

AN OPEN LETTER TO BLACK BROTHERS & SISTERS WHO ARE WILLING TO STAND FOR YOUR RIGHTS-REV. JAMES E. ALLEN

We have arrived at a critical moment in history. The present administration is building up the most frightening war machine known to humanity, paying for it with funds diverted from a multitude of human services, most of which were gained through the struggles of people demanding equality and justice from the system.

We want the peace movement to be as powerful and as effective as possible. In order for this to happen, however, it must become functionally multiracial and focus on racism and economic injustice as well as international militarism.

While the causes for particular wars often appear complex, racism has played a pivotal part in virtually all military conflicts. There are six ways in which we understand racism, militarism and economic injustice to be interrelated.

Battlefield casualties. Racism in the U.S. has resulted in a pool of conscripts for the armed services disproportionately made up of people of color. Since most of these "economic conscripts" are unskilled, they end up in the front lines of battle, victims of the white generals and Presidents who wage the wars.

The war at home. Poor people of color have not been visible in the mainstream peace movement because they are already experiencing war in their own communities. Blacks in inner-cities experience police as an occupying force.

We believe it is essential that everyone who is serious about stopping this racial machine and establishing a real peace understand the racist nature of war. It is no coincidence that Carter reinstated draft registration, giving rise to the reemergence of a vocal anti-war movement, at a time when the military was complaining that there were too many people of color in the armed forces. They realized that people of color might not be counted on to fight against their brothers and sisters in Third World countries. It was, after all, a heavily Black and Brown military which mutinied during the Vietnam War.

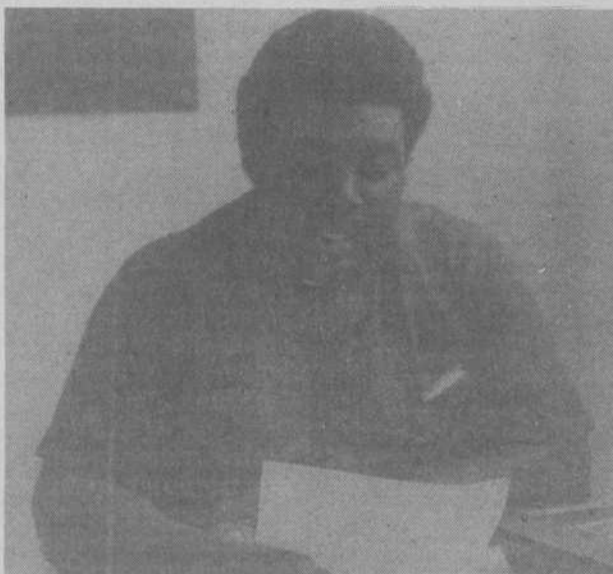
We are encouraged by signs that the peace movement is concerned about its white, middle class image. We, too, are concerned, not only about the image, but about the analysis and strategy which flows from white, middle class leadership.

Such leadership sometimes assumes that people of color are not interested in peace or are too preoccupied to join a movement. We believe this is a misreading of reality. On the contrary, Black and Native People have been among the

boldest and most eloquent spokespersons for peace.

We are convinced that it is difficult for white, middle class people to see the connections between racism, militarism and imperialism - connections which we feel are vital to a correct analysis of our current predicament and therefore necessary to developing strategies that are likely to work. Poor people of color understand these connections far better.

If real peace is to be achieved, the white peace movement must aggressively seek leadership and direction from Blacks, Hispanics, Native Americans and other people of color. They must participate in all aspects of organizational planning, decision-making and outreach. In those situations where funds are available to pay organizers, people of color must be actively sought out. It is only with the active involvement of poor people of color that it will be possible to build



Rev. James Allen

a truly broad-based, multiracial multi-cultural movement capable of moving forward on the tasks and winning. White organizers must learn to struggle with their own racism, which comes up in often subtle, but significant ways and keeps them from working with or taking leadership from people of color. We are convinced that racism is learned behavior and therefore can be unlearned, though the process is often painful.

I am convinced, however, that this struggle over the racism in our movement is a healthy one. If we are to be genuine peacemakers we will have to work unstintingly for justice. Martin Luther King said it eloquently in 1967.

I am convinced that if we are to get on the right side of world revolution, we as a nation must undergo a radical revolution of values. We must rapidly begin the shift from a "thing-oriented" society to a "person-oriented" society. When machines and computers, profit motives and property rights are considered more important than people, the giant triplets of racism, materialism, and militarism are incapable of being conquered.

So I say to you, my brothers and sisters, either we stand together and by law fight the racial system in Las Vegas by putting our monies in our

SOUTHERN BAPTIST TO LAS VEGAS

Las Vegas, NV - The annual Southern Baptist Convention is coming to Las Vegas in 1989, June 9-16, and coincidentally could eliminate the last shred of doubt about the city's suitability to host any and all types of meetings.

For some association executives, Las Vegas projects a "sin city" image. The Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority (LVCVA) hopes the Southern Baptist Convention will convince doubters that there is

no reason not to consider meeting here.

The convention is expected to attract 27,000 and could impact the local economy by \$26 million. It will be the first time Las Vegas has hosted the annual conclave; however, several Southern Baptist chapters meetings have been held here.

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banks, buying in our own stores, building our own jobs, making our political leaders start to fight in Carson City to pass bills to help us instead of hurting us; if we don't do these things we might as well move on toward the state line.

There are about 60,000 Blacks in Las Vegas and the news media are saying that 23 people speak for 60,000.

If the proper role for any Black leader if he or she is true blue to stand and speak out for his or her people. Moses went to the King, Ester went to the King, and Jesus went to the cross for his people. Our Black leaders need to go to the City Hall Police Department before a riot, and tell them to stop holding back jobs, and stop beating heads. One of the most impossible things to do is to stop a tomado. Trying to stop a riot after it starts is almost impossible. The time to stop a riot is before it starts.

Since the N.A.A.C.P. was founded in 1909, it has successfully overcome many setbacks and challenges. And today, the Association remains the one continuing nationwide civil right organization that has consistently advanced the cause of equal rights for Black Americans. Currently, an increasing, yet subtle, tide of racism is threatening to erase the significant victories achieved through the willing sacrifices and unflagging dedication of N.A.A.C.P. members and friends across the Nation. There is escalating hostility to Affirmative Action Programs. The Bakke and other so-called "reverse discrimination" cases exemplify this opposition. Affirmative Action Programs are crucial in accelerating the meaningful involvement of Black Americans in every phase of our local and national life on the basis of equality and fairness.

In Las Vegas, the N.A.A.C.P. is closely monitoring the re-emergence of the KKK and other hate groups. Further, the Association has increased its activities in the crucial areas of housing, education, employment, voter registration, prison reform and other endeavors where the fundamental interests of Black Americans are at stake. Your Life Membership money is necessary to insure the continued work of the Nation's oldest, largest and indeed most effective Civil Rights Organization. (Please Join).

Your President,
REV. JAMES E. ALLEN

Rev. Allen is president of the Las Vegas Chapter, NAACP.

SOUTHERN CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

ATTENTION, ALL MEMBERS!!!

Board Meeting - 7:30 p.m.

SCLC Meeting - 8:00 p.m.

THURSDAY, JULY 28, 1983

Meeting will be held at

TRIED STONE BAPTIST CHURCH

621 WEST CAREY

For more information, call

646-0550

(9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.)

Agenda: Voter Registration

Busing

Martin Luther King's Memorial Day

The Use of Hollow Point Ammunition

by Metro Policemen

There will be open discussions for attendees to voice their opinions on these and other topics.

THE COMMUNITY IS INVITED TO ATTEND

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