

September 29, 1967

Mr. Adolph Held, President
Jewish Labor Committee
25 East 78th Street
New York, New York

Dear Mr. Held:

I am in receipt of your letter making inquiry of SCLC's position on anti-semitism. First, let me apologize for being rather tardy in my reply. Absence from the city and the accumulation of a huge volume of mail account for the delay.

Serious distortions by the press have created an impression that SCLC was part of a group at the Chicago Conference of New Politics which introduced a resolution condemning Israel and unqualifiedly endorsing all the policies of the Arab powers. The facts are as follows:

1. The staff members of SCLC who attended the conference (not as official delegates) were the most vigorous and articulate opponents of the simplistic resolution on the Middle East question. As a result of this opposition, the Black caucus modified its stand and the convention voted to eliminate references to Zionism and referred to the executive board the matter of final wording. This change was the direct result of the spirited opposition on the floor by Hosea Williams, Director of Voter Registration and Political Education of SCLC. Incidentally, I only attended the conference to make the opening speech and left immediately after. I had no part in planning the structure or the policy of the conference, nor was I a delegate. If I had been at the conference during the discussion of the resolutions, I would have made it crystal clear that I could not have supported any resolution calling for black separatism or calling for a condemnation of Israel and an unqualified endorsement of the policy of the Arab powers. I later made this clear to the press but a disclaimer seldom gets the attention that an original sensational attack receives.