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September 15, 1972

California Adult Authority
Ferry Building
San Francisco, California

Re: Parole of David Hilliard

Gentlemen:

We, the undersigned, urge you to grant David Hilliard, Chief of Staff of the Black Panther Party, an immediate release on Parole.

Mr. Hilliard's administrative abilities and experience are urgently needed for the Black Panther Party community programs.

Reverend Earl A. Neil, Rector of Saint Augustine's Episcopal Church, Oakland; Father Eugene J. Boyle, then Pastor of Sacred Heart Catholic Church, San Francisco; Miss Willi Curtis, registered nurse, a retired Air Force Captain and a volunteer nurse at the Peoples' Free Health & Research Clinic, Berkeley; Philip Shapiro, M. D. of San Francisco; and D'Army Bailey, attorney and City Councilman of Berkeley; all volunteered to testify in the Superior Court of Alameda County on July 14, 1971 that from 1969 to 1971 the Black Panther Party has instituted a series of survival programs. All of these programs were initiated and operated under the direction of David Hilliard.

The fundamental purpose of these programs was to help Black people of the Bay Area, and indeed of the country, to survive under the conditions of deprivation they normally face. The needs of Black people to be met by the programs, according to the above witnesses, are clothing, shoes, food, breakfast for school children, diagnosis and ultimately a cure for Sickle Cell Anemia, and basic medical attention.

Mr. Hilliard would devote his time to the administration of the several survival programs, in addition he will matriculate in college and complete his education in order to better serve his community.

Mr. Hilliard was convicted by an all white jury and judge.

The probation officer who investigated the facts of the conviction for assault stated as follows:

"There was no direct evidence that placed a weapon in the defendant's hands during the incident."

"The defendants affiliation with the Black Panther Party was apparently a salient factor in the present offense."

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According to the probation report, David Hilliard had no record of trouble with the law before except for minor traffic violations.

The probation department made the following recommendation to the Court:

1. "Serve the first 12 months in the County Jail."
2. "Obey all laws of the community and be of good conduct."
3. "Probation to terminate upon release from County Jail."

The probation report further stated:

"Review and evaluation of information obtained by the Probation officer does not appear to indicate that a commitment to the Department of Corrections is warranted ... Probation supervision beyond the date of release from incarceration would be difficult and would be more oriented toward surveillance and community control than the traditional effort at rehabilitation through treatment. Thus, active supervision within the community by this department is not specifically recommended . . ."

Mr. Hilliard has been imprisoned since July 14, 1971 - a period of time in excess of that recommended by the probation department.

Under your own rules, he would have been subject to parole in 6 months. There is no need for further imprisonment, if indeed, there was even any need. His ulcers has activated to a point that further needless imprisonment will permanently impair his health. His visitor's report that he is in pain frequently and has difficulty getting medication in prison. Last February, he had a bleeding ulcer episode and lay untreated for four days at Folsom prison until the community discovered how ill he was and brought pressure on the prison to hospitalize him at which point it was discovered he was indeed seriously ill. This event was reported in the press and is well known.

In conclusion, David Hilliard released from prison would be restored to health, able to complete his education, unite with his family of five who need him and would be restored to his leadership in the Black Community where the need for him is most important.

Sincerely,

Dear Mr. Garry:

_____ You may use my name on behalf of David Hilliard to send the letter to the California Adult Authority for his immediate release.

_____ I have written to the California Adult Authority inquiring why David Hilliard has not been released

_____ Requesting the immediate release of David Hilliard.

Please enclose any copies of your correspondence so that we may have a record, so that David Hilliard may know of your support and also we can know what mail has been received at the Adult Authority so that no letters get "lost." Return these letters immediately. They must be in by October 25, 1972.

SIGNATURE _____

PRINT THE NAME

TITLE OF PERSON

ADDRESS