meet with Agostinho Neto, the leader of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA). Cleaver's visit helped to solidify the BPP's commitment to the Angolan struggle and paved the way for future collaboration.

Solidarity with Asian and Latin American Revolutions

The BPP's internationalism extended beyond Africa. They expressed solidarity with revolutionary movements in Asia, such as the National Liberation Front (NLF) in Vietnam and the Viet Cong. The BPP organized protests against the Vietnam War and condemned U.S. imperialism in Asia.

In Latin America, the BPP established connections with revolutionary movements in Cuba, Nicaragua, and El Salvador. The BPP provided medical aid and training to guerrilla fighters in these countries and helped to raise awareness about their struggles in the United States.

Impact on Cold War Politics

The BPP's internationalism had a profound impact on Cold War politics. By aligning with revolutionary movements outside the U.S., the BPP challenged the prevailing narrative that the Cold War was a struggle between two superpowers.

The BPP's internationalism also exposed the United States' hypocrisy in supporting oppressive regimes abroad while claiming to uphold freedom and democracy at home. This critique resonated with many people around the world and contributed to a growing disillusionment with U.S. foreign policy.

The Black Panther Party's internationalism was a vital component of their struggle for Black freedom. By forging alliances with revolutionary movements around the world, the BPP demonstrated that the struggle for Black liberation was interconnected with the struggles of oppressed people everywhere.

The BPP's international legacy is a reminder that the fight for justice and equality transcends national borders. It is a legacy that continues to inspire activists and organizers today who are committed to the global struggle for human rights and dignity.



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