

“If you want peace, you got to fight for it”

David Hilliard

1969

The following speech was delivered by David Hilliard, Chief of Staff of the Black Panther Party at the November 15th anti-war rally at Golden Gate Park in San Francisco.

He was charged with threatening the life of the President as a result of it.

There's too many American flags out here, and our Minister of Information, Eldridge Cleaver, says that the American flag and the American eagle are the true symbols of fascism. ALL POWER TO THE PEOPLE. Black power to Black people, Brown power to Brown people, Red power to Red people, and Yellow power to Ho Chi Minh, and Comrade Kim Il Sung the courageous leader of the 40,000,000 Korean people.

The Black Panther Party takes the position that we want all Black men exempt from military service and that we believe that Black people should not be forced to fight in a military to defend a racist government that does not protect us. We will not fight and kill other people of color in the world, who like Black people are victims of US imperialism on an international level, and fascism domestically. So recognizing that, recognizing fascism, recognizing the occupation of all the pigs in the Black community, then it becomes evident that there's a war at home, there's a war of genocide being waged against Black people right here in America.

So then, we would like to ask the American people do they want peace in Vietnam. Well, do you? (audience) “Yes.” Do you want peace in the Black communities? (audience), “Yes.” Well you goddamned sure can't get it with no guitars, you sure can't get it demonstrating. The only way that you're going to get peace in Vietnam is to withdraw the oppressive forces from the Black communities right here in Babylon. So that we have a suggestion for that, we have a proposal, we have a message for that. We have a petition that we're circulating on a national level to control the pigs in the Black community; and we know that those pigs are not going to move of their own volition. We know that those pigs are not going to stop murdering Black people in the Black community. We also recognize that White people are oppressed in the White community so that our petition is applicable in their community.

But we have to make some very clear distinctions in terms of minor danger and major danger is right here in America because the Black community is occupied territory and the pigs of the power structure are killing Black people with the same compunction with the same outrage and hatred that they killed the courageous people of Vietnam. So that we're not going to let you get around that. We're not going to let you talk about waging a struggle in support of people 10,000 miles from here, when you have problems right here in fascist America. We recognize that a whole lot of people get uptight and they think that the Black Panther Party is just making up shit, that they're distorting history when we say that this country is fascist. But I think just a little reexamination of your history will show to you that the American people, that the history of this country promulgates and it sets a precedence for any fascism that has ever taken place on the stage of world history.

Adolph Hitler was a fascist The man was an animal. The man was a monster. He was a jingoist, a warmonger. But Adolph Hitler did not create fascism. Adolph Hitler did not create the Black Legion. Black people were enslaved and killed in the millions before Hitler even came on the scene. The Red man was exterminated in this country and Hitler don't take responsibility for that. So that this country has a blood stained history. This country is a country that was built on war, it was built on the ruins, it was built on the sweat and blood of its Black people.

So that the history of the Black Panther Party, the ideology of the Black Panther Party is nothing more than the experiences of Black people in this country translated by way of Marxism-Leninism. Because we recognize that Marxism-Leninism is not a philosophy for Russians, it is not a philosophy for Chinese but it's a philosophy for any people that's moving against an oppressive power structure such as the capitalistic fascist system of the American Society. And we have adopted that. And that we're putting it into practice because it is proven beyond a doubt that it's truly in the service of the proletariat.

We would just like to ask the American people, we would like to ask all the mothers in the audience, all the wives who have husbands that are prisoners of war, that have been lost in action, do you want your sons home? Do you want your sons home? (audience) "Yes." Well we have a proposal for that. Our Minister of Information, Eldridge Cleaver is in Algeria. He spent two months in Korea, at the Pyongyang Journalist Conference, and there he spoke with members of the National Liberation Front of Vietnam. So that we propose to the mothers whose sons are political prisoners of war or wives whose husbands are lost in action. That they submit to the Black Panther Party their name, rank and serial number and we will turn this over to the Minister of Information of the Black Panther Party, and we will begin to negotiate for freedom for Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale, because they're political prisoners of US fascism. That's the way that we want to help people. So that if you can relate to that then we can relate to the American people. If you can't relate to freedom for our Chairman Bobby Seale and our Minister of Defense Huey P. Newton then we say that we can't relate to the American People.

We say down with the American fascist society. Later for Richard Millhouse Nixon, the motherfucker. Later for all the pigs of the power structure. Later for all the people out here that don't want to hear me curse because that's all that I know how to do. That's all I'm going to do. I'm not going to ever stop cursing, not only are we going to curse, we're going to put into practice some of the shit that we talk about. Because Richard Nixon is an evil man. This is the motherfucker that unleashed the counter-insurgent teams upon the BPP. This is the man that's responsible for all the attacks on the Black Panther Party nationally. This is the man that sends his vicious murderous dogs out into the Black community and invade upon our Black Panther Party Breakfast Programs. Destroy food that we have for hungry kids and expect us to accept shit like that idly. Fuck that motherfucking man. We will kill Richard Nixon. We will kill any motherfucker that stands in the way of our freedom. We ain't here for no goddamned peace, because we know that we can't have no peace because this country was built on war. And if you want peace you got to fight for it.

ALL POWER TO THE PEOPLE!

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See letter from Peggy Brown, Letters, FE #98, February 4-18, 1970.

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