

National antidrug coalition grows

"The NAACP delegates realized [at their convention —ed.] that drugs is a battle we can't afford not to fight and can't afford not to win." With these words to a meeting of antidrug activists in Philadelphia, Ms. Toni Morton of the Northwest Philadelphia Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) expressed the sentiment growing among Americans from every constituency that the time has come to engage in an all-out battle to eliminate drugs.

This sentiment is now being actively channeled toward the founding of a nationwide antidrug coalition at a national meeting to be held on Sept. 29, 1979 at Cobo Hall in Detroit, Michigan. The meeting is expected to draw approximately 4000 participants, according to Michigan Anti-Drug Coalition Chairman Juan Torres. The Michigan Anti-Drug Coalition, one of eight coalitions now organizing for the founding of a National Coalition, first issued the call for the for-

1979. Since that time, more than 140 religious and civic leaders, as well as elected officials, have pledged to "vigorously organize representatives and members of all sectors to attend a founding convention in Detroit."

Organizational support for the national meeting is now being organized through a series of regional antidrug coalitions at premeetings for the national meeting. Such regional meetings will be held in Baltimore on July 21, in Chicago on July 22, in Hartford on July 29 and in Los Angeles on August 18, and antidrug meetings were held last week in Buffalo and Philadelphia.

The sense of moral purpose which is rallying civic leaders to turn to this fight is indicated by the involvement of major religious figures in the antidrug fight; of the World Community of al-Islam in the West has announced that he will speak at the July 22 meetings sponsored by the Illinois Anti-Drug Coalition and, as well, attend the November 1979 international antidrug conference in Bogotá, Colombia.

NAACP spokeswoman calls antidrug fight essential

The following statement was delivered by Ms. Toni Morton, spokeswoman for the Northwest Philadelphia branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) at the meeting of the Pennsylvania Anti-Drug Coalition held on July 10, 1979 in Philadelphia. 150 persons attended the meeting, which the local ABC-TV prominently covered. The NAACP's National Convention to which Ms. Morton refers was held July 1-5 in Louisville, Kentucky.

Good evening. I'm very pleased to be among all of you this evening representing the Northwest Branch of the Philadelphia NAACP. Our president, Mr. Robert Johnson, because of an earlier commitment, could not attend this forum, but he wanted everyone here to understand and know that the Northwest Branch supports, *actively* so, the mission of the Anti-Drug Coalition which is of course to finally eliminate the availability and the use of drugs in our schools.

Our branch agonizes, and I'm sure all of you here do too, over the frightening and staggering number of young men and women whose minds and spirits, once alive, once inquisitive, once energetic, have now be-

come, due to drug indulgence, apathetic, exhausted, empty and insensible.

Because the Northwest Branch painfully recognizes this crisis among our youth (our president) Mr. Johnson at the national convention, held two weeks ago in Kentucky, worked persistently to rearrange the national agenda to impose on it the opportunity for Mr. Curt Bonaparte to speak face to face with delegates to the national convention of the NAACP. I have been told that Mr. Bonaparte's presentation aroused their interest to a deeper level and because of his compelling presentation, the delegates realized that the drug problem will be one of the main priorities of the NAACP not only in the Northwest Branch but throughout the country.

Again, I want to express my gratitude for being with you this evening, and I must reiterate that the Northwest Branch intends to ally itself with this movement and connect with forces which will dauntlessly engage in the battle against the insidious brain snatches of the community. We admit that the battle will be long and will undoubtedly be very frustrating but we also must admit that this is a battle we cannot afford *not* to fight and certainly not to win. Thank you.

The still ongoing tour of Mr. Fausto Charris, the leader of the 125,000 member Colombian Agricultural Workers Federation (FAN-AL) has had a deep impact on the antidrug organizing. Audiences in Chicago, Fresno, California, Washington, D.C. and elsewhere have been moved by Charris's description of the minds of the American people, representing a developed nation, as the patrimony of mankind and an essential resource for the development of the Third World. Likewise, the Fourth of July appearance of a parade float designed by the Illinois Anti-Drug Coalition in the New World Patriotism Day Parade sponsored by the World Community of al-Islam in the West in Chicago moved an audience of an estimated 100,000 viewers. This week, 150,000 copies of the national call and its endorsers were produced by *New Solidarity*, the newspaper of the U.S. Labor Party, which has endorsed the Anti-Drug Call.

The national antidrug coalition in formation is aiming to reach every institution in the U.S. and enlist its help in the antidrug fight. The Michigan Anti-Drug Coalition, for example, submitted a resolution to the National Convention of the National Educational Association. It is anticipated that proposals to join the national antidrug coalition will be introduced at the conventions of many U.S. organizations this summer. A recent example of legislative activity against drugs is the action of a committee of the Georgia Legislature in considering legislation to make drug pushing prosecutable as treason against the nation.

With the growing pressure being exerted by the regional anti-drug coalitions, it is the view of the organizers of the Sept. 29 conference that even the pro-drug legalization media will soon have to break and give the anti-drug coalitions prominent coverage.

—Anita Gallagher

Colombia's Charris: U.S. Muslims back antidrug fight

Colombian agrarian leader Fausto Charris, touring the U.S. to mobilize support for the fight against drugs, issued the following statement July 9:

I, Fausto Charris, in my capacity as a Colombian agrarian leader, was invited to the United States by the New York-New Jersey Anti-Drug Coalition to expose the danger Colombia faces of having to destroy its present economy and replace it with one based on the production, commercialization, consumption and legalization of marijuana. I want to make the following statement with regard to the support I have received from eminent figures in this country. Of crucial importance for the elimination of the drug plague is the support which the Imam Wallace Deen Muhammad has given the international anti-drug campaign.

On the basis of a memorable personal meeting I had this week in Chicago with the Imam, I can say that Wallace Deen Muhammad is an exceptional individual. As a religious leader of the World Community of Al-Islam in the West, he is characterized by his orientation toward the search for human perfection in a practical sense, where man participates in this battle through his work, at the same time as he confronts the dangers which ignorance, bestialization, underdevelopment and war represent for the world. It is on this basis that (the Imam's) disciples fight for virtue, science, technology, peace and development.

During our meeting, the Imam Wallace D. Muhammad expressed support for the work of the antidrug coalitions in the United States and in Colombia. He has joined his voice, as I do through this statement, to the call for the creation of a National Anti-Drug Coalition in the U.S. The Imam also indicated that he accepted with pleasure my invitation for him to personally attend the International Anti-Drug Conference to be held in Bogotá in November 1979. This is one of the greatest steps forward that antidrug forces have taken in favor of development for the United States, and for the world.

By their very nature all vices are harmful to man, some more than others. Nonetheless, there is no limit to the harm done by the use of drugs. They are a penetrating and almost irreversible evil which destroys and causes the degeneration of entire populations. They are even more dangerous when, as is the case today, they have such advanced media as the press, radio, television and other technical means of propaganda at their disposal.

How is it possible that in the United States and in Colombia those who appear before us as "wolves dressed in sheep's clothing" promote the production, trade, consumption and legalization of drugs—and not only say that they are not harmful, but that they are good for the soul? This is when we hear the proud voice of Wallace Deen, calling them liars, and merchants of evil.

Yes, citizens of the United States and of Colombia, we must take up the battle against the drug traffickers who annihilate thousands and thousands of youth and children annually, destroying generations in a business worth \$200 billion dollars. You must fight against the decriminalization of marijuana in the United States, and against the legalization of drugs in Colombia; you must fight for the use of paraquat to wipe out marijuana crops; you must fight for the development of Third World countries with nuclear energy, and for peace in the world.