



BLACK PANTHER PARTY NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

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Office & Ministry of Information
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JL
Black Panther

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

An Open Letter to Roy Wilkins:

It is clear that your published criticism of my statement regarding the commitment of Black Panthers to the revolutionary struggle of the National Liberation Front in Vietnam was written for the comfort and aid of the oppressors in this nation rather than for the oppressed. I want to take this opportunity to make my intent clear to the oppressed of this wretched land.

I am very grateful for the support and encouragement I received from many thousands of Black people during my 33 months of prison. I always found the reports of their faith and confidence in me and their wish to see me free to be great sources of strength during that sojourn. My release was a joyous event for me and the people, and I thank them for freeing me.

I am also aware that the enemies of the people--that is the ruling circle of America--are just as anxious to see me dead or in prison and will go to any lengths to accomplish their evil purpose. This is not because of me but because of the goals and the ideology of the Black Panther Party, a vanguard party totally committed to the liberation of those Blacks who have been missed by almost every program and legislative change resulting from the Civil Rights movement.

Your statement charging me with "wrong priorities" reflects your own self-interest as a so-called leader of Blacks who has the ear of the ruling circle, and your obvious class interests and identification with the ruling circle. Your insidious "white-baiting" is also a reflection of self-interest, lack of understanding, and incipient black racism. Should you continue such attacks for the benefit of our oppressor you will only reveal yourself to be a treacherous enemy of the people who misleads them by placing self-interest above the objective needs and interests of the Black lumpen-proletariat--America's wretched of the earth.

We recognize, and many Blacks with us, that the Civil Rights laws which you have won in the recent past have not protected the people, but have frustrated their drive toward freedom. Even though recognizing this some Blacks continue to put their faith

in you because they feel it necessary to hang on to the belief that America will transform itself through its own legal mechanisms. This does not make sense for the numerous cases you cite throughout the land are evidence to the contrary. A people who have needed "everything from an overcoat in" for literally centuries cannot objectively expect that their oppressors will "heal themselves." There is obviously some deeper motivation for the oppression, motivation not only based on the character of the oppressors, but upon the fundamental aspects of the American system itself. Yet we all seem to have some need for dreams of self-healing.

The Black Panther Party puts the struggle on such a level and gives analyses and answers to this madness so that it is no longer necessary for the people to accept a dream. We encourage the people to strive for real goals--survival, liberation, freedom.

The priorities of the Black Panther Party are in full view of all Black people in this land. Our first priority is survival and we place this in the context of the needs of the people. Therefore our programs have helped people to survive through breakfasts for children, health clinics, and newly-developing programs such as free clothing, free shoes, loans to welfare mothers, and free buses to prisons for families of inmates. The people have rallied to these programs because they meet their basic and daily needs. The priorities of the Black Panther Party are well stated in our ten-point program which is published weekly in our paper.

We recognize that our oppression is supported and maintained by the fire-power utilized by the agents of the omnipotent administrators. We recognize that the small ruling class which exploits us here finds it to their economic advantage to exploit the people of distant lands. We recognize that America is no longer a nation but an empire and the same troops who occupy and kill at Jackson State, Birmingham, Chicago and New Orleans are also occupying and killing in My Lai, in Phnom Penh and many other places. The same ruling class which controls the military and government here also controls the military and government in South Vietnam and Cambodia.

America is World Enemy #1 and the military is its strong arm. We feel that it is imperative upon us to defend people of color when they are attacked by troops in this land, and it is also imperative to defend people of color when they are attacked by

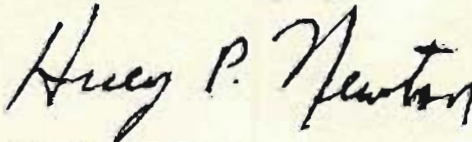
American troops in other lands. These attacks are designed to continue the profit-mongering of the ruling class and their carbon lackeys.

Black people in America have long been affected in a negative way by America's war of imperialism. The Black Panther Party now understands what is going on and is moving to develop appropriate responses. We are internationalists because our struggle must proceed on many fronts. While we feed and clothe the poor at home we must meet and attack the oppressor wherever he may be found.

It is clear, however, that you are also an internationalist, but in support of imperialism and at the expense of Black people who contribute so much to you. Recently you signed a full page advertisement in the New York Times urging this government to send jets to Israel. We challenge you to show the people how your support of this ad is designed to improve their lot rather than your own self-interests. That advertisement cost several thousand dollars of somebody's money which could have been put to good use by those very Black people you accuse me of ignoring. Why do you support imperialism and ignore the reality which indicates so clearly that the lowly conditions of Blacks are caused by a complex intermingling of capitalism, imperialism and racism? All of these must be dealt with at the same time if we are to end our oppression.

I am sorry you felt the need to attack me and that this response must be made. We will be free and we will settle for nothing less. Our number one priority is survival of Black people in this land and we will use all necessary and sufficient means to do so.

Power To The People,



Huey P. Newton
Minister of Defense
Black Panther Party