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league of revolutionary
black workers



ON REPRESSION

A SPEECH DELIVERED JANUARY 30, 1970, DETROIT

This is going to be brief. I live here - don't have to catch a plane so it wasn't too difficult to wait. I just want to make a couple of observations, but before we make the observations and I don't think I will be long, what I was going to do was first of all, remark upon the fact that the program has no direction obviously, whatsoever. And that as a result of the program not having any direction, persons might be tired from having sat for a fairly long time. And if people are interested in taking a break for a brief time we would be happy to accomodate them. On the other hand what we've got to say won't probably take too long. So what I'd like to do is get some indication of what people's attitudes are. They might want to stand up and stretch in terms of this marathon instruction on the foibles of repression. Evidently, people don't want to get up so let me be as brief as I can.

First of all, I think it is the obligation of persons, who are a part of political structures that they regard as being serious political structures, to engage in criticism in the spirit of fraternity, in the spirit of constructive concern for the accomplishment of revolutionary objectives. So it is in that spirit that I would want to make some observations about the course of the conduct of this meeting. That is to say that whoever set up the meeting, I'm sure I can't identify the persons who set up the meeting: Newsreel and perhaps some other individuals. It seems to me they ought to be the subject of some criticism here, in terms of not making the maximum efficient

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utilization of the time and the presence of people here. Now, I don't want to compound that by going into an extenuated rap on the instances of attempts at incarceration that met with no success on the part of MAN in relation to members of organizations that I,ms associated with. What I do want to say is I don,t see what this program is all about. And I don't see what we can accomplish within the context of these protracted raps. And I think that there has been a breach of responsibility on the part of people who set up this meeting, and I think they ought to be criticized for that and they ought to accept that criticism in the spirit in which it was intended. But if they don't - it's of no consequence either. Now, the position that the League of Revolutionary Black Workers takes in relation to the question of repression, since this is styled as a repression conference, is that there is but one means where by a repression can be ended and that is that the source of the repression, namely the oppressor, be destroyed.

We don't say that idly - we don't say that in the familiar sense of the nominal black militant who points his finger and roundly denounces Honkies, threatens to decimate the entire white population of the globe, and stands astride of what remains and proclaims the intrinsic beauty of blackness without relating to a concrete political program that's going to end oppression for all people in this world. We say this in all seriousness, that there is but one solution, that is the destruction of the present state mechanism, the dismantling of the present state mechanism and the process whereby that dis-

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mantling will be brought about is that those who are seriously concerned about bringing about revolutionary change will move to seize state power, and what we suggest is the program the League of Revolutionary Black Workers is that. We say that for a very simple reason: we express and we feel complete and total solidarity with all organizations which relate in a revolutionary way to conditions in this country. We are concerned about the extent to which they appear to be singled out to have repression visited upon them - and to the extent that it is possible, we do all that we can to support members of other organizations who find themselves subjected in a specific way to efforts at repression; for example, we relate to and defend members of the Republic of New Africa, members of the Welfare Rights Organization and indeed we've represented and related to members of the Black Panther Party here locally (as well as other members). But we feel that the principle responsibility of persons who are concerned about doing political work is that they first of all have an obligation to conduct themselves in such a way as to avoid incarceration, because the primary responsibility of revolutionaries is to be about the business of doing revolutionary work. And that means that your first responsibility is to do all that is in your power to avoid becoming a defense organization. Now there's a very interesting phenomenon that is operating here at this meeting. One of the things that I was alluding to when I was engaged in my criticisms. See, the first phenomenon is that the M C or the Master of Ceremonies (he who has the respon-

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sibility for this program) is exhibiting a kind of standard and fairly predictable psychopathic white response. That is, there are bloods speaking: I am reluctant to exercise any control over the meeting because they are bloods. What is it? Is it the cat's into a psychopathic thing? Is the cat just afraid that he's a blood? Or is it the position that any utterance that is ever made by any blood, at any time is profoundly revolutionary in content and should not be in any way stifled, stymied, ordered, directed, or organized? We regard that as being a wholesale abdication of responsibility to use time efficiently and to use time of other people efficiently. That's one observation that we would want to make in connection with what we pick up on.

The other thing that we pick up on at the meeting like this is that we got, you know, all the people here are basically local people, live in the metropolitan area, live in the city of Detroit. They're here to relate to what is called a Repression Conference, and the discussion with the exception of the discussion with Chairman Rob (who presently resides here and who is the object of an effort at extradition); the discussion relates to the "political prisoners" strung out all over the country. No discussion whatsoever with regard to what's going down in Detroit, what's going down in the metropolitan area and how you relate to that. What does that say? There are people here for example who are so unaware of what's going down in terms of serious effort at making revolutionary change in this city that when they seek external

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objects of admiration in relation to what they perceive as being revolutionaries. They are forced to canvas the country and relate to, let us say, New Haven, Fort Hood, Texas, Fort Jackson, Fort Dix, Milwaukee Fourteen or whatever. We could go on, Texas Southern Five, Fort Jackson Eight and so forth. What they don't realize is that the wholesale murders going down right here in the city of Detroit, wholesale murders indeed going down wherever you find yourself in this country. And that there are persons being killed who are not Panthers, that there are political organizations which are being subjected to attacks which are not Black Panther Organizations and we're not suggesting for a second that we have the remotest interest in having these things recognized so that persons can say -- well, there's been a fairly impressive list of shall we say Panther casualties. It becomes the responsibility of other speakers to attempt to match it or perhaps top it. We're not relating to that. What we're relating to is the responsibility of politically serious people to recognize what's going down where they find themselves, because that's where they've got an obligation to do work. The reality is that you ain't in New Haven; that you cannot do a damn thing for Bobby Seale and you cannot do a damn thing for the Panther 21. You can't do anything for Fred Hampton and Mark Clark. You can't do anything for David Hillard, but you can do something where you find yourself. That is, you can be about the business of doing serious revolutionary work. What do I mean by this? We say that the League of Revolutionary Black Workers

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is a serious organization with a serious program that has been consistently working over the years and we point proudly, not to the numbers of persons that we have in jail, not to the numbers of persons that we have under indictment. We point proudly to the fact that we have functioned as a serious revolutionary organization for years and we have not one man in jail. We point proudly to that fact. And, we don't say that lightly, and we don't say that because we haven't been subjected to efforts to place us in jail. The last year for example, has been replete with instances in which efforts have been made to place members of the League of Revolutionary Black Workers Central Staff and member organizations in jail and we will briefly canvas them for the information of those who are present. Member of Central Staff General Gordon Baker. You see that, I think it is the responsibility of persons engaged in political work to select from their comrades their heroes. And while I have profound respect for other men in other organizations, who are brothers who are relating to the liberation struggle; my principle respect and my undying love and affection and my primary responsibility and obligation goes to my comrades in struggle. Persons with whom I am associated - those are my heroes and those are the persons whose posters I have on my wall, my brothers. And when we talk about my brothers we understand that people in Detroit have been subjected to efforts at incarceration and what is styled repression. But the significantly different factor when you begin to look at bloods who are operating in Detroit in all the organizations, incidently, is the fact that the MAN does

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not have them anywhere in jail. Be he RNA, be he Panther, be he League, be he whatever. None of them...none of them...none of them...are in jail and that says something. What does that say? It says, number one, we've got a highly sophisticated black community in the city of Detroit and that we relate in such a way as to make it impossible for the MAN to frame us on jive chicken shit charges. What do I mean by this? We mean a number of things. For example, there has been discussion, there has been discussion of people being charged with various kinds of conspiracies. There is one thing that must be understood; when you talk about people being charged with conspiracies. A conspiracy under law is defined as an agreement between 2 or more persons to perpetrate an unlawful act, or an agreement between 2 or more persons to perpetrate a lawful act in an unlawful manner. What does this mean? This means that the only way you can be cracked for conspiracy is for one of the parties to the conspiracy to testify against you. That's the only way you can be cracked in a conspiracy. What does that mean? That means then that you must be a member of a political organization that is structured in such a way as to make it possible for your enemy to be in a position to sit on a witness stand and plausibly run to the MAN that you are a part of a conspiracy to do some ridiculous thing. We say that we do not relate to an organization that permits that kind of penetration and that is one of the reasons why we have not been subjected to efforts at conspiracy although there has been one effort, that being the Federal Grand Jury that convened in the city to investigate members of the League of Revolutionary Black

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Workers who also are members of the Steering Committee of the Black Economic Development Conference around the question of the Manifesto. People like Mike Hamlin, people like Chuck Wooten, people like John Williams, people like Luke Tripp, and other members of the League of Revolutionary Black Workers have been subjected to the microscopic scrutiny of the federal blood hounds. We were successful to date in that no indictments have been returned.

John Watson, member of Central Staff of the League of Revolutionary Workers, former famous editor of the South End newspaper. John Watson was attacked. John Watson was sought to be prosecuted for allegedly beating the hell out of a white television newsman in the offices of the South End, who came to interview him to get his opinion of a letter written by the president of Wayne State University charging his paper with being anti-semitic. The Detroit News and other racist institutions in the city of Detroit including jive liberal institutions such as the UAW which is opposed to Watson because he is a member of the League of Revolutionary Black Workers, which organization was using the South End as an organizing vehicle. That is to say, that after the Inner City Voice went out of business we took over the South End with the explicit purpose in mind. To use the resources of that printed organ to organize workers in the plants. This was being done, and this represented the reason John Watson was attacked...and you found such perverse things going down in the city as the racist Detroit News pretending to be not anti-semitic and charging the bloods with being

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anti-semitic. John Watson was not anti-semitic. John Watson was not prosecuted and attempting to be charged for beating the hell out of a white newsmen, because he was a member of allegedly beat up Joe Weaver. He was charged because he was a member of a revolutionary organization and he was making an efficient revolutionary use of an available resource to replace resources we no longer had. He took over the paper.

Ron March, member of the Central Staff of the League of Revolutionary Black Workers. One of the founding members of DRUM (Dodge Revolutionary Union Movement) which went on strike in 1968, closed down the Dodge Main plant, which related to ELDRUM (Eldon Avenue Revolutionary Union Movement) another member organization that closed down the Eldon Avenue Assembly plant which makes axel housing, wheel wells and so forth, which if it had remained closed for another day would have paralyzed all assembly operations in all Chrysler plants in the country. Injunctions were gotten, naming members of the Central Staff. Naming Wooten, naming General Baker who was already on probation for allegedly carrying a concealed weapon during the 1966 so called mini riot, the Kerchevel Street incident as it is referred to. MAN sought to bust him for violating the injunction by demonstrating in opposition to Chrysler Corporation. They were unsuccessful. Ron March was charged - and we just completed his trial last month, he was charged with assault and battery on a police officer from the tenth precinct. They contended that Ronald March had nothing better to do when he got off from work but to get in

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a car and play bumper tag with some rollers riding around in a marked scout car. We beat that. Myself a member of the Central Staff, had some problems in terms of being cited for contempt. Presently, being subjected to disbarment for allegedly characterizing, truthfully, the conduct of a judge - the racist honky fool. We could go on interminably. Young brothers in the Black Student Voice have been ejected from schools, Northern High School, for example. Warren McAlpine Rakeith Jackson. Young brothers, Waistline Darryl Mitchell who have been kicked out of Highland Park High - just put on two year probation by a Circuit Court judge because he was distributing the Black Student Voice in Highland Park High School. We could go on and on with persons in organizations who have been sought to be attacked. But we proudly proclaim to the world that all of our people who are members of our organization are still on the street and are still working. Moreover, we say and we claim some responsibility for keeping members of other organizations on the street, where they can still work, i.e. Hibbit. We say that to say what? We say that to say a very simple thing, that conferences such as these should theoretically at least, be designed to have their auditory nerves effected by sound waves traveling across the ether. We say that one of the things that ought to come out of such a political discussion is some understanding of what might be regarded as being a proper course.

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of conduct to pursue, if you're about the business of revolutionary change. And that also deals with the question of Oppression and Repression, because repression is that which is to be logically expected by a person who perceives you as a serious threat to the maintenance of conditions which are beneficial to him. You are to be honored when you find yourself as the object of an act of repression, because he would not, for a second, consider expending energy in directing it toward you if you did not, in some minimal way, at least, represent some threat to the way things are being done in this country. But, the primary thing that can be done to prevent the occurrence of repression is for those of us of the oppressed classes to take over, to take power, to run every god damn thing in this country. To run everything in this world and certainly to start out by running everything in this city. So, we say the first responsibility of revolutionary organizations is to advance and practice a program that is designed to produce that one and only thing that can bring about an end to repression and that is take power. How does the League of Revolutionary Black Workers relate to that? Just briefly, some of the things the League of Revolutionary Black Workers is indeed involved in is organizing black workers because the League proceeds from the analysis that it is necessary to humanize the world, that racism, monopoly capitalism and imperialism, the institutional structure that is designed to maintain those three things, be destroyed. And, we say that the point of greatest vulnerability of such a system is the

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point of production in the economic infra-structure of this system. So we say that it makes sense to organize workers inside of the plants to precipitate the maximum dislocation and the maximum paralysis of the operation of the capitalist, imperialist machine. And that is why we organize workers; we do not simply define workers in the orthodox sense of he who toils laboriously with his hands over a lathe or on the line, or in the trim shop or in the frame plant or in the foundry. We say that all people who don't own and rule and benefit from decisions which are made by those who own and rule are workers. That includes black students who are kicked out of schools for example, because these black students understand very clearly the fact that the instruction that they get is designed to produce fodder for, fuel for, the maintenance and the on-going operation of this economic machine. We understand in other words, that the productive relations of this society, that the way it's organized in terms of its economy determines how the educational structure is going to respond to it and we then understand that Northern High School, for example, and the Northwestern High School for example, are deliberately structured in such a way as to produce potential unemployed men during periods of what are euphemistically referred to as recessions, and/or in the alternative, bloods can go to Saigon and die bravely for this country for which we have no reason whatsoever for dying. That's what the educational system is designed in such a way as to reflect precisely what is ordered and what is required to be done by the economic system. We see that relationship. We say that all

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persons who are oppressed are workers. Whether they are permitted to participate productively in the operation of this society is determined, not by the fact that they are or are not workers, but by the fact that the men who control the means of production organize them (the means of production) in such a way as to make them unnecessary. And the way that you solve that problem is to take over the total ownership and complete control of those devices of production, so that you have a society where you do not have production for profit but production for the use of those who do the producing. We're committed to the development of that kind of society. And we say that you do not develop that kind of society necessarily in the joint. But we understand that there are instances in which cats will get cracked and there ain't nothing they can do about it - they're going to get vamped on - they're going to be jammed up - we understand that. So we organize workers. We also understand that the only way that you end oppression is not by circulating petitions, not by writing letters to the attorney general, is not packing galleries in the state legislature, is not by demanding meetings on the third floor of Detroit Police Headquarters with whoever the black administrative assistant is to the current police commissioner might be. We say that the only means whereby you do this is to run the police department, is to run the city. So we say we're committed to running the city, in order to do this we've got to develop a political machine. And when we say that we're interested in developing a political machine we do not delude ourselves

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for a second into suggesting there's an alternative route to the destruction of the oppressor short of actually having to destroy him. We don't deceive ourselves. But we don't engage in superficial discussions between that cat relating to electoral politics, that bullshit. We relate to whatever's going to give us the power we need to create and widen the sphere within which we can function to bring about the destruction of this country. We don't engage in bullshit arguments about, that's reformist-- that's not reformist -- what's reformist is that which is counter-revolutionary. What is not reformist or what defines what is counter-revolutionary is any action that conduces to the greater creation of a larger predisposition on the part of most people to view revolution as the only course of conduct available to the end of oppression. That's what we relate to -- that's what we understand and see very clearly as being real. One of the means that we begin to approach that is that there has been a bill passed that proposes to decentralize the Detroit School System -- to create between 7 and 11 regions; to create local, regional governing bodies that will relate in certain ways to the communities in which they find themselves and relate in other ways to what remains a so-called Central Board whose members will be increased and so on. We have no illusions about decentralization and community control being the solution to the problem. We don't say that community control will end anything; but we do say that if that bill, for example, affords an opportunity to organize people around the concept of taking power; that we will relate to the bill on that level. And in order to do that, the West Central Organization, (which is headed by John Watson

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a member of the League) has been relating to; having Decentrali-
zation Conferences and attempting to develop a mechanism to
organize a political machine so that we can take power via what-
ever means is necessary. We understand the need for a theoreti-
cal organ - for a revolutionary organ - for a newspaper for a
means of communication; so we're making efforts to develop a
high quality press. We've had some problems - we've printed
the paper- they're persons who have all kinds of views of the
Inner-City Voice- none-the-less we keep pushin' it because we
think it's a serious revolutionary document. A part from that
the League runs Journalism schools. The League is training young
people to write. In addition to training young people to write,
the League is in the process of establishing printing presses
and printing shops and printing newspapers in four parts of this
country. That's another program because we understand the need
for an accurate and truthful dissemination of information. What
we say very simply is this - that, yes we can stand up and raise
our hands and we can declaim mightily about the existence of Hon-
kies -- that Black is Beautiful and we can hang bullets around
our neck and wear all kinds of daisikies but that's not going to
bring about an end to oppression. What really is going to bring
about an end to oppression is doing very serious and very hard
work over a fairly protracted period of time, that is designed
to increase the likelihood of people taking power. And we say
that the League represents that kind of organization and we say
that it's important to talk about the League in that connection,
at what is styled a repression conference because we say that
the only means of ending that repression is to take power over

that system in which you find yourself and that's how we relate to the question of repression.

If there are any responses, observation on those brief comments - we'll deal with them anyway you want. I'll lay -- if not, cool.