

ARTIST'S WRITING

RAINBOW COALITION COUNCIL OF ELDERS STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

As participants in those organizations that created the original Rainbow Coalition, we gather in Chicago to rededicate ourselves to its principles of solidarity and to form a Council of Elders.

We are joining in a loose council governed by consensus so we may amplify the wisdom and experience we have accumulated over forty years of fighting against racism, imperialism, and violence, and to serve as a resource to organizational efforts within the communities of which we are a part.

This Council we are forming will enhance our collective and individual abilities to advise and to support ongoing struggles among poor and working people, immigrants, students, and all progressive people seeking political change to gain respect for fundamental human rights, including concerns with discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, and gender; and to end racist, militarist, and homophobic injustice, and to bring about peace.

We affirm our consensus on the fundamental values that brought us together: self-determination for oppressed and colonized peoples, including the independence of the colony of Puerto Rico; we support work that implements economic, environmental, and social justice in our communities and that challenges the corporate devastation of our culture, and all efforts to end the violence directed against our communities by police, courts, and rampant imprisonment.

We reaffirm the basic principles that informed the original platforms of the organizations constituting the Rainbow Coalition, which included the Black Panther Party, the Young Lords, the Young Patriots, Rising Up Angry, I Wor Kuen, and the American Indian Movement.

We recognize the dangerous levels that political and cultural repression as well as radical economic inequality have reached in this post-9/11 United States, and join in love, hope, and defiance to bring another world into existence.

Date: April 21, 2007

(Young Lords)

We want self-determination for Puerto Ricans--liberation of the island and inside the United States.

We want self-determination for all Latinos.

We want liberation of all third-world people.

We are revolutionary nationalists and oppose racism.

We want equality for women. Down with machismo and male chauvinism.

We want community control of our institutions and land.

We want a true education of our Creole culture and Spanish language.

We oppose capitalists and alliances with traitors.

We oppose the Amerikkkan military.

We want freedom for all political prisoners.

We are internationalists.

We believe armed self-defense and armed struggle are the only means to liberation.

We want a socialist society.

(Black Panthers)

We want power to determine the destiny of our black and oppressed communities' education that teaches us our true history and our role in the present-day society.

We want completely free health care for all black and oppressed people.

We want an immediate end to police brutality and murder of black people, other people of color, and all oppressed people inside the United States.

We want an immediate end to all wars of aggression.

We want full employment for our people.

We want an end to the robbery by the capitalists of our Black Community.

We want decent housing, fit for the shelter of human beings.

We want decent education for our people that exposes the true nature of this decadent American society.

We want freedom for all black and oppressed people now held in U. S. Federal, state, county, city and military prisons and jails. We want trials by a jury of peers for all persons charged with so-called crimes under the laws of this country.

We want land, bread, housing, education, clothing, justice, peace, and people's community control of modern technology.

(Young Patriots)

We demand freedom. We demand the power to determine the destiny of our oppressed white community.

We demand full employment of oppressed white people, and that the means of production should be placed in the hands of the people.

We demand an end to the robbery by the capitalists of our oppressed white community: we demand that they do not make a profit on things we need for survival.

We demand decent and adequate housing, fit for the shelter of human beings, regardless of our income.

We demand education that exposes the true nature of this decadent American society; that teaches us our true history, that teaches us cooperation rather than competition.

We demand that all oppressed white people be exempt from military service.

We demand an immediate end to police brutality and murder of oppressed white people, and that the people of our community control the police.

We demand freedom for all oppressed white people held in federal, state, county and city prisons, and that all our people be tried by a jury of their peers or from their communities.

We demand the end of the rape of our land by the corporations and monopoly farmers, and the land be returned to the people to meet their basic needs.

We demand an end to racism, and the inequality of the sexes, as tools of capitalism to divide the people.