

COMMUNIST WORKERS PARTY
P. O. Box 20344
Greensboro, N. C. 27420

December 23, 1979

Dear Friend:

The reality of November 3 is still reverberating throughout the Greensboro community, the state and the country. The brutal daylight assassination of five members of our Party while preparing for a march against the Klan is unprecedented in the history of this country. In the wake of the avalanche of anti-communist hysteria since November 3, many honest people have lost sight of the basic facts surrounding the November 3 murders. That is why the Communist Workers Party (CWP) is communicating with you directly. We want to raise and discuss some critical questions with you. We will start with several basic points which we should not forget!

- A. While we were preparing for a legally called march (exercising our constitutional rights, we were attacked without warning by the Klan and Nazis. Five people were selectively murdered. It was not a shoot out!
- B. The attack on us by the Klan and Nazis was a surprise which we were neither expecting nor prepared to deal with. Most of us had our families present, including children. It was not a shoot out!
- C. The Greensboro police department did not fire a single shot to defend us as we were murdered. This occurred despite the fact that the police department knew in advance that the Klan and Nazis were armed and planned to be at our march. It was not a shoot out!

We are asking you to ponder these points deeply. We want you to stop thinking in terms of labels and ideologies. Try to stop thinking of the half truths and speculations so that the issue of what happened can be more deeply understood.

You probably did not know Jim, Bill, Sandy, Caesar or Mike. These five people were murdered. They were not plastic faceless reflections of ideology. They were fine, dedicated, hardworking selfless people. All of them had their families and loved ones just as you do. Far from the impression of the press that these comrades were a "little off," all of them had a comprehensive understanding of the social forces which underlie the current crisis in this country. They understood deeply the forces giving rise to the Klan and Nazis and the interests which these racist groups served. Most importantly, all of them had the courage to act on their convictions. That's why we were all in Morningside on November 3rd.

I know that what I have just described is not the picture that you have been getting from the media. The basic facts of what happened are being lost in a growing hysterical atmosphere. In fact, things are being turned upside down. Our Party is actually being seen by some people as the cause of the assassinations. Coverage by the press, particularly the Greensboro press, has been scandalous. If you go back through the daily coverage you can see the pattern of escalating hysteria daily. It eventually reached a point where the Greensboro Record permitted a story essentially saying that we planned the murder of our beloved Party members in order to have martyrs because our work was not going well! You really have to step back and think hard in order to appreciate how deep that charge is. Frankly, the massive attack on the CWP, the work it has been doing and our members, both dead and alive, is unequalled in recent times.

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There can be no doubt that the target of the murders were leadership members on the CWP. Ever since November 3 the CWP has remained the target of a huge slander campaign. In the future we can expect more slanderous attacks and possibly more legal charges drummed up by the state. We stated in our first official press statement after the November 3 assassinations that "We want to make it clear - this attack on the CWP is an attack against all the workers, oppressed nationalities and races in this country. It is the beginning of a new wave of systematic attacks against the inevitable and mounting resistance of the workers and oppressed people, be they black, brown, white or yellow or red. The Palmer raids, the McCarthy era, and the attack against the Black Panther Party are pale in comparison to this new wave of attacks in the coming period. We must be prepared and are actively preparing to beat back this systematic attack."

Six weeks after the assassinations, the McCarthy era atmosphere is very apparent. Not only have CWP members and supporters been fired from their jobs but now the families and friends of Party members are also threatened with being fired and harassment from the SBI and FBI. Some people are actually afraid to talk with us because of fear of "guilt by association." The "witch hunt" is on! Anyone familiar with history knows that it will not stop with the CWP. Next it could be trade union leaders, progressive professors, Black leaders generally, out-spoken clergymen, etc. etc. That is the inevitable path this repressive pattern will take if it is not checked. Already, the Governor of the state has come out publicly in favor of infiltration of so called extremist violent oriented groups.

Some well intentioned people, especially members of the clergy, have come out to oppose violence in general. Although their voices have registered opposition to violence there has been little discussion of justice and no serious examination of the real source of violence. The stand of just being against violence in general while it might be popular, avoids the hard question of what is happening in the country daily. It avoids dealing with the fundamental source of violence which is this oppressive system and it grows more oppressive daily. The stand of just being against violence opens the door to equate those of us who have been struggling for equality, justice and an end to exploitation to the notorious violence of the Klan and Nazis. That's what it means when what happened on November 3 is described as the extremen right vs. the extreme left.

We have to look deeper to understand the essence of things. If not, we risk being swept away by the swift current of bourgeois propaganda. The view that some people are just bent on violence is too simple of an explanation. It does not explain why the Klan and Nazis have been so actively promoted over the last 18 months. It draws no relationship between the rise of the Klan and the economic crisis which the entire country is in. It does not explain why we have to have a bold, aggressive, political campaign to expose the Klan and whose interests they

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really represent. In the last analysis the stand of simply being against violence in general without addressing the question of justice and the source of violence aids further repression and violence. We can see that happening as Governor Hunt calls for the infiltration of "extremist groups" which actually translates into whoever speaks the truth about the nature and essence of this system.

The current situation requires of us that we unite to struggle against the vicious injustices reflected in relationship to November 3. The Klan-Nazi terror and police collaboration must be our point of unity. The CWP wants to unite and work cooperatively with anyone in building support against the Klan-Nazi murder and terror. We realize that we do not see eye to eye with many groups on our assessment of the source and nature of the problem we face. Undoubtedly there are also significant differences on the methodology of solving such problems. We are always eager to discuss these differences, but such views cannot and should not interfere with our working together. We think that it is both possible and necessary for us to unite in our opposition to the obviously pre-meditated murders of November 3rd, even if there are a number of other questions on which we disagree.

We are available to meet with you or your group in either a public or a private setting. This could be an opportunity to discuss November 3rd and subsequent developments. We have developed a slide show on the five assassinated CWP members which daaws out what their lives and work were really about. Finally, we want to encourage you to actively join different efforts being initiated from different sources, such as National demonstrations, civil r. ghts hearings, police investigations, our trials, or simple community forums. Your active involvement will become part of the massive fight for justice. We hope you will be in touch with us. We can be reached at 621-6822 or 275-6589.

Yours in Unity!

Nelson N. Johnson
Nelson N. Johnson
Spokesperson for CWP

IN DURHAM, CALL (919) 682-1014 between 1-6 P.M. or come by
BREAK THE CHAINS BOOKSTORE, 951 East Main Street
(corner of N. Elm St.---just east of Goodwill Industries)