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July 14, 1969

To All Organizers, NC Members, and At-Largers

Dear Comrades,

The Black Panther Party has called for a conference to be held in Oakland, California to form a "United Front Against Fascism." The conference registration form indicated the conference is being co-sponsored by the "I.L.S." The I.L.S. is the International Liberation School which is led by Tom Hayden, Linda Morse and Stu Albert.

The conference will be held July 18-21. The BPP has made a big push to build the conference and has extended invitations to all groups which are "anti-fascist but not anti-communist." The YSA and Socialist Workers Party have been invited to attend by a representative of the BPP and through their mailings.

There are two aspects to the forthcoming conference. First, it reflects a response by the BPP to the series of repressions which have hit it very hard. They seem to be groping for more support to defend themselves from governmental repressions. In this regard we foresee the BPP attorneys, Garry and Kunstler, playing a role at the conference. There is certainly an objective need for defense of the BPP which has become today the central target of repressions aimed against the entire radical movement.

Second, there is the political line being projected as the motivation for the conference. Behind the smokescreen of the rhetoric about fascism is a move towards the classical politics of popular frontism. Not only have the Panthers used Dimitrov as the source of their call for a "United Front" but direct evidence indicates the content of their proposals is along the same line.

The Communist Party has begun to give its whole-hearted support to the conference. In the Daily World, they explained to their members not to be confused by the "revolutionary rhetoric." The CP sees the new turn by the Panthers as an opportunity to project their popular front politics. The CP has been added to the conference steering committee and Herbert Aptheker is scheduled to give a major address on the history of the Afro-American people.

Other white groups, particularly Maoist ultraleft types, are supporting the conference and participating on the steering committee. All of these groups are seeking to use the prestige of the BPP and the conference to move in the direction of some sort of "People's Party." The regular SDS, which has taken the position that the BPP is the vanguard, has declared full support for the conference.

Recent discussions with representatives of the BPP indicate that the conference will feature a petition drive for community control of the police. The BPP also intends to keep the conference tightly organized and limit floor participation to an absolute

minimum. The conference is apparently being reduced from a 4-day to a 3-day conference in order to minimize discussion from the floor.

We will intervene at the conference both to observe the proceeding and to introduce our views through the sale and distribution of our literature. The Bay Area locals should provide most of the needed comrades for the intervention. Other locals on the West Coast should consider sending a few comrades, especially any comrades who have worked with or have contact with the BPP. The SWP National Office will be sending a representative or two to the conference, and Tony Thomas will be there from the YSA N.O.

Comradely,

Larry Seigle  
National Organizational Secretary