

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF SAN FRANCISCO 8

WHEREAS in January, 2007 eight former members and supporters of the Black Panther Party (“BPP”), Hank Jones, Richard Brown, Harold Taylor, Richard O’Neal, Ray Boudreaux, Jalil Muntaquim, Herman Bell and Francisco Torres (“the San Francisco 8”) were charged with participation in the 1971 homicide of a San Francisco police officer;

WHEREAS in 1975 these same charges were dismissed against some of the defendants after a court ruled that inculpatory statements were obtained through the use of physical and psychological torture;

WHEREAS the Black Panther Party for Self Defense (“BPP”) was formed in 1966 and quickly spread throughout the country;

WHEREAS, the ten-point program of the Black Panther Party included demands for adequate health care and education in the Black community, an end to police brutality, and put forth the right of Black people to defend themselves against racist attack, including attacks by the police;

WHEREAS in 1967, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (“FBI”), with the cooperation of local law enforcement, intensified and expanded the counterintelligence program (“COINTELPRO”) whose stated goal was to “misdirect and otherwise neutralize” Black organizations and their leadership. The Black Panther Party became one of COINTELPRO’s major targets. Among the tactics used against the BPP were murder, such as the 1969 murders of Chicago BPP leaders Fred Hampton and Mark Clark, false criminal prosecutions and the use of informants designed to foment dissension within the BPP;

WHEREAS state, federal and local governments have a documented history of bringing false criminal prosecutions against BPP members such as former BPP leader Huey P. Newton, the New York “Panther 21” (acquitted in 1971 after a two-year trial), Geromino Ji Jaga (Pratt) (freed in 1995 after being falsely imprisoned for over 20 years) and Dhoruba Bin Wahad (freed in 1990 after being falsely imprisoned for 19 years);

WHEREAS in addition to the foregoing, because of the loss and/or destruction of evidence in the San Francisco 8 case, the defendants will likely be denied their right to present a defense;

BE IT RESOLVED that the National Lawyers Guild calls upon Jerry Brown, the Attorney General of the State of California to move to dismiss all charges against the San Francisco 8 defendants and that all defendants be immediately released from custody;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the National Lawyers Guild recognizes that it is important to educate its membership and the community at large about this case and the history of repression against the Black Liberation Movement. In accordance with this understanding, each chapter shall, within the next 12 months and to the extent possible, sponsor an educational event and/or perform some activity in support of the San Francisco 8.

Implementation:

1. National Office shall send resolution to appropriate California officials, the media and all NLG chapters.
2. Sponsoring Chapters, in consultation with the National Office and the San Francisco 8 support committee, will provide lists of available speakers and literature to chapters concerning the case. Within one year chapters shall notify National Office of the nature of the event/activity that they have held.

Sponsored by: New York City Chapter, San Francisco Bay Area Chapter; NLG Anti-Racism Committee. Contact: Bob Boyle, NYC Chapter; (212) 431-0229, (917) 701-0047 (cell)