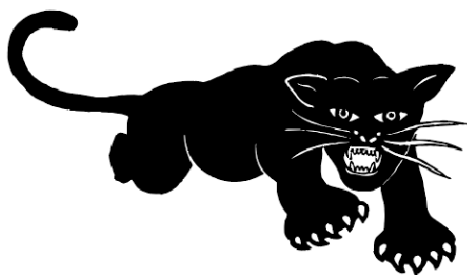


**OPEN LETTER TO
THE WEATHER
UNDERGROUND FROM
THE PANTHER 21**



BY ANY MEANS NECESSARY

“Open Letter to Weatherman Underground from Panther 21” (1971)

This letter was originally published in a January 1971 issue of The East Village Other (EVO). In 1977, the letter was reprinted in a double issue of BREAKTHROUGH: the Political Journal of Prairie Fire Organizing Committee (PFOC), along with an introductory statement by the PFOC.

Below is a reproduction of the EVO original. No spelling or grammar edits have been made to the text.

Compiled by G4G - FK

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We, of the Panther 21, take this opportunity to greet you with a spirit of revolutionary love and solidarity — that spirit that revolutionists feel for each other — that spirit that our enemies cannot understand nor deal with — that spirit that defies their divide and rule campaign — with that spirit — we greet you.

We wish to make known to you that we feel an unrighteous act has been done to you by the self-proclaimed “vanguard” parties by their obvious neglect in not openly supporting you — by their obvious disregard of and silence on your righteous revolutionary actions. But they have all but ignored us also — so in that respect we are in similar waters. But we wish to inform you that the most revolutionary and progressive brothers that we have met within the confines of a maximum security Babylon — along with us — have considered you one of the — if not the true vanguard within the confines of the artificial boundaries of the United States of Amerikkka at this time. You related to action — the unequivocal truth — by which revolutionaries gauge each other.

This letter is to acknowledge your actions — and like how we have watched your growth — and to relate to you how we have felt revolutionary joy on both accounts. This letter is also a response to your latest communique — “New Morning — Changing Weather”. In it we can sense and feel your frustration and sense of isolation. We know the feeling very well, having felt it ourselves for the last 21 months.

We also very keenly feel the loss of direction, the confusion and chaos that is running rampant out there. We see how the pigs are working overtime to try and fuck things up — but we also see how much of the misdirection comes from these self proclaimed “vanguard” parties themselves. How these “omnipotent” parties are throwing seeds of confusion, escapism, and have lost much of their momentum by bad tactics — in fact terrible tactics, tripping out, pseudo-machoism,

arrogance, myrmidonism, dogmatism, regionalism, regimentation, and fear. Thus the situation out there has become a sort of the lost leading the blind. We have seen our comrades-in-arms sit in maximum security and dig the contradictions out in the streets – get bailed out – and then not be able to deal with it head-on – so that finally, they too became co-opted by this bullshit – and now cannot confront us – cannot look us in the eye. So from our experiences we are responding to your communique because although we can understand fully where you are coming from – we sensed a certain mood and saw certain statements in your communique that sent chills up our spine.

We can see your attitude towards the mother country “youth culture” – how it was “the forces which produced” you, “a culture that” you “were part of, a young and unformed society (nation).” We can also see “the possibilities that exist for” you “to develop the movement so that as revolutionaries” you “change and shape the cultural revolution” – You “are in a position to change it for the better.” We can also see that you feel – and rightfully so – the need for more support from the mother country youth. But we feel that most of the mother country youth culture communes smack heavily with escapism – a danger you must be aware of and guard yourselves against.

Another facet to be considered is that there is a world of difference between a MOVEMENT and a REVOLUTION. Movements can go in many directions – and all at one time – and can only be used up to a certain point. Like the essence of the government's power has been FORCE and its agility to maintain a gap between the people's beliefs and the realities of society. For what the people do not understand they cannot control. A movement can deal with the belief/reality gap, but not with force. The only thing that will deal with reactionary force and violence is revolutionary counter-force and counter-violence. Another factor to be considered is that just because you “go out into

the air” does not necessarily mean that you will be closer to the people
– Look at the self-proclaimed “vanguard” parties.

Many of the peace people are out there, not because they feel a solidarity with the Vietnamese, but because they don't like war – something that is inevitable in any oppressed/oppressor struggles – or they are really Amerikkkan – they don't subconsciously want this imperialistic country – their home – to be whipped. We have no idea how you are going to deal with the latter, but as far as we are concerned – with the former– to quote Sartre – “...if violence began this very evening and if exploitation and oppression had never existed on the earth, perhaps the slogans. of non-violence might end the quarrel. But if the whole regime, even your non-violent ideas, are conditioned by a thousand year-old oppression, your passivity serves only to place you in the ranks of the oppressors.”

You must also deal with racism within your “youth culture” – although as Sartre states– the “worthiest souls contain racial prejudice” – we are talking about overt racial prejudice. You mention the demonstrations over Kent State and Jackson State – but there was a world of difference in them – a racial difference – an overt racial difference. When the Kent State incident occurred – the nation stopped – flags flew at half mast – everybody was uptight – that in no way resembles the magnitude – or rather the lack of magnitude concerning the Jackson State incident. The former – as you said “showed real power and made a strong difference” – the latter did not put anyone “on the defensive” except black people.

We can understand your need to build a strong sense of community – it is a necessity for you in the mother country – Just as it is for us in the colonies. Now while doing this we must use this new consciousness and recognize it for what it is – a perception of reality. We – you especially under the circumstances – must realize that

“grass and organic consciousness expanding drugs” are NOT weapons of the revolution — they may be a tool to bring you together in a sense of a community — but they will not bring the Amerikkkan system down. Remember — the amount of hard drugs increased proportionately with the growing political awareness in the black community — and that was no accident — and the establishment uses as its tools not only “the killer drugs (smack and speed) — to pacify and destroy young people”— but also DANGEROUSLY adulterated organic consciousness-expanding drugs. Also these things — these “tools” can also be used for escapism — and again to quote Sartre — “in other words, the colonized people protect themselves against colonial estrangement by going one better — in religious estrangement and wine and dope and organizations and petitions and congresses.”

Then in your “youth communities” of the mother country — the emphasis is on individual freedom still, while we are dealing with group freedom still. Thus where do blacks and the rest of the third world fit into the scheme of things in your “new families”? You see, you state that “none of these changes that people are going through are rules and principles.” Now in dealing with the mother country — black and third world relationships — in dealing with revolution — in dealing with “the need for new men and new women” — you are dealing with principles — or are you trying to tell us that these contradictions have been dealt with — we are not convinced. We realize that this will be a protracted struggle— but when does protracted become non-movement -- escapism-isolation-and retrogression? Those contradictions — all of the above — must be dealt with — and rapidly — without a drop in the armed struggle. As Dowbar of Brazil states — “You cannot build the revolutionary consciousness of a population through political explanations. But military actions can create this consciousness.” And as history has shown, Martin Luther King’s tactics can only work to a certain extent. It is your duty as revolutionaries to

“change and shape the cultural revolution” into a real revolutionary culture— to shape your youth to fight.

For instance, take a group, a party and its supporters with a few activists— it can move in a revolutionary manner against the pigs OR it can function — have a newspaper, hold rallies, conventions, congresses, etc. — then rhetoricians rhetoric, functionaries function, printing presses print, delegates travel, international friendships grow, “leaders” become overwhelmed with “work” — then the prospects of armed struggle — real revolution diminish. It gets lost in the “works” — it becomes to be looked upon as adventurism— always premature — it might “sabotage” the legality of the party — (which if it was effective would be illegal anyway) — it might bring down too much repression — meanwhile, the fascists snatch out the activists — who are not so noisy — but deemed more dangerous. Does this not sound familiar?

We say — Right on! — Use the new consciousness BUT remember this new consciousness of love, creativity, and liberation will not stop the exploitation of the third world. You state that you “had all come together around the militancy of young white people determined to reject racism and U.S. exploitation of the third world.” This involves a very basic fundamental thing that cannot involve much vacillating — the people's hunger — 2/3 of the world — the third world is starving — with an average life expectancy of 33-35 years of age. Do you believe that your “Acting openly, denouncing Nixon, Agnew, and Mitchell,” and sharing your “numbers and wisdom together with young sisters and brothers” will — in the eye of the octopus of Amerikkka — significantly deal with such situations as South Africa, Latin America, Palestine, Rhodesia? — Will it “blow away” the people's hunger? Will it free in any way any of the chains upon the Red Man, The Black Man, the Chicano, The Puerto Rican? For over four years the new consciousness has known about the contradictions concerning Vietnam — yet the largest mass demonstrations were in May 1970 — that’s Vietnam. How long will

it be before all of the contradictions are known and make themselves felt about conditions for third world people in this country, in South Africa, Panama, U.S. aid to South Africa and Portugal, U.S. and Russia moving closer to try and contain China? Will rallies and demonstrations – even on a mass level – do much to combat racism and the U.S. exploitation of the third world? Remember the U.S. economy is based on this very exploitation and the U.S. is also a warfare state – a dynamic capitalist power, requiring periodic wars to survive! No philosophical masturbation or no other “ism” is going to deal with it. The Amerikkkan machine and its economy must be destroyed – and it can only be done with intelligent political awareness and armed struggle – revolution! Or do you believe that this new consciousness can really reach Westmoreland and Laird and Stennis and Eastland and ----?

We are sorry to hear that the townhouse “forever destroyed” your “belief that armed struggle is the only real struggle.” That places us in a unique position because, as Che stated – “Armed struggle is the only solution for people who fight to free themselves” – and we have lost dearly loved comrades. Also – probably every experienced revolutionary has – but we realize that risks must be taken – some will die – others will replace them (or us) – like people rapping about ending racism, colonialism, sexism and all of the other pig “isms”, exploitation and all that – but these things can only be ended by revolution – and revolution is – in the final analysis – ARMED STRUGGLE – revolution is VIOLENCE – revolution is WAR – revolution is BLOODSHED! How long have different successful liberation fronts fought before they have won large popular support?

Che stated – “A revolution is a handful of men and women with no other alternative but death of victory. At moments when death is a concept a thousand times more real, and victory a myth that only a revolutionary can dream of.” Are you hip to Marighella – Carlos

Marighella? “Revolutionary action unleashed by small groups of armed men was the great strength that nourished our struggle.” “Revolutionary organization usually grows by two important methods; 1) grouping and training of political cadres to hold meetings and discuss documents and programs; 2) revolutionary action — its method is extreme violence and radicalization. We chose the latter because we feel it is the most convincing method and that the former leads — if not combined with the latter — to bourgeois tactics and loses initiative.” “Action is what will awaken the revolutionary energy among our people, that is what will determine the formation of such a battle force that on one will be able to hold it back.” “Our methods and forms of organization are subordinate to revolutionary action and we will not stand for anything that may impede and limit such action — everyone of our actions is a revolutionary action and aims at seizing power through violence of of revolutionary war.”

We have had too many martyrs. We desperately need more revolutionists who are completely willing and ready at all times to KILL to change conditions. Just to be ready to die does not make a revolutionist — it just makes a martyr — “revolutionary suicide” and “only those who die are proven revolutionaries” — are bullshit — tripping escapist bullshit — a revolutionist accepts death as a natural phenomenon, but MUST be ready to KILL to change conditions. Revolution is ARMED STRUGGLE — revolution is VIOLENCE — revolution is WAR — revolution is BLOODSHED — and the “duty of a revolutionary is to make revolution.”

Now we must make ourselves clear — we agree with you that demonstrations and rallies may have some use — and as you state “someone must call for them, put out leaflets, convince people that it is a priority” — but the only way to get good support — to quote Marighella again — “The rebellion of the urban guerilla and his persistence in intervening in public questions is the best way of

insuring public support of the cause we defend – we repeat and insist on repeating: IT IS THE BEST WAY OF INSURING PUBLIC SUPPORT. As soon as a reasonable section of the population begins to take seriously the action of the urban guerilla.” You state “People become revolutionary in the schools, in the army, in prisons, in communes, and on the streets.” BUT the only thing that “will blow away the fear of the students at Kent State, the smack of the lower east side and the national silence after the bombings of North Vietnam” is victorious military action by the revolutionaries here in Babylon who are in complete solidarity with the third world revolutionaries. Information has to be distributed on ALL of the contradictions caused by the U.S. exploitation of the third world – but while we see that rallies and demonstrations on a mass level are a contribution – like keeping Nixon and company off the streets – at this point intensified mass demonstrations will serve a dual purpose and be much more functional only if they are used in coordination with armed action – military action. For instance – we know full well and feel and can relate to your frustration – like when we were in the Long Island City (Branch Queens) jail rebellion – we felt that the people outside could have supported us in the fullest revolutionary manner in two or three simultaneous ways: 1) mass demonstrations at each of the prisons involved, 2) while the pigs – quite a large percentage – were surrounding the prisons – and if there had been mass demonstrations – more pigs to contain the demonstrations – while leaving the city vulnerable – in this case for five days– for some righteous urban guerilla military actions, and 3) if the chance occurred – to liberate the prisoners at any jail that the opportunity presented itself. Thus you see – the best tactics in revolution is in CONTINUOUS CONFRONTATION AND STRUGGLE.

As George Jackson states – “Every mass movement in history has been led by one person or a small group of people. Although everyone is born with a brain only a few choose to use it. The difference between

successful and unsuccessful mass movements is in the people who lead them. Successful ones are led by persons gifted with a delicate balance of both mental and physical forcefulness. Brains are useless without the nervous equipment and muscle required to execute their orders.” So it is a necessity that you – when you deal with the mother country “youth community” – must take this new consciousness love and redirect it – so that it becomes revolutionary love – love to destroy the enemy – love to destroy a pig's life to create a human life. So as you say – it is true – “People become revolutionaries in the schools, in the army, in prisons, in communes, and on the streets” – like Kent State showed what can happen in schools, in the army – they can change sides or desert, you have seen about all that can be accomplished in prison, and on Wall street in May about on the streets – if these revoltings are done alone – without coordination and outside help. Thus the underground and military actions are very necessary – very necessary – and very necessary that they are very much together. You must also spread your light of knowledge and encourage more of your “youth community” to FIGHT.

We don't accept the pig's boundaries – thus when we talk of an American revolution – we are speaking of America – north, south, and Latin – ALL of America – therefore even here we are talking about a third world revolution – this is also a third world situation because Amerikkka is the world's largest white monster – and in America north, that is Amerikkka – the black, Puerto Rican, chicano, red man's revolution is the heart and core of the revolution of America north – Also to buttress this is the fact that revolutions come from the bottom up – the bottom becomes the banner – the leadership – can your “youth communities” accept this realization? You must form your mother country new consciousness, “young and unformed society (nation)”. – They, as a nation, if they are going to progress as a nation – can either take a position similar to that of France (reactionary – but taking personal swiping pot shots at Amerikkka) or Sweden

(neutral – but giving some aid to the third world) or Albania (fully committed to the struggle) (And we can only have full solidarity with the Albanian position) – Because if you and your “youth nation” don’t keep the pressure up – not only with mass demonstrations – but also with military action – then – basically – as you state – “Black and third world people” are forced by necessity to go “up against Amerikan Imperialism alone.” In that event – we say to your “youth nation” – if they can not be of aid to us – then keep them out of the way!

Now no successful war for liberation has ever been waged without violence – the question is how intelligently are we going to use it? We must fight with gun, bomb, mind, and heart – we must match the enemy AT LEAST blow for blow – AT LEAST! You see – for us things are critical– every day – every hour – how many of our people are suffering? How many die? That’s why our fight will not be over until no human being in Washington D.C. is more important than any human being in Harlem, no human being on Wall Street is more important than any human being in Guatemala, no human being in Ohio is more important than any human being in the congo, no human being in London, Paris, Moscow, Stockholm or Rome is more important than any human being in Hanoi, Peking, the concentration camps of South Africa, Dar-es-salaam or Kingston, Jamaica-- in other words – until everyone is free – nobody will be secure. We, of the third world, MUST of necessity destroy this highly automated and cybernated society or be destroyed by it – NOW!

We need allies– we have a powerful enemy who cannot be defeated without an allied effort. Anyone who has the same interest as we do – the destruction of this evil society – is an ally – all others are foes. Now how are our allies going to aid us? You speak of “Almost random bombing offensive” and “most of” your “political actions have hurt the enemy on about the same military scale as a bee sting. But the political effect has been devastating. The world knows that even the white

youth of Babylon will resort to force to bring down imperialism.” Well – let's look at that – for one– Mohammed Ali boasted of his “Floating like a butterfly – sting like a bee” – and with enough of his “bee stings” could destroy a foe– and he himself admits – as he got more mature his “bee stings” began packing more of a wallup. We think the same principle might apply here – also picking targets – let's ALL try to pick targets with more care and planning – The object is to 1) destroy the economy – like bombing sites which will affect the economy the most; 2) rip-off money, weapons, and etc; 3) sniping attacks. Bomb factories, mine factories, gun factories, and bullet factories are needed. Let's talk about “Large scale material damage” – This economy must fall – There is a war on, you know! And we KNOW that “twos and threes” can “do an armed action without getting caught.” As you say – your power is that you “are mobile, decentralized, flexible . . .”

In conclusion – we would like to leave these few thoughts – we wish you revolutionary victory in all that you do. But remember – the degree of racial co-existence greatly depends on your successes. Secondly – remember that this is not a national war, but a global war – and we who are in the eye of this evil, monstrous octopus – we who are in the belly of this beast – a lot depends on us! Thirdly – remember “In a revolution one wins or dies!” The stakes are very high – humanity versus inhumanity – do you recall the old “Ask what you can do for your country”? – Destroy it– mentally, morally, psychologically, and physically – destroy it. And whatever you do – do it good!

Your fellow guerillas in the revolution

The Panther 21

“For instance, take a group, a party and its supporters with a few activists— it can move in a revolutionary manner against the pigs OR it can function — have a newspaper, hold rallies, conventions, congresses, etc. — then rhetoricians rhetoric, functionaries function, printing presses print, delegates travel, international friendships grow, “leaders” become overwhelmed with “work” — then the prospects of armed struggle — real revolution diminish. It gets lost in the “works” — it becomes to be looked upon as adventurism— always premature — it might “sabotage” the legality of the party — (which if it was effective would be illegal anyway) — it might bring down too much repression — meanwhile, the fascists snatch out the activists — who are not so noisy — but deemed more dangerous. Does this not sound familiar?”