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September 26, 1970

TO: Members of the Political Committee

From: Bob Langston

Dear Comrades:

I hope Mary-Alice and the comrades of the Administrative Committee will be able to consider these comments immediately and to review the decision to begin running the Fatah statement, "Towards a Democratic Palestine," in its entirety and without comment in The Militant.

I think it is a mistake to run this document now and in the way decided on.

(1) I do not see how it is possible to carry, without comment, on two full pages of the paper several weeks running, a basic programmatic statement of this sort without it appearing to readers -- both our own comrades and others -- as a statement of the position of the party. As far as I know, the Fatah document does not represent the position of the party; if it does, however, I think this should be clearly stated.

(2) A regroupment of the Palestinian forces is almost certain to take place in the present situation in Jordan, and the Fatah leadership and program are almost equally certain to come under intense critical scrutiny. It therefore seems to me tactically unwise -- unless the party regards the Fatah program and leadership as adequate to the revolutionary tasks -- to solidarize with Fatah -- or with any of the other organizations -- specifically to the extent that will be indicated by devoting so much space to a Fatah programmatic statement.

(3) At this moment, it seems to me, our main task is to defend the Palestinian national movement against the imperialist-Zionist-Arab-reactionary attempt to crush it, and to make clear that this defense is completely independent of the adequacy or inadequacy of its programs. To devote so much space to this document at this time will, it seems to me, almost inevitably suggest that we support the Palestinian struggle because it has developed such a tolerant and humanistic attitude towards the Jews. Most of space should be devoted to rallying support for the Palestinians by explaining why they have to fight for an elementary democratic right and by exposing the imperialist-Zionist-Arab-reactionary alliance and explaining why it must try to crush the Palestinian movement.

(4) A single long article on the declared goals of the guerrilla movements would certainly be valuable, it seems to me. This article could quote extensively from the Fatah document. It should also, I believe, indicate the position of the DFFLP -- the only other group, as far as I know, that has formulated its position with anything like the same degree of concreteness as Fatah.

873 Broadway
2nd floor south
New York, N. Y. 10003

September 28, 1970

Bob Langston

Dear Bob,

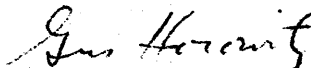
The administrative committee discussed today your request to reconsider the decision by the editor of the paper regarding publication of the Fateh statement, "Towards a Democratic Palestine."

It is the opinion of the administrative committee that publication of this document for information purposes is in line with a long-standing policy we have had regarding such documents. In the past the press has published documents and statements from a variety of non-party sources without necessarily making any special editorial disclaimers or comments, for example, speeches by Malcolm X and Fidel Castro, statements of Chicano leaders, etc. This is in line with our responsibility to ensure that the truth is told about the liberation movements all over the world. The publication of such documents has never implied that the party necessarily agrees with everything said in them.

As to our position on the Mideast, it is elaborated in the totality of articles by party spokesmen that have appeared in the press and which will continue to appear.

It is the feeling of the administrative committee that the publication of this statement by Fateh does not in any way detract from our unconditional support of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination. To the contrary, the publication and circulation of such documents, by helping spread the truth about what the liberation movements stand for, enhances our support by cutting through the lies spread about the Palestinians by imperialist and Zionist propaganda.

Comradely,



Gus Horowitz
for the Administrative Committee