

COPY

[for the P.C.]

New Orleans
March 3, 1976

Dear Comrade Doug:

There are two reasons for this note: 1) the editorial about the bookstore which isn't too bad (see other side) and 2) to inform the N.O. that the branch did make contact with the Mosque (Bilalian News). In fact, they sent a reporter to cover the KKK harassment. The attitude is friendly.

We got three complimentary tickets for the Savior Day Program at the Mosque. And then one more. We took Mrs. Juanita Tyler, Gary Tyler's mom, so that we could introduce her to the reporter (which we did, and an appointment for a story about Gary was made). Incidentally, at the end of the program when "honorable" guests present are mentioned, Pearl Chertov, Militant Newspaper Rep., was asked to stand.

Incidentally (one more incidentally) the program was warmly received by the audience. There was a response which wasn't mechanical, and some critical listening. Unfortunately, Mrs. Tyler had to go home and the other comrades had split so I didn't want to go alone to eat at their Bilalian Banquet. I wanted to hear them talk amongst themselves. That luxury will have to wait.

Doug, there are a few questions I have begun to think about. One is how the Capitalist Press seems to be screaming louder for the death sentence these past months. I notice our branches are directly involved with frame-ups in the ghetto (a form of racism) and I am wondering what thinking is going on in the center. The Tyler Case -- a real frame-up -- Hurricane Carter, etc. ad nauseum. A branch can make this a major issue for many reasons, if nothing else, to save a life and to organize a struggle against racism; but building a party (hard as it may sound) has to involve itself in more issues. The thought occurred to me just like we use the Militant for ERA struggle a column keeping readers abreast of what is happening with cases, at least ones we are working on, can become a useful tool to put this work in perspective. I realize you have a hell of a lot to think about, but I scratch my head trying to think about how to conduct an effective struggle at this conjuncture and I can see the role of a Militant article the size of a Harry Ring column that a Baxter or a Black comrade can handle. The field would have to help by sending in frequent articles.

Re the district. Syd wasn't too clear at all. Is it a political concept to ensure that our plenums don't become huge show and tells. So that after a plenum is finished the gap between how and why the center is thinking about a problem is not lagging behind too far by the field. Regional or district work will distribute leadership responsibility amongst more comrades of varied talents and the ranks will definitely grow faster.

Comradely,
s/Pearl

sat, 2/26/76 - M.O., La
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THE LOUISIANA WEEKLY

Normal Surveillance

Early this month, a spokesman for the Socialist Workers Party complained to the City Human Relations Committee about harassment by The Ku-Klux Klan and plainclothes policemen when its Pathfinder Bookstore opened at 3812 Magazine Street on February 1.

Pearl Chertov said the KKK picketed the store's opening and plainclothes detectives took photographs of those entering the bookstore which sells feminist, labor history, socialist and black struggle books.

She said she believed the aim of the picketers was to "intimidate those in the community from coming into the store."

In an open statement to Mayor Moon Landrieu, she said: "We are here to demand that you make it quite clear to the Ku Klux Klan that you and other city officials will not tolerate any vigilante night-riding or cross-burning activity in the city of New Orleans."

Jim Duffy of HRC was quoted as saying: "The city was quoted as saying the practice of police taking photographs at such events is "normal surveillance. At this time, I don't see the need of added police protection, but that's a police matter."

Whether or not one agrees with the principles of the Socialist Workers Party, there

can be no doubt that, intentional or not, the net result of the picketing and surveillance did have the effect of discouraging persons from entering the bookstore.

Then, too, it is a fact that the bookstore is in a heavily populated black neighborhood.

The practice of police taking pictures at such events being "normal surveillance" is another matter which must be considered.

Significantly, no predominantly - black civil rights or militant organizations made any public comments on the Socialist Workers Party's complaints.

This is indeed surprising. Especially when it is remembered that the same tactics were used against the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Congress of Racial Equality, the Black Panthers, and other organizations in Louisiana during the 1950's and 1960's.

It cannot be denied that the Ku Klux Klan is the common enemy of all groups which advocate full equality for black people.

Thus, it is not unlikely that what is happening to the Pathfinder Bookstore, will at some future date take place at gatherings of the various civil rights organizations.

But, at this point, the silence of these other groups is deafening.

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