

Dear John Brown Anti-Klan Committee,

I neither voted nor participated in the Coalition meeting this last Tuesday. This was not because I was late, but rather because I will not be joining in the Coalition action in Uptown. Let me try to explain.

A little background first. I came to the Aetna Plaza Paint-out because I was trying to hand out flyers for the RIA action and because I thought the fascists might show up. Following that confrontation I said I would make myself available in the future when it seemed likely that the fascists would try to disrupt events. The political differences with the direction of JBAKC and the Coalition were stated, but I also said that allowing the Klan or any other group to disrupt the work of a progressive organization in Chicago over-rode those differences.

My problem now is not so much with what I understand to be the strategy of JBAKC and those close to it, but a case of JBAKC not being consistent with its own politics. Here we have Uptown, a community containing Appalachian white folk, many Black people displaced from areas such as Lincoln Park, Native Americans, Japanese, Filipinos, Hmong, Vietnamese, Cambodians, Latin peoples from various countries. Here we have the Coalition, a group of predominantly white people, most of whom live in Lakewood. Now I don't have a problem with 'outside agitators' going into a situation, I don't even have a problem with white revolutionaries going into Black communities and doing work. I do think that the way it has been done in Uptown guarantees little success and possibly failure (more on that). When I am approached and asked to give the names of Native activists two weeks before the event I can only conclude that for the most part groupings representing the progressive elements of each nation were not contacted. Worse yet, I have always understood our shared politics to say that white revolutionaries would not merely contact such folks, but would consult and seek approval before undertaking organizing in their communities. Do they think the Rebels are a problem? Would they be in favor of such an ~~xxx~~ action? Do they have other suggestions for attacking this problem?

This to me is a matter of principle, but it is also a pragmatic thing. When the Rebels can ~~xxx~~ send four members or followers into a public forum of the ~~Coalition~~ Coalition and only one person in the crowd recognizes this there is a definite problem. Suppose he hadn't been there.

I think the event and the date have become a fetish, symbolizing something that does not really exist, actual anti-fascist organizing in Uptown. Had I the political weight, I would suggest that the action be postponed enough so that the actual organizing, that is, talking with the independent white activists, the AIM-type Native folks, the progressive Filipinos, etc. ~~xxx~~ occur. If leafletting were organizing we would have won some time ago.

The lack of ^{active} community support combined with militant posturing by the part of my former comrades (and yes, you can show this to them), is extremely worrisome. What is qualitatively distinct between the position of InCAR and the Rock Island Affinity Group? I am never really scared for myself in these actions, but am fearful of the consequences when the rhetoric of militancy exceeds the collective strength of the group. It is almost unbelievable that the same folks who most wish to confront the fascists physically have done the least to prepare the Coalition for this eventuality. (I am aware of the restrictions placed on actions by Tuesday's votes; this doesn't change the danger of such posturing).

There are several other lesser points. Where are the punks is one. But I hope that my absence from this event raises ~~xxxxxxxx~~ the first ~~xxx~~ point. If you can tell me that the criterion for success involves the self-organization of Uptown peoples in this action, then we should probably talk further.

Alan