

Issue 16: Summer 2010

4STRUGGLEMAG

from the hearts and minds of north american political prisoners and friends



www.4struggle.org

4struggle.org
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Black August
Book Reviews
Prison Struggle
Political Analysis
News and Updates
Ongoing Resistance

Welcome to 4strugglemag

You have just come to a dynamic and unique publication, where Truth (real and raw) speaks to power. This magazine focuses the insights and experiences of U.S. political prisoners on major issues of the day. While a lot of the writing is by political prisoners, other activists, allies, revolutionaries and insightful outside voices are included. We publish 3 issues a year and all back issues remain posted on the website (4strugglemag.org).

4strugglemag is an independent non-sectarian revolutionary voice. We are unapologetically anti-imperialist and solidly in support of progressive national liberation, especially the struggles of New African/Black, Mexicano/Chicano, Puerto Rican and Native American Nations presently controlled by U.S. imperialism. Reflecting the work and principles of political prisoners held by the United States, 4strugglemag advocates for justice, equality, freedom, socialism, protection of our Earth, human rights and peace.

www.4strugglemag.org is primarily an e-magazine, but hard copies are available (see sidebar for subscription details). We encourage readers to respond, critique and carry on discussions in the magazine. We value and encourage feedback and discussion. The address of each political prisoner is posted with his/her article so people can directly communicate with them (few political prisoners have access to the internet).

We like dialogue, but we are not going to print racist or pro-imperialist messages, so you government agents and klansmen don't bother wasting your time.

Each issue of 4strugglemag focuses on at least 3 main topics. Additional poems, graphics, essays, announcements and more are included. Unsolicited writings and graphics are accepted and welcomed. We won't guarantee printing, but we'd like to see your work. This and other correspondence should be sent via regular mail to the following address (remember it costs 75 cents to send a letter to Canada from the U.S.).

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Call for contributors

4strugglemag is looking for quality writing that contributes to critical, revolutionary thought and reflection. In particular, we are interested in the following:

Feature articles: We're looking for in-depth, analytical articles that critically examine a particular issue, historical occurrence, political idea, or current event. We are looking for well-researched articles that broaden and challenge revolutionary thought. If you are in need of research help, don't hesitate to ask. We may be able to supply some of the resources needed in order to write a well-informed piece. We can also help with the editing and/or writing process.

Book reviews: Is there a book you'd like to review for 4strugglemag? Let us know. If you don't have the book, we can arrange to get it to you.

Letters: We love to hear from you. Please let us know if we have permission to print your letter.

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If you wish to pay by cheque or money order, please **get in touch first**. We **cannot** cash cheques made out to 4strugglemag.

Running Down the Walls

The ABCF and all of us at 4SM invite and encourage everyone reading this to join in and support this years run. Relatives, friends, convicts, supporters, interested individuals, activists and certainly revolutionaries should get on board and run with us on August 7th. This year in particular, since RDTW is being held on Aug 7, in honor and commemoration of Jonathan Jackson's heroic raid on the Marin County Courthouse (8/7/70 --see the article on Aug. 7 in the Black August section), it is a great time to join us in a 5k run. Many cities and areas are holding runs. Check with LA-ABCF to see what might be close to you. Many solidarity runs are being held in state and federal prisons across the u.s. If there is nothing close by or in your prison, organize a few friends or a whole cell block or community to join in.

RDTW is first of all to support political prisoners. But it is more than that, it is a show of unity and solidarity for all revolutionary and conscious people and convicts. We run to highlight and oppose the abuse and injustice going on behind all of America's prison walls. We run in solidarity with friends and activists outside, and to uphold our human rights and human dignity inside. Join us, even if you are just finding out about RDTW now. In unity there is strength -- In strength there is progress and victory. Jaan Laaman - anti-imperialist political prisoner

On Saturday, August 7, 2010 at 10 a.m., the Los Angeles Anarchist Black Cross will host a 5k run/walk/jog/bike around the bustling sports fields of South Gate Park in Los Angeles. This event will raise much-needed funds for the ABCF's Warchest program and Corazón Del Pueblo.

ABCF Warchest: The ABCF Warchest is almost 16 years old; its funds are divided and distributed through monthly stipends to political prisoners who receive little or no financial aid. Prisoners use this money to cover the basic necessities of everyday living, such as stamps, shoes, clothes, and assisting their families with what little they can.

Corazón Del Pueblo: Corazón del Pueblo is a volunteer-run, not-for-profit collective, and community cultural center, that promotes peace, social justice and cultural understanding through the arts, education and social action.

Official Runs: The ABCF is a Federation of ABC chapters that span across the country and is holding two official runs on the morning of August 7th: in New York and Los Angeles. In sync with solidarity runs, we will collectively pound the pavement with our feet and bike tires as we exhibit our strength and stamina as examples of our tireless effort to free our imprisoned comrades.

Solidarity Runs: Every year, prisoners and supporters of political prisoners organize solidarity runs with Running Down the Walls. Last year, we had runs in Albuquerque NM, Arcata CA, Ashland OR, Bellefonte PA, Boston MA, Denver CO, Elmore AL, Inez KY, Los Angeles CA, Marion IL, New York NY, USP Navosta TX, Pelican Bay CA, Phoenix AZ, Tucson AZ, and Toronto, Ontario. Funds were distributed between the ABCF Warchest, Romaine Chip Fitzgerald Homecoming Fund, and Ojore Lutalo's Homecoming Fund. This year we hope to have even more runs in cities, towns, and prisons all across North America.

Support the Struggle: Many of those arrested in the past or present are not far from us. They are community and labor activists, queer, and environmental activists; people who decided to speak out against various forms of oppression and paid the price of their freedom for their actions. The strength of our movement is determined by how much we support our fallen comrades. As anarchist and former POW Ojore Lutalo says, "Any movement that does not support its political internees is a sham movement." So please help us, help them! Help us, help you!

Why August 7: We chose the date of August 7 as the day to commemorate the life of revolutionary Jonathan Jackson who on August 7, 1970 was killed in an attempt to free the Soledad Brothers. Jackson brought guns into the Marin County Court house during the trial of James McClain, William Christmas, and Ruchell Magee. He demanded the release of the Soledad Brothers as he and the three prisoners took the Judge and four others hostage. As Jackson and the others entered his van in an attempt to leave, the authorities open fired on the van, killing Jonathan Jackson, James McClain, William Christmas and Judge Harold Haley. Ruchell Magee was injured but survived the onslaught and remains in prison to this day.

Run: We are asking people or groups who are running to collect as many sponsors for the run as possible. Remember the money received is going to help imprisoned comrades who need your help. The person who collects the most funds will be given a prize for their involvement and dedication to helping our fallen comrades.

Sponsor a runner: This can be done through a flat donation to the runner of your choice. We ask from those who wish not to run to actively support those who are running in hopes of collecting as much for our comrades as possible.

The Warchest: Send funds directly to the Los Angeles ABCF (PO Box 11223, Whittier, CA 90603). Make checks or money orders out only to Tim Fasnacht.

Corazón Del Pueblo at 2003 East 1st ST. Boyle Heights, CA 90033

heart of the womyn are on the ground.” Doesn’t history support this thesis?

Fly’s last days on the West Coast with the BPP would shortly follow the above-noted Central Committee meeting, when, on October 23, 1977, he and a few of his Buddha Samurai Comrades went on a modified Frantz Fanon-type “right to initiative” operation (viz., non-Central Committee sanctioned assassination action, act first and explain later) to eliminate the female pimp of a prostitute/female sex worker that they were accused of murdering (the female pimp was scheduled to testify at a preliminary hearing in the case). After supplying some quality details on how to properly carry out such a mission, Fly tells us that they nonetheless botched the job by going to the wrong door of a duplex home, where after an innocent old Black lady bust a couple of caps at them when they were coming through the door. One of Flores’ operatives panicked, shooting (with an M-16, mind you) and killing the Buddha Samurai member Louis Talbert ‘Texas’ Johnson, and wounding Fly with a near catastrophic hand wound. This event forced Flores into the Party’s underground network of extraordinary forces (made up of our black and white comrades) which provided him with food, clothing, shelter, money, companionship, entertainment, and alternative identities for 3 years, and he provides some surface details of his existence in the network. Fly would remain within the protective embrace of this red network until he came to the conclusion that the BPP was no longer about the struggle of liberating the people, the masses, from the horrors of generational poverty and class warfare. After consulting with legendary BPP attorney Charles R. Garry who confirmed this observation (placing emphasis on Huey’s drug addiction and the absence of effective Party leaders and programs), Fly turned himself in to the grips of empire’s repressive state apparatus in October 1980. Flores states that during his pre-trial jail stay, comrades still in the Party came to visit him, where he learned that the membership was down to only a handful, and that the only thing the brothers in the so-called ‘leadership’ talked about on these visits was getting fucked-up on drugs and hanging out (so much for ‘power to the people!’ huh?).

It was at this point, sometime between 1980 and 1982 that Fly states that he no longer wanted to be a Black Panther and decided to ‘reinvent’ and lookout for himself as a person. Basically, he dropped out. Fly quit. This is confirmed in no uncertain terms when he describes being emotionally shaken by the fact that capitalism’s imperialist machine seemed to have railroaded nearly all of his childhood friends into the very ails in which he was confined, but that he would no longer do anything about it. He states, “America had my entire childhood jailed all at once. Shit, if I had been the old Flores, that is Buddha Samurai, swagging and dumb enough to think I could convince these guys that this was not the life they had chosen, I would have attempted to educate, organize, agitate, and just plain

old start some shit and see how far we could push the system. But...I had changed...I decided to avoid these guys and get on with my life. I would not tell them that they had been wronged, simply because that was no longer my job or goal in life. My job and goal was to look out for me.” Can’t get no clearer than that. I may be wrong, and do correct me if I am, but that seems like some foul counter-revolutionary shit to me!

He must have either never been told, or forgotten that the eyes of the future are looking back at us and praying for us to see beyond our time. Anyway, after a 1983 jury trial, Flores was convicted of second degree murder while armed, and sentenced to 8 years imprisonment. The balance of his book deals with his jail and prison experiences and his quest for post-secondary education. Flores eventually receives a masters degree in urban planning in 1989, after his release from prison, and at the time of the 2006 printing of his book he was the Chief Strategic Officer of the Abyssinian Development Corporation in New York City. The brother doesn’t make clear whether he is utilizing his higher educational skills and knowledge in the service of the oppressor class or the oppressed masses before closing out his book. Maybe someone can enlighten us on this point if you are privy to this information. but what I, this Black male born in October 1969, do know, is that I sure wish that the main players would not have walked away from the Party and its righteous mission so nonchalantly. I partially blame those elements for being a factor in my not being even vaguely aware of what the principle contradiction was until I was nearly 36 years old. On the other hand, all of my love, yea my very life, to those of you who have pushed ahead with this struggle of liberation in this class war that we are engaged in, and made sure that the knowledge, wisdom, understanding and practice was there when the people needed you. Out of these ashes we shall rise again and the Black Panther will once more roar. We shall take the cat’s paw and drag the chestnut of imperialism into the fires of the depths of hell. The sacrifices of our martyrs is heavy on my mind, but their deaths only sharpen my fighting spirit, for no defeat is final...they simply reveal lessons to be learned in preparation for the next and greater attack. Out of defeat will arise a new society, and we will know then that we had the courage to once again give body to the rhetorical call: “Will you die with me?” and response: “Yes comrade, I’m with you until death or the day of final liberation.”

All power to the people! Panther power to the vanguard!

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Cover: This issue’s cover is by Jesus Barraza, an activist printmaker based in San Leandro, California. Check out his graphic arts collaboration with Melanie Cervantes: Dignidadrebelde.com

It features the iconic face of Angela Davis, radical Black activist, author and academic, who’s commitment to the struggle is unwavering. She is featured on this Black August cover, in commemoration of her contribution to Black liberation, including her work with the Black Panther Party. She was arrested as a suspected conspirator in the abortive attempt to free George Jackson from a courtroom in Marin County, California, August 7, 1970.

Issue #16 - Introduction

Welcome to the summer 2010, issue 16 of 4SM. We have lots of interesting, important and timely information and analysis for you.

We begin by doing something we rarely do, dedicating this issue to an outstanding individual, a courageous sister, Marilyn Buck. Our primary section is on Black August (BA). You'll find Doc Holiday's historic words on the meaning and principles of BA. This is followed by Akili Castilin's essay on "A Generational Perspective" on BA. There are several other insightful articles in this section, as well as Kazi Toure's run down on the events and significance of August 7, 1970. This August 7 is also the date of the national Running Down The Walls run, and information on that is at the end of this issue. Definitely check it out and join or start a RDTW run in your city or prison.

We have lots of information in "The Struggle Continues" section, on the G8/G20 events in Toronto, Canadian "Prisoners' Justice Day," the CMU in Marion and more.

In the "Revolutionary Analysis and Info" section, our central long piece is by Russell Maroon Shoats, entitled, "The Dragon and the Hydra." This essay adds to the discussion Bill Dunne began in issue 15 with his article on the Tamil struggle in Sri Lanka. The theoretical question raised and discussed was on national liberation struggles and methods of revolutionary organization. 4SM welcomes serious and reasoned revolutionary analysis of these and related issues, especially from political prisoners (PPs) and others, who have hands on experience in these struggles. While 4SM pages are open to PPs and other revolutionaries' criticisms of national liberation as a strategy and various types of revolutionary and guerrilla organizations, this in



no way should be interpreted as 4SM lessening its support for actual revolutionary struggles and professional and fighting organizations. As we clearly state in our general introduction in every issue, "4strugglemag is an independent non-sectarian revolutionary voice. We are unapologetically anti-imperialist and solidly in support of progressive

national liberation, especially the struggles of New African/Black, Mexicano/Chicano, Puerto Rican and Native American Nations presently controlled by u.s. imperialism." There are several other thought provoking articles in this section.

We also have some book reviews, including Marland X's review of a Black Panther Party study, Will You Die with Me?, which readers will learn from.

4SM is always open to your revolutionary thoughts, criticisms and suggestions, poems and graphics too. We will have more reflection from Bill Dunne on the national liberation question, as well as reports back on the RDTW runs in the next issue. See you all in issue 17, out in November, and like and old saying goes, if you don't like the news happening (the wars, the government repression, continuing job losses and house evictions), then go out and make some news of your own!

Freedom Is A Constant Struggle!
Jaan Laaman, editor

Dedication

Ms. Marilyn Buck

In the 1960's and beyond, there was a popular chant/song used in demonstrations, often prior to confronting riot cops and other government forces. Marchers would sing it out, in one loud voice, and even in the face of tear gas and cop violence (much like the good people in Toronto recently faced, when they challenged the G8/G20 meeting in late June), the demonstrators spirits and energy would remain high. Any appropriate name could be inserted in the song/chant. For example: 'We love Nelson Mandela - deep, deep, - said down, down - said deep down in our heart.' Or we could sing: "We love Assata Shakur - deep, deep- said down, down - said deep down in our heart." Or:"We love the Freedom Struggle - deep, deep - said down, down - said deep down in our heart.

So right here and now, I want to say, "We love Marilyn Buck - deep, deep - said down, down - said deep down in our heart!"

It is truly with pleasure and conviction, and the kind of street rally solidarity and militant march energy, that I want to let you know that this issue of 4SM is dedicated to Marilyn Buck, a long held political prisoner sister.

Marilyn is a revolutionary, poet, activist, feminist, organizer, writer, fighter; an anti-imperialist and a true and dependable ally of oppressed people and their revolutionary national liberation struggles. Marilyn is a wonderful human being and even the decades of her harsh imprisonment has not changed that.

TE to attending to the administration of the Party's community survival (pending revolution) programs and various fundraising activities.

Karl Heinrich Marx once expounded, "Only the economic organization is capable of setting on foot a true political party of labor, and thus raise a bulwark against the power of capital." It appears that Comrade Elaine, as BPP Chair-womyn July 1974 to October 1977, was successfully attempting to put this theory into practice, utilizing then liberal capitalists' (viz., the Oakland Mayor and the California Governor) influence to secure the following for the Party: multi-million dollar government contracts for construction projects and control of the thousands of permanent jobs that came with them that could, in turn, be made available to poor and Black people; grants from various philanthropic groups and foundations, government programs and private contributors, which were funneled through the Party's multifaceted 501(c)(3) non-profit apparatus to support and expand the community survival programs and people's revolutionary education complex (these were also funded with some of the money expropriated from the unlicensed drug dealers); and to wrest some leniency from the bourgeois courts when Party members stood before them, etc.

Of course, the capitalist-imperialist pigs would have never conceded any of this ground without the BPP possessing the threat of large-scale organized violence unleashed against the people's class enemies right there within the belly of the beast, had their modest demands not been met, and I am confident that the anti-class-enemy examples then being set by our valiant warriors in the Black Liberation Army were not too far from the devil's reckoning when contemplating these negotiations, but it appears that this hard power (a potent military arm) went to the heads of many of the brothers and had them practicing some very backwards bourgeois socialization tendencies towards the sisters in the party, instead of being the revolutionized new men they were destined to be.

In point-of-fact: While the administrative, overt/aboveground side of this economic and political equation was effectuated mostly by the womyn in the Party (the more familiar forces being Comrades Phyllis Jackson, Joan Kelly, Norma Armour, Regina Davis, and Ericka Huggins), the covert/underground military matters were enforced by a security cadre which was male dominated and chauvinistic in many of its practices, and this oppression of the womyn in the party (amongst other things), when left unchecked and allowed to run wild (such as when Huey was allowed to call all of the shots during the 1970-1974 and July 1977-1982 periods), would prove to be the Party's ultimate undoing. Our lesson is that the oppression and exploitation of womyn is a politically and morally indefensible reactionary tendency which marries the movement to failure. Remember this: sex is not a class...class is sexless...class is amorphous in point of sex. The sister will

not be free without the brother, nor the brother without the sister, so let us keep our shit together in this area from here on out. But back to these ugly facts: in her autobiography, Elaine described the physical beatings and compulsive/peer-pressure sexual encounters endured by some of the sisters in the Party at the hands of the Brothers, and that some of the Buddha Samurai brothers' (post-Huey 1977 return) blatantly disregarded Party rules and discipline, as well as reverted to the physical beatings of the sisters for perceived slights (real or imagined), and rampant drug usage and abuse, all with the explicit blessings of Huey who refused Elaine's pleas that he put these patriarchal proclivities in check forthwith. Elaine had this mess eliminated while Huey was in exile in Cuba, 1974-1977, but his return to the states was used as a cover by the brothers to start the bullshit up again, and this forced Elaine to walk away from the Party and Huey's indifference. Elaine's last act in the Party was to call a Central Committee meeting to discuss these matters, but in his book, Flores tells us that during this October 1977 confab (minus Elaine, who was in the wind after scheduling the meeting) the only thing that the sisters were concerned with was getting permission (reversal of a party rule) to sate and sex men who were not members of the BPP, just as the male Party members were already allowed to do. Now, that seems like a pretty narrow agenda considering the broad range of negative conditions then confronting these sisters (and even that narrow proposal was voted down by the brothers along gender lines), but that's how it went down according to Fly in this book. I think that a transcription of the minutes of that Central Committee gathering would be a really good teaching point for us on this subject matter if we could ever procure such, but that will have to await another day. I just need to repeat here the maxims that "Brothers, the Sisters are not our stronger-halves or our weaker-halves, but are our other-halves; Our womyn hold up half the sky, and a people and their communities are not conquered until the



duction, consumption and distribution to the people, the masses. After this Oakland base of operations, this socialism stronghold, was firmly established, the plan was to move to higher ground by deploying sorties to relaunch the revolutionary process in other major and strategic parts of the U.S. empire. It was, thus, that many of the chapters and branches of the BPP were shuttered and their forces concentrated in Oakland; this, in addition to the problems arising from the Huey/Eldridge split.

Now, this Brother Huey, he was no fool, and Flores tells us that it was during this 1972 transition that Huey created this elite grouping of military operatives known as the Buddha Samurai to handle specialized high-vale security detail and deal with the grimy street operations that Huey styled as the “stern stuff” of organized violence aimed at the lumpen proletariat and petite-bourgeoisie elements engaged in the “illegal” drug trade. Members of this selected elite grouping were said to be some of the most trusted and talented elements of the Party and included both brothers and sisters capable of both attending to the daily administrative and traditional work of the Party (Buddha) and carrying out decisive military operations (Samurai). Fly would be appointed to this security cadre, then headed by Raymond “Masai” Hewitt, who made it a priority to train and drill these members daily so that they would be highly organized and deserving of the “elite” tagging.

However, from the surface information supplied by Flores in this book, I think that this magnificent unit was somewhat misapplied by Huey (something else I perceive could have been prevented, had the BPP’s Central Committee existed in more than political theatre form), as he directed their greatest energies to levying street taxes on the Bay Area’s unlicensed drug dealers and speakeasy owners. While I fully appreciate all of the valid justification for that tack, for reasons I have yet to see anyone explain, Huey did not aim these shock troops at the empire’s licensed drug dealers (viz., doctors, pharmacies/drug stores, monopoly pharmaceutical companies and their lobbyists and the lawmakers, executive branch members and armed pig enforcers who created this class distinction and made it possible for the bourgeoisie drug trade to flourish), or the establishment elements who were misusing the sales and income taxes already being levied on the speakeasy owners and street dope boyz by the enemy state apparatus. Was such a tack a major strategic error on the BPP’s part? This point deserves greater analysis from our thinkers. Not surprisingly, these street elements joined forces and not only placed a \$10,000 bounty on Huey’s head, but also killed that brilliant brain of his by giving him the tried and true chemical lobotomy, getting him addicted to the very dope he was taxing and trying to suppress.

Fly relates one instance where a few members of this Buddha Samurai guerrilla clique and Huey went to a speak easy to “hold court,” and the do’ boyz laid an Al Pacino/

Scarface high (6 to 8 inches) mountain of that girl (cocaine) in front of Huey and proceeded to snort a lot of that shit up his nose with a \$100 bill and a straw. As I read this, I kept having flashbacks to the Fall 2008 season of BET’s American Gangster series, where the wife or daughter of Sanyika Shakur (f/k/a LA CRIP “Monster” Kody Scott) observed that a person cannot lead a revolution and be a drug addict at the same time (the sister was lamenting the fact that Comrade Sanyika had exited the hard-cell prison walls with so much scientific socialist insight and potential to lead the next great push forward because of his influence in the streets, but he had let the significant pressures of leading such a movement drive him to abusing the drugs and had, thus, missed that opportunity). These are major opportunities for true liberation that have been blown, my people, partially because of this damn cult of personality taking over (as opposed to democratic centralism and a strong no-nonsense Central Committee guiding the party) and a certain amount of selfishness on the part of our leaders. We cannot have a Party that glorifies our leaders by heaping sickening adulation upon them and cloaking them in an aura of infallibility. Taking such a course of action is akin to the sickness which is the Catholic church and their ‘infallible’ pope (no human being is without error or mistake, and you are ill if you believe otherwise) and introduces a ‘cult of personality’ into our ranks which will do infinite harm. w communists take an oath of fidelity and total subjugation not to any 1 person, but rather to the programme, party line, and the self-determination and liberation of the people. Class struggle – this is where our revolutionary duty lies. Don’t get it twisted! We must correct for this if we are to make any great leap forward any time soon, and I would urge that the movement be ever mindful of the enemy’s strategy of utilizing the drug angle in various ways to kill off our revolutionary potential.

Eventually, as told to us by Comrade Sister Elaine in her autobiography, the Brother Masai (BPP Minister of Education) called Huey and the so-called Central Committee out in 1972 for not practicing what they were preaching, viz. democratic centralism, and stated that the BPP’s Central Committee was nothing more than a rubber-stamping group of rank-and-filers in reality; Huey retaliated against this truth-telling by busting the Brother down in rank and duties, which in-turn forced Masai to walk away from the Party over principle. Fly states that it was after Comrade Masai resigned that he was appointed to head the Buddha Samurai, much to the consternation of other Party members who thought him too young and inexperienced to be charged with such great responsibility. Despite these protestations, Fly would apparently handle his duties with deft adroitness and would be promoted to the Assistant chief of Staff and Party Armorer position two years later in 1974 after Elaine assumed leadership of the Party, thus solidifying his leadership position of the Buddha Samurai security cadres, where he reports that he did everything from assuring the quality and availability of the necessary weaponry/

4SM doesn’t normally dedicate issues to one person, but dedicating this summer issue, which features Black August and the struggles germane to the Black - New African liberation struggle within the u.s., is especially fitting. Marilyn is a life long dependable ally of the Black liberation struggle and she is in captivity today for her direct support of the freedom struggle of Black people.

We, your comrades and friends, salute you and embrace you Marilyn. We urge readers, especially younger people, to look at and learn from the life, words, acts and spirit of this woman. Marilyn Buck --- live like her.

With respect and revolutionary love
-- Jaan Laaman, editor

Update from Soffiyah Elijah, Marilyn’s lawyer: Marilyn is coming home next month. Her release is certain. Many thanks to all her supporters who have joined her in morning meditations. No letters to the prison officials are needed or advisable. Please continue to keep her in your prayers and meditations.

Warrior-Poet Marilyn Buck: No Wall Too Tall

BY MARIANN G. WIZARD
Reprinted from *The Rag Blog*: theragblog.blogspot.com

Supporters call for release: Free Austin’s Marilyn Buck!

AUSTIN, Texas -- Marilyn Buck and I have been friends since 1966, a world or so ago. For the two and a half decades that her life has been narrowly circumscribed by a prison cell, our friendship has remained strong through all too few visits, many letters, phone calls, books shared, other friends met, and poems critiqued.

But before that, there were her fabulous boots, working together on *The Rag* (Austin’s pioneering underground paper), Students for a Democratic Society, my husband George Vizard, our well-meant matchmaking, George’s death, GI organizing, hippie dancing, every visit I ever made to San Francisco, and unconditional love.

For all its state-imposed limits, Marilyn is one of my closest and dearest friends, one of those, for me, of whom *The Who* sang, “You can count ‘em on your one hand.” I mention this only to let you know up front that mine is not an unbiased report. And there are hundreds of people around the world who love her as much as I do. She has earned every bit of our affection.

Marilyn Buck dared to dream of a world without racism, without American imperialism. More important, for those

who dream this dream today, she dared to act. She dared to try to make this dream a reality. For her acts of selfless courage on behalf of victims of American criminal behavior, Marilyn has spent 25 years as a political prisoner of the United States government.

A year ago, it looked as if Marilyn’s long exile from the free world was coming to an end. After uncounted rejections, a new hearing brought a positive decision: she would be released on parole in August 2010! Supporters in the Bay Area began to raise funds for her expected transition.

She’d never talked about what she would do when -- or if -- she was released. When you’re doing an 80-year sentence, you do it, as they say, “one day at a time.” Suddenly she was full of questions: “What kind of computer should I get, a laptop or a desk top?” Like most prison inmates, she’s never been in cyberspace. (I told her to get a smart phone for the first six months and see if she even needs a computer.)

Unconvinced that digital cameras are now as good as film, the gifted photographer talked about how she might find work in a darkroom. Although she’s tried hard to stay in touch with social and technological changes, it’s hard to do so behind the bricks and razor wire fence, with your legs in shackles any time you’re moved, restricted in every daily choice.

But she was coming out. Nothing else mattered.

Then, last December, right around her 62nd birthday, she was diagnosed with a rare form of uterine cancer, a sarcoma, dangerous as a rattlesnake, potentially lethal. Another friend sent me a clinical description of the disease, but I couldn’t bear to read it all the way through.

Marilyn had symptoms for months before diagnostic tests were made, but not wanting any “fuss” over herself, not wanting to worry her friends, she kept her “health issues” vague and low-key with most people she spoke to or corresponded with, while she and her lawyer tried to get medical tests done.

Health care in the federal Bureau of Prisons is not renowned for its excellence. But, as her friend Penny Schoner reminded me gently, “This is a woman who wakes up every morning thinking about the plight of women in Afghanistan and Palestine, not about herself.”

Marilyn had surgery in the Bay Area pretty quickly after the diagnosis was made and should have started chemotherapy six weeks later, when the surgical wounds had healed. But when she was finally admitted in mid-March to Carswell Federal Medical Center in Ft. Worth, where thousands of seriously ill federal prisoners are treated, the tests performed revealed new tumors and growths outside the original cancer site.

Now at last, the chemo has started, and she is full of hope. She has so much pent-up energy, so many dreams, desires, abilities, concerns -- so much life to live! Her experiences in America's prisons have illuminated a hundred worthwhile projects and pressing needs to which she wants to contribute, as well as a whole new world of experiences that so far she has been denied.

Marilyn was accused of sensational acts of insurrection -- including jail break, bombings, and a robbery attempt in which two police officers were shot and died. Many otherwise liberal-minded Americans are unable to get past the violence of the confrontations between the police and the small groups of Black and white revolutionaries with whom Buck was linked. Many committed leftists criticized the militants as foolhardy adventurers.

Neither give due weight to the extraordinary repressive measures undertaken by the U.S. government to crush lawful dissent against unjust policies at home and abroad. Behind the shadow of COINTELPRO (the FBI's Counter Intelligence Program), law enforcement agencies operated outside the rule of law against Movement activists. To be an African-American dissident, especially, meant walking around with a "shoot-to-kill" sign pinned on your chest. Being Black or Brown or Red, or even white and "hippie-looking," was to face hatred and brutality (and possible death) day and night at the hands of racist white police and their allies in the U.S. Justice Department.

Marilyn Buck saw her friends being hunted down like dogs on the streets of Oakland. It may be that the murder of her friend (and my husband) George Vizard, in the summer of 1967 in Austin, by person or persons then unknown, also led to her belief that right action lay in helping victims of oppression defend themselves, as the saying went, "by any means necessary."

Part of Marilyn's story is told on a website, Friends of Marilyn Buck, created by friends and supporters. There is a lot more to her story of activism, self-sacrifice, and achievement. But it is her story to tell, and she's not yet able to tell it -- and, until she is free, perhaps not yet able to see it whole.

Meanwhile, the simple facts, and a few errors (e.g., she was born in Temple, Texas, not Jasper, as Wikipedia reports), are scattered in bits and pieces through Wikipedia entries, *New York Times* archives, and websites of various organizations supporting the rights of political prisoners in the U.S. and abroad.

After a 1973 arrest for buying two boxes of ammunition under a false name, Marilyn Buck was sentenced to 10 years in federal prison. It was a harsh sentence for the actual crime, but those were harsh times.

It's not unreasonable, given the circumstances, to suspect that the real accusation against Buck was that a middle-class, educated white woman had acted as quartermaster for the Black Liberation Army, an offshoot of the Black Panther Party. She was charged and convicted for the same reason that University of California professor Angela Davis had been arrested: she gave material support to Black people to defend themselves against white supremacist attacks and the racist police who allowed and, in some cases, even enabled them.

After four years at Alderson (West Virginia) Federal Women's Prison -- and after being denied parole for, I think, the third time -- Marilyn was given a furlough to consult with her lawyers. She didn't come back.

During the next few years Marilyn allegedly participated in the prison escape of BLA leader Assata Shakur, a bank robbery to assist the New Afrikan independence movement, and, with other militant activists, was involved in a concussion-bombing of the U.S. Capitol to protest the U.S. invasion of Grenada and the bombing of Lebanon by U.S. warships.

When she was captured in 1985 and charged in what became known as the "Resistance Conspiracy case," she and three women co-defendants took a plea to secure the release of a male co-defendant, a physician whose non-Hodgkin's lymphoma had recurred in prison. Marilyn received a total sentence of 80 years.

As a prisoner, Marilyn has always embodied the old-school principle, "Don't mourn, organize!" Ever since her first arrest, she has steadfastly resisted diverting "movement resources" to her defense or benefit. In her interactions, she directs attention away from her personal inconveniences as a high-security prisoner (she is considered a "terrorist" by the government) to social and political issues -- or at least to the personal lives of her friends and correspondents with whom she unfailingly empathizes, even when pointing out occasionally that I'm being whiny.

Her character is like the finest steel: it resists



Left: Marilyn Buck in her trademark boots, at offices of the San Francisco Express-Times, 1968. Photo by Jeff Blankfort.

cist to taste the bitterness of our wrath. Nonviolence must constantly demonstrate the effects of its implied opposite. The dialectic between Narodnik and Nihilist should never break down." and "we may advance a simple rule here: the likelihood of significant social change in the United States may be gauged by the extent to which the covert, armed, guerrilla aspect of the struggle is developed and consolidated...If on the other hand,...leadership is able to successfully do what amounts to the work of the state, that is to say, to convince most people to shy away from armed struggle, and to isolate those who do undertake to act as guerrilla from the mass of support which should rightly be theirs, then the revolution will be forestalled." To be sure, even Karl Heinrich Marx stated on different occasions that "force is the midwife of every old society which is pregnant with a new one"; and that "the weapon of criticism is no substitute for criticism by weapons. Material force must be opposed by material force." Even the ruling class' running dogs and power elite understand this critical dynamic; Witness:

"Our people understand that the guys with the guns make the rules!" -Wayne LaPierre, National Rifle Association CEO and Executive Vice President, speaking at the annual Conservative Political Action Conference ("C-PAC") February 28, 2009.

and

"You got to get a mental attitude that these guys can't really hurt us. They're not going to shoot us. It's not Iraq. Worst thing can happen to us is we run up a bunch of legal fees... and might have to pay a fine..." -U.S. Senator Ted Stevens, caught on tape by the FBI in 2006 in a telephone conversation with oilman Bill J. Allen, discussing the corruption/bribery probe against them. The tape was played at his jury trial on October 6, 2008.

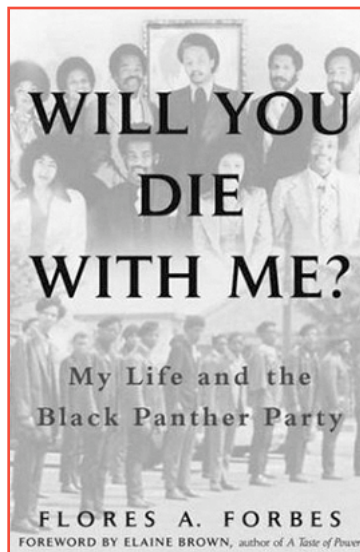
So, we see that the oft-stated position that Eldridge had his theory and reading of the concrete conditions messed up, and that Huey was correct and only he could be right and, thus, Eldridge was wrong, was a horrible misreading of reality. But these brothers, and the ones who followed them to the extreme of waging death matches against their BPP comrades, failed to pick up on the untenable nature of dealing in absolutes and the necessity of unifying these two concepts for the movement to progress in any significant manner, and when this was combined with the death blow concoction of COINTELPRO disinformation and disruption campaigns, super-large egos, minds clouded by too much drug usage (effective chemical lobotomies no doubt), and a paper BPP Central Committee that never voted on this critical matter and just let Huey be the decider rather than practice democratic centralism...well, history is best qualified to reward our research: everything eventually went to shit, with the Party eventually completely disintegrating and the truly committed revolutionaries in both

factions either dropping out, being shot and put in earthen graves, or suffering living deaths and isolation via the cold prison doors or exiled to communities located outside of the belly-of-the-beast. Fly saw this coming, relating in his book that "I thought my world was coming apart before I even got started." He states that he eventually backed Huey's position because he assumed that the Party wasn't ready to continue engaging in armed guerrilla warfare actions due to the fact that the organization had suffered significant losses of life in only a little over 3 years time and this was thought to be unsustainable when it was a known fact that wards of liberation of protracted events that span decades.

This position, which Comrade Elaine Brown took also, reminds this reviewer of an observation that one of empire's devils made: "a few funerals tend to have a quieting influence." It also occurs to me that, in addition to the well-reasoned analysis of concrete conditions that underlined Huey's position, there existed some unspoken desire amongst that faction to somehow escape the destiny that held that "the revolutionist is a doomed man" (Sergei Nechaiev and Michael Bakunin's *Catechism*), that "in revolution, one wins or dies" (Ernesto "Che" Guevara de la Serna) and that "A true revolutionary realizes that if he is sincere, death is imminent. The things he is saying and doing are extremely dangerous. Without this realization, it is pointless to proceed as a revolutionary." (Huey, "The Correct Handling of a Revolution" July 20, 1967, a little over 3 years before this 1971 purge mess came along). I think that this fear fully manifested itself just 6 years later, when in October 1977, Huey tells Elaine that the Party had not been all that mattered in life to him and that "I don't want to save the world [anymore]. I just want to be Huey." (See Elaine's autobiography, *A Taste of Power*).

Fly tells us that by 1972, Huey believed the Party to be spread too thin over 42 chapters, with money being seriously drained from Party coffers, and with many BPP members, including the leadership, having no idea who most of their own Party members were, which was a recipe for easy infiltration of the Party apparatus by enemy state agents. Brother Huey had the idea that the Party should close ranks, regroup and rejuvenate along the lines of the exemplar laid down by Chairman Mao's 1934 Long March to the southwest Shan-his province in China (of note: only 6,000 of the original 100,000 Chinese people who started this march made it to the destination alive), by executing a 5-year plan that would culminate with the BPP securing political control of the city of Oakland, California and its lucrative containerized sea port in order to "wrest, by degrees, all capital from the bourgeoisie, centralize all instruments of production in the hands of the proletariat organized as the ruling class, and increase the total of productive forces as rapidly as possible." (see *The Communist Manifesto*)---Essentially, the effective dictatorship of the proletariat, designed to return the benefits of pro-

As noted earlier, this book, this weapon in our arsenal, is a soldier's surface telling of the operations of the BPP's West Coast military and security apparatus. Such stories are important to communicate because we, being materialists, understand that there will be no revolution in the fascist state of america without an army because under such conditions, politics and war are inseparable. So, we find gems dropped here such as the procurement of arms and ammo from renegade or sympathetic members of the empire's military forces (and the necessity to immediately transfer this technical equipment (TE) to another area of the country, in order to thwart the snitches and raids); the deployment of nomadic 'goon' squads to conduct criticism/self-criticism sessions, impose disciplinary sanctions, root out infiltrators and conduct necessary purges; the construction of soundproof indoor shooting ranges in the basements of homes, and practicing on them with simulated bullets (plastic rounds with a smaller amount of gunpowder than usual); practicing gun safety in order to eliminate accidental discharges of weapons and just plain ole' stupidity from the equation; and finding the right books for guidance on how to correctly execute your job. For example, an armorer should have the small arms of the world encyclopedia; particulars on conducting security guard duty/watch detail over BPP offices, so as to prevent break-ins and raids (eg. using 2-person teams at a minimum... 1 inside, 1 outside, and rotating); the fortification of BPP offices and pads with wire fences, multiple 10 feet deep tunnels running away from the property, eagles' and snipers' nests, sandbags, gun ports with wire mesh to prevent tear gas from being tossed into your defensive location, steel plates for the windows, floodlights and the trench systems, etc; the movement of warriors who had been in shootouts with the fascist pigs to safe houses in other parts of the country or world; the creation and maintenance of safe houses; particulars on assuring the safety and security of Party members; learning to dress in and be comfortable with business attire in order to thwart easy identification by hostiles; learning to tell the difference between 7.62 mm and 7.62 x 39 ammo (former is for American m60, the latter for the Russian AK-47); moving sensitive material from place-to-place in innocuous containers such as clothing bags, briefcases and trunks; trafficking sensitive items during rush hours; learning proper combat handgun shooting techniques such as the weaver stance; and applying urban guerrilla texts' techniques to the unique conditions presented by U.S. streets, etc. I wish he would have given the reader some specific and detailed lessons learned in this last area of concern, but



alas, the tome is lacking such critical information.

But don't get it twisted; it was not all blood and guts/ fighting to destroy the enemy's military strength for these particular Party members. Indeed, they were tasked with recognizing that as vanguard elements they were a propagandist and organizer of the revolution. So, Brother Flores doesn't neglect to tell of how he and other Party members also undertook the arduous task of carrying on minute and detailed political and mass work by establishing Party chapters and branches in new territories; selling the Party's newspaper organ; attempting to establish people's red political power in the halls of city, state and federal government, so that government would administer to the needs of the people; and organizing community survival programs which helped the masses meet their daily needs and defend themselves while the Party guided them to the level of consciousness where they would seize the time, act against those who continue to oppress and exploit them, and institute a human and equitable society. Unfortunately, the BPP would eventually disintegrate and let the hourglass pass into ashes. But this reviewer sees something on the distant horizon. We as a people are destroyed, but not quite yet conquered, for the Panther spirits live on and the truth is not extinguished in our hearts, their progeny.

Flores gets into the major 1971 defection/purge that went down in the BPP, splitting the Party into factions following either Comrades Huey Percy Newton and David Hilliard, or Eldridge Cleaver. Fly states that he went with Huey's idea which was to de-emphasize the gun and armed self-defense as its primary means of addressing the conditions which the Party confronted and relating to the community, and elevate and expand the Party's work with the Service to the People survival programs, conquering of political offices via participation in electoral politics, and community economic development. Eldridge, on the other hand, wanted to seriously ramp up the organized offensive-defensive military actions against the enemy state ('Babylon' as he so eloquently styled it), making it very clear to the empire that we, as the vanguard, would indeed give body to the rhetoric of 'by any means necessary' in this class war of liberation. Both of these men were correct, of course, as (quoting Comrade Brother George again) "politics is violence [and] we must never delude ourselves into thinking that we can seize power from a position of weakness, with half measures, polite programs, righteous indignation and loud entreaties. If this agitation that we like to term as non-violent is to have any meaning at all, we must force the fas-

corrosion, shakes off the grime of daily use, and shines forth. Her level-headedness alone is enough to make her a valued friend!

Despite her selflessness, an active support group has grown up with members all over the world. It is centered in San Francisco, across the bay from Dublin Federal Correctional Center where Marilyn was sent after human-rights lawsuits forced the closure of a brand-new "supermax" prison in Marianna, Florida, where she began her second incarceration.

She has been upheld throughout her captivity by a multicultural, multi-gendered group of working class supporters, poets, former prisoners, prison reform activists and others, enabled to buy postage stamps, prepaid phone minutes, paper and pens, and kept in books and periodicals (she's a daily reader of the *New York Times*).

During those years, Marilyn became an accomplished, highly acclaimed poet and translator, the result, she says, of being "a censored person. In defiance, I turned to poetry, an art of speaking sparsely, but flagrantly." Marilyn's poems can be found in many collections, in her chapbook, *Rescue the Word*, and on her CD *Wild Poppies*. She was awarded the P.E.N. American Center poetry award in 2001.

Marilyn has developed a significant artistic talent as a sculptor; organized prisoners to raise funds for AIDS education through a pledge walk-a-thon; and taught untold hundreds of other women how to read, how to think things through, and how to survive and even transcend their prison sentences. She has mentored and inspired scores of poets inside and outside the walls.

All along, her principled conduct has brought many new friends and supporters along with the old. She had a steady stream of visitors at Dublin FCI, including sixties radical icons and the now-grown children of friends and former neighbors. She corresponds with poets and artists around the world. Thirty or more poets participated in making *Wild Poppies*, including South Africa's liberation laureate Dennis Brutus and Amiri Baraka (formerly known as Le-Roi Jones), who introduces the compilation.

Both of Marilyn's parents passed away during her incarceration, and she could neither see them before their deaths nor attend their funeral services. There have been other serious personal hardships, but that was, I think, the most difficult for her to bear. Even the shock of the 9-11 terrorist attacks in 2001, when Marilyn -- along with scores of other prisoners in many facilities around the country, completely uninvolved in the attacks -- was suddenly removed from her cell and placed in solitary confinement, without access to her attorneys for many days, didn't really compare with not being able to properly mourn her parents.

Marilyn's Episcopal minister father, Louis Buck, was a

noted Austin civil rights activist when I first got involved in that cause as a college freshman in 1965. I heard about Dr. Buck, and met him once or twice, before I ever met his daughter. Marilyn had an upper-middle-class private school education, but crosses had been burned on the family lawn north of the University of Texas campus. When her father's denomination defrocked him because he started an integrated congregation that still exists today, Austin's St. James Episcopal, he became a veterinarian to support his family.

Early on, Marilyn saw that racism was wrong, that she needed to oppose it, and that those with the political power to make changes could not be counted upon to do the right thing. Ironically, her dad sent her to college at the University of California at Berkeley to keep her away from the crazy radicals (SDS and others) at UT Austin. Smart as a whip and curious about everything, the innocent young lady who went to "Berzerkly" soon discovered psychedelics, rock music, and "high" society.

Despite the protection the elder Bucks attempted to provide their daughter, there was no hiding place for anyone with a minimal curiosity about national and world affairs on the college campuses of 1965-66. When she returned to Austin the following summer, she and I, and George, became fast friends. We were fascinated with her West Coast sophistication; she with our close-knit and eclectic community of activists, artists, musicians, and dopers. It was in Austin that she joined Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), worked on *The Rag*, and met a national SDS organizer on his way out of town. She went with him.

In Chicago, she worked in the SDS National Office and edited *New Left Notes*, the group's national news organ, then returned alone to the Bay Area, with a sharply honed and newly militant outlook on the state of the world and what needed to be done to change it.

There she worked with Third World Newsreel; this was back when video cameras weighed 30-plus pounds and needed two people to operate, running in tandem through the tear gas-choked streets, taping demonstrations as the San Francisco TAC Squad closed in! It wasn't long before she met and became friends with members of Bay Area Black liberation groups.

Nor was it long before she emerged as a target of special interest in FBI COINTELPRO operations against the Black Panthers and other anti-imperialist organizations.

So why, now, with parole already scheduled and her serious illness, is she still imprisoned at all? She's been incarcerated longer than most other political prisoners of the Sixties. Former Chicago Black Panther, working class artist, and Houston's "Mayor of da 5th Ward" Robert al-Walee says, "If Marilyn was a Black woman, she would

be free by now; there would have been a public outcry for her release.”

Lee compares Buck to famed abolitionist leader John Brown, demonized in the American historical record. Whites who stand steadfastly against racism and discrimination become “race traitors,” and the label of “terrorist” -- by which Brown was also known -- drives away liberal support. Assata Shakur, who has lived in exile in Havana, Cuba, for many years, agrees. She wrote, “When I think of Marilyn as a preacher’s daughter, I think of her as someone who wrestled with the moral problems of our times and who was not afraid to take principled positions around those issues.”

Marilyn had a choice. She could have remained silent; she could have reaped the benefits of white-skin privilege. But instead she chose the path of righteousness. She has defended the have-nots, the powerless, and as a woman she has struggled for the liberation of all women. The only reason that she remains incarcerated is because of her political activism.

She needs and deserves the support of all those who are committed to freedom and the abolition of pain and suffering on this earth. She deserves to be supported, she deserves to be respected, and she deserves to be free. Austin author and “candyman” Robert King, a former prisoner and Panther activist at Louisiana’s notorious Angola Prison, where his two comrades from the Angola 3, Herman Wallace and Albert Woodfox, remain imprisoned, expressed his wishes for Buck’s recovery and remarked on her “indomitable spirit.” He says, “Marilyn’s self-directed commitment shows her evolution towards the ideal of the revolutionary ‘New Wo/Man’ of whom George Jackson spoke. This is what enables her to weather the storms of life. She has given so much and has asked for nothing. She has kept the faith and continues to fight the good fight. She will always have my love and respect. Kathleen Cleaver, professor of law at both Yale and Emory Universities and a veteran of both the Black Panther Party and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), states that “Marilyn has always been stalwart and devoted in her dedication to the liberation of Black and all op-

pressed peoples. Unlike some, she never withdrew from that struggle.”

Akwasi Evans, editor and publisher of Austin’s *NOKOA: The Observer*, is another long-time admirer. He says, “Marilyn Buck is a truly courageous woman who sacrificed her liberty in the struggle for the liberation of all of America’s oppressed. She has paid a great price for her crimes against capitalist exploitation and ought to be released from prison now so she can fight her cancer in freedom instead of incarceration! Marilyn’s support has always been strong in the Black community and among ‘minorities’ in general. But some of us, her white sisters and brothers, may have let her slip from mindfulness. She dared to support with deeds what we only said we supported: the right of oppressed people to defend themselves.”

Her experience underground, after her 1977 escape from prison, is of special relevance today. Marilyn has had a long time to meditate upon the mutually reinforcing beliefs, held then by some, that armed revolution was imminent and that the duty of the revolutionary was to make a revolution. Reading her letters, poems, and essays over all these years, I’ve seen her extraordinary evolution, witnessed the maturation of an articulate, responsible, disciplined, ethical mind.



In prison but clearly in bloom Marilyn Buck at Dublin FCI, 1994. Photo / The Rag Blog.

In her 1999 master’s thesis in fine arts (she’s earned undergraduate and graduate degrees by correspondence while incarcerated), she wrote, “The artist creates the concept and framework for a different cultural paradigm. Political speeches, leaflets, and pamphlets that exhort and condemn the old oppressive order rarely do that. Without the imagination, there is little daring to confront the old.” We need her out here in the world; need her insight, her experience, and her creative imagination. I can’t wait to hear her speak freely.

[James Retherford and Sarito Carol Neiman contributed to this article. Mariann Wizard, a Sixties radical activist and contributor to *The Rag*, Austin’s underground newspaper, is a poet, a professional science writer specializing in natural health therapies, and a regular contributor to *The Rag Blog*.]

Book Review:

Will You Die With Me? My Life and the Black Panther Party, by Flores A. Forbes. Atria Publishing, 2006. 320 pp.

BY MARLAND X

The Black Panther Communist Party for Self-Defense (BPP) manifested itself in many forms during the era of 1966-1982. This book is a surface telling of the story of the BPP’s West Coast military arm, and especially of its underground covert operations executed from 1972 to 1977 by the “Buddha Samurai,” a politico-military organized group of BPP brothers and sisters (mostly brothers) who were so serious about their craft that comrade sister Ericka Huggins once observed that “their reputations would make [notorious 1930s Harlem gangster] bumpy Johnson shit his pants.” It is an autobiographical soldier’s story as told by brother Flores (aka Fly), former BPP Central Committee member and head of “the fold” (slang for this elite security grouping).

Brother Flores kicks off this tome by taking you on a brief journey throughout his adolescent years, during which he conveys the conditions that heightened his consciousness of the degenerate nature of the racist enemy state apparatus in north america, which included, amongst other things, the oak stick therapy session he suffered at age 14 at the hands of armed pig police elements, the housing discrimination his Navy family experienced in the U.S. Navy stronghold of San Diego, California, the fact that his parents struggled to survive economically in this capitalist board game even after his father “retired” from the imperialist U.S. Navy, and his introduction to the radical ideas of comrades Frantz Fanon and Malcolm X and the BPP through his college-attending brother’s book and newspaper collection which put a lot of this shit in its proper perspective for him. Flores and his brother, Fred, would eventually seek out BPP membership as a vehicle to help them rectify this oppression that their expanding political consciousness had heightened their awareness of.

History teaches that strong and effective organizations are usually composed of people who have a vision that is rooted deep down within their beings and lies at the core of what they believe themselves to be, believe in and value in life. When it comes to movements advocating socialism and communism, comrade Lenin put forth the thesis that “without a revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movements,” and that “the role of vanguard fighter can be fulfilled only by a Party that is guided by the most advanced theory.” Comrade Mao Tse-Tung echoes this truth concerning communist theory, by stating that “we should regard it not as dogma, but as a guide to action. Studying it is not merely a matter of learning terms and phrases, but of learning...the science of revolution.” In this book, Fly points out one of the oft overlooked practices that made

the BPP so strong whenever we hear tales of the Party at its best: the mandatory political education (“PE”) classes, where participants were led to the fountain of scientific socialism and shown how to drink deeply therefrom, with reading and explanation/comprehension sessions, until their feet were firmly planted on the rockbed of fact and pure reason.

As the Party’s San Diego Branch founder and Defense Captain, comrade Kenny Denman, states to the young Fly, “This is hard work and a dangerous thing we are doing... People are getting killed, and you need to know what this is about.” Fly relates to us that “fighting had occurred to me as a way to wage revolution, but not reading. This stuff included using your brain and having functional skills that would make the organization work smoothly.” So it is that we find Flores’ grounding, the basis that would eventually make him and other BPP cadre forces to be reckoned with. These beautiful brothers and sisters could not be marginalized because they understood what was going on socially, politically and economically, and knew that they were fighting for themselves and the people. Ergo, the Panther slogan “power to the people” always reminds people that this whole thing was about class struggle, which often broke out into hot class warfare which made the antagonism between the oppressors and oppressed very sharp and clear. A revolutionary party must be on message, and this is accomplished by achieving and uniformity and unity in the mode of thought amongst party members which deliver truths about processes in the material world.

Our method of thinking about and analyzing the world is called dialectical materialism. If you don’t do this and you just cling to generalities and assumptions, you will kill yourself with the fated “crisis in thought” phenomena, where the main thrust of the movement is on random activities rather than being based on thought, education and clear objective; the membership is espousing various opinions and compounding the problem of non-unified thought; and, the vacuum is filled with viewpoints and positions of hostile ideologies, lack of understanding among members and cliques and the breeding of mistrust and enmity among various factions in the party. Unfortunately, as time wore on during the era in question, less and less emphasis was places on the PE classes in the BPP and both the crisis in thought and the pig infiltration of the party ranks set in. We cannot afford to make this mistake again, and we would do well to remember comrade George Lester Jackson’s charge on this point: “Full commitment generally comes as a result of awareness, and awareness is the product of study and observation. The things a person has gone to the effort of reading and analyzing say a great deal about his character. In other words, very few Black intelligence agents will have studied Marx, Mao, Lenin, Fanon, cats like that in depth. You can generally tell what process a man’s mind has gone through by what he’s studied, observed.” We must move as a cohesive unit...this starts with education.

Book Review:

The Greatest Threat, by Marshall Edward Conway, 2009, iAMWE Publications, P.O. Box 4628, Baltimore MD 21212, 222 pages, \$12.95 + \$5.00 shipping

BY SUNDIATA ACOLI

Marshall Edward Conway has done an excellent job of making the case for Political Prisoners (PP) and Prisoners of War (POW) in the U.S. Although the American government does not recognize PP/POWs, Eddie Conway, formerly a key member of the Baltimore Black Panther Party (BPP), is widely recognized as a PP by Left political movements both national and international. In 1969, the FBI labeled the BPP “the greatest threat” to the internal security of the U.S. In 1970, Eddie was arrested and subsequently convicted for the shooting death of a city policeman. He remains in prison to date.

Eddie maintains that a small ragtag BPP of 5000 to 8000 members with a few raggedy shot guns was never a serious threat to a combined U.S. military/police force of millions but it was the POLITICS of the BPP which was the “greatest threat”; thus in the eyes of the FBI it had to be destroyed.

The government used an illegal COUNTER INTELLIGENCE PROGRAM, COINTELPRO, as its main weapon to destroy a legitimate political organization, the BPP, by killing, exiling or imprisoning many of its members and leaders, scores of whom remain imprisoned today, 40 years later.

In addition to COINTELPRO, the CIA, National Security Agency (NSA), Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), Army Intelligence (AI), and other government agencies also engaged in illegal and unconstitutional actions against Black and other political organs of the era: the American Indian Movement, Weather Underground Organization, Puerto Rican Independentistas, Brown Berets, I WOR QUEN, MOVE, United Freedom Front, etc., in order to silence political dissent.

The class of prisoners which Eddie Conway identifies as PP/POWs is largely made up of victims of COINTELPRO and combatants resisting the repression resulting from COINTELPRO. The Senate Committee tasked with CORRECTING GOVERNMENT ABUSES under COINTELPRO only issued statements and made suggestions. It wrote: “The American people need to be assured that NEVER AGAIN will ...the government...conduct a secret war against those citizens it considers a threat to established order,” but the question of the status of the victims of that secret war was left untouched by the Committee.

Other nations who addressed dirty wars on populations during that same period have released their PPs: United

Kingdom vs Irish Republican Army (IRA), South Afrika vs Afrikan National Congress (ANC), Germany vs Red Army Faction (RAF), as well as dissident movements in Burma, Iran, Cuba, China and other countries. Yet the U.S. continues to hold in prison its BPP/BLA and other class war prisoners of the era.

Andrew Young, President Carter’s Ambassador to the U.N., lost his job for speaking the truth that there were over 100 PPs in U.S. prisons. The December 12th Movement, New Afrikan Peoples Organization (NAPO) and other Left organizations submitted petitions to the U.N. Human Rights Committee calling for the U.S. to release its PPs. Mainstream organizations as the NAACP, American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) and others have added their names to the call. American dock workers and their unions have held work stoppages in support of the release of MOVE/BPP PP Mumia Abu-Jamal. Amnesty International has long called for the release of AIM PP Leonard Peltier. Noted political analyst Dr. Ronald Walters and U.S. Congressman Bobby Rush call for the U.S. to free its PPs, and in particular its long held BPP PP/POWs.

Eddie charges that the U.S. should no longer deny that ex-BPP members and similarly situated prisoners were 1) victims of a secret and illegal war, 2) are in fact PPs and 3) their actions were based on political beliefs and not criminal behavior.

Despite the U.S.’s continued denial of the existence of its PP/POWs, in ‘79 President Jimmy Carter granted unconditional clemency to 5 Puerto Rican Nationalist who had shot up Congress and tried to assassinate President Truman in the ‘50s. In ‘99 President Clinton granted amnesty to 11 Puerto Rican Independentistas convicted of bombing conspiracy and 2 white anti-imperialists convicted of bombing government and corporate buildings.

No Black identified as a PP/POW has ever been granted amnesty, pardon or similar release and no law enforcement person has ever gone to prison for assassination of BPP/BLA members.

There are 2.3 million prisoners in the U.S. Over 1 million of them are Black. There are 8 million prisoners in the world. Black prisoners in the U.S. are 1 of every 8 prisoners worldwide. Blacks were and are still at the bottom in every poverty category in the U.S., so the real question is: Was there just cause for those ex-BPP/BLA members presently in prison, and similarly situated PP/POWs, to agitate for change or to resist the conditions some of them lived under? If the answer is yes, then Eddie Conway calls for the release of the Panthers and other long held PP/POWs still in prison. He also calls for a PP/POW class action law suit against COINTELPRO perpetrators and other collective PP approaches to freedom that merit serious consideration. In my opinion there are few faults with his book.

Letters

Greetings 4strugglemag,

My name is Damego Lee, one of many prisoners that receive your magazine. I was writing to say what a nice improvement with this new hardcopy edition of the mag. To me, it says 4strugglemag is for real – it’s not a joke – and we take this seriously, passing the information we do to the world. The new cover is an eye catcher, with its colour and all. Regardless, I would still desire you and support you without the change, with all the knowledge you have enlightened me with. As a fellow brother told me, each one teach one, and I am truly thanking you for your teachings. Much love and respect to al who make 4strugglemag possible to all prisoners everywhere, free of charge. Any way I can help further the cause for 4strugglemag, say the word and it’s a done deal. Can’t wait until the next issue.

Until then, stay strong, stay real, and stay focused.

Power to the people. Yours truly,
Damego Lee

[Thanks, Damego! We’ve gotten lots of comments on our new colour covers and higher-quality printing – all courtesy of our friends at Denver ABCF, who have been doing an AMAZING job of printing and mailing 4strugglemag.]

Hotep,

Shu Ru Brothers and Sistass. I would like to thank you for the contribution you are making to the struggle and how you keep brothers and sistass updated on what’s going on within the freedom, justice and equality liberation movement against the oppressive and exploitative system. We still have a long way to go. It saddens me that most brothas and sistass become aware of the institutional racism we experience when we’re behind bars doing a lot of time. But it is what it is. It’s a goal to connect with the streets.

I came across your 4strugglemag through a brotha in the institution I’m in.

I do want to introduce brothas and sistass to the Politically Intelligent Revolutionary Unit I represent within the Black Blood Brotha and Sistahood. We’re Royal Descendant People who are Kings, Queens and Warriors. We trace our history of the struggle from Afrika to Amerikkka. We’re Black Leaders over our domain, who study our ancestors and leaders from Afrika throughout the Amerikkas and Caribbean.

It’s our first day as New Afrikans to share our ancestors’ and leaders’ legacies. We share ideas, plans and strategies

on how to network and organize against a common enemy. We know that some organization have different methods of operating. We don’t focus on what is going to divide us. We look to what’s going to unite us. A Common Unity which will make us a community forming alliances is important for sharing resources and intel (intelligence/information). All strategies and tactics are needed in a freedom fighter war.

Brothas and sistass, we are at war. The Black Liberation Organization of Defense has moved past just talking. It’s organizing, networking and building programs that turn into institution’s time. Focus on goals.

Dedicated to Precious D. One. Power to the People.

Mr. Williams (486232) and Mr. Maddox (555753)
878 Cottsville Hubbard Rd.
Youngstown, OH
USA 44505

Dear 4strugglemag,

Greetings! First of all thanks for providing the encouraging, knowledgeable mag! I have gained knowledge as well as a more active endeavor toward us in governmental confinement and all in mental prison due to a lack of knowledge and vision. Issue 15 was the first issue I received personally, but have read a previous issue that drew me in and captivated my mind for hours.

Please note that I was in a situation where Correction Officers assaulted and used excessive force on me while I was subdued and in handcuffs. I received multiple injuries including broken tooth, busted lip, bloodied nose and multiple bruises. When sent to the hospital they did a CAT scan to search for internal injuries. I have used Prison D.O.P. Remedy Procedure to no avail, I wrote to ACLLI N.C. as well as N.C. Prison Legal Services, Director of Prisons N.C., and that county district attorney but either receive no reply or a deficient response. If there is any way you can send me contact info to organizations who take serious this type of situation or any type of legal “lay man” or lawyers please do so. There are medical records as well as video of the situation. Thanks for whatever you are able of.

I am sending you a piece I wrote about this prison I’m at. You can edit it and use it for a feature article if you find it suitable. You also have permission to print my letter. To all in any struggle our thoughts are a vital aspect of our being with tangible results. If we build our intellect, edify and affirm each other, there’s no limit to our capability. Stay strong!

I am an inmate housed at Alexander Correction Institution N.C. I am on segregation also known as a control status

unit. Inmates on such units are confined to their cell 23 to 24 hours daily - some for 6 months, some for up to 18 months. Over time, a person becomes dissatisfied and frustrated by the mundane routine and the detachment one must endure in this unnatural environment. Therefore many inmates seek a positive effective outlet for our distress and suppressed anger, which reading and writing can help cure.

N.C. Division of Prison (D.O.P.) Policy and Procedures book chapter C Section 1200 Title: Condition of Confinement 1209 Personal Property States “(a) assigned inmates may have personal property including authorized religious material, books and magazines not exceeding two cubic feet.” In spite of this, Alexander C.I. has formulated a policy so inmates can retain only two books/or magazines (personal). Alexander C.I. classifies a dictionary as well as religious material (Bible, Koran, Prayer Book, etc) as a personal book. Consequently if you possess a religious book and dictionary it leaves no room for progressive or leisure reading materials of personal interest. This policy hinders enlightenment and development of ones intellect.

Inmates, Department of Corrections, as well as N.C. citizens are undermined by such hindrance. Prison is to be a form of rehab. Reforming and improving thoughts is a direct connection to successful rehabilitation. As it stands this policy neglects sociable production and deserves better regard to psychological provision of our confinement. We ask for intervention helping us mediate with this facility that we may obtain 4 to 7 personal books or magazines which will still meet N.C. D.O.P. Policy.

Thomas Bennett # 0777462
633 Old Landfill Rd.
Taylorsville, NC USA

Greetings family of 4strugglemag:

My respect is given to you. Paper costs money! Ink costs money! Copyright, trademark, publishing...costs money! Websites...that too costs money, money, money! And yet you all valiantly sacrifice that overvalued paper cloth to put out such a controversial periodical? Thank you! It takes people with humble, disciplined, and unselfish souls to literally combat with the militant, mightily structured Department of Corrections in the US of A. Honestly, after a fellow P.O.P. (Prisoner of Politricks) offered me your mag, without seeing it, I regarded it as more irrelevant mumble-tumble.

I'm a very thoughtful Hue-Man and if I waste any time of my short day, it is for something I feel is worth it to me. Whether reading, writing, or just relaxing...I decide what fills in the blanks. I have to admit that 4SM...I rather read

it than write letters of my views to family. And family is a priority.

Anyway, I am an unheralded author of fiction and poetry. I am a heady speaking of society's ails. I am also a sponge for political reform as it pertains to the minority Hue-Men. All in all, I'd really like to be a spect on 4SM's nation-spanning enlightenment and share (as well as receive) love from the mind(s) and heart(s). This nation and its citizens are in peril beyond some people's recognition. I refuse to be blind to the times.

If you would place me on your subscription log, I will one day or two, submit a great piece of work from my stored collection.

Before I close, I ask of two things. One: keep doing what you do, because although you (i.e. us prisoners) don't collectively show interest in the issues raised in your mag, there will always be those who wish to focus on nothing but. And two: can you bring up issues in the future mags of focus of living abroad since the U.S. and its Tea-Partied drunks who over value their "hard-worked-for" paper cloth don't seem to value our lifestyle or care for our livelihoods? I'd love to hear brotha + sista of mine speak on alternative answers than constantly attempting to revise the unchangeable. I mean, what would happen if...we could abandon US of A for...I am beginning to burn out on bias newspapers and mundane radio (NPR).

Respectfully & Sincerely Written,

Jeronimo GKA (governmentally know as)
Kevin N. Jones (0862259)
Bertie, C.I.
P.O. Box 129
Windsor, NC
27983 USA

I salute your courage for standing up for what is right!

As the days go by my date to go home draws near, after seven years of a long, hard struggle. I just finished reading the spring 2010 issue of 4strugglemag. I'm a student of the New Black Panther Party movement and an uprising Black revolutionary! So for me to be able to read the 4strugglemag was both a gift and blessing! I go home August 2nd 2010 and I would at least like to receive my own issue before I go. I understand 4strugglemag is only published 3 issues a year. Can you please send me a free prisoners subscription of the 4strugglemag. Any back issues would be appreciated as well.

Anonymous

Book Review:

Defending the Spirit: A Black Life in America, by Randall Robinson. Plume Publishing, 1999.

BY MIKE AFRICA

Defending the Spirit is an autobiography. Randall Robinson first lays out the history of himself and his nuclear family, and his upbringing in the south. His experience of racism and classism is immediately recognizable to any Black person in America – or anywhere else on the globe, for that matter – and is an experience he would later battle as he delved into higher education, job employment, simple everyday living, and most certainly when trying his hand at activism.

Randall states early in the book, as he tries to battle racism, both in and out of school, while attending Harvard Law, “No one could know that black leaders and organizations would become either so enfeebled by a lack of resources or by the strings attached to those resources that their call to arms, if heard at all by the rank and file, would sound perfunctory or, worse, incomprehensible.” This observation is alarmingly clear to true activists, revolutionaries, political prisoners, as well as their supporters the world over.

Robinson spends the remainder of the book detailing his efforts and accomplishments in several national and international campaigns. Chief among them was his very successful effort to bring international focus on South Africa's apartheid, a policy that was fully supported and funded by the U.S. and its closest allies. As a direct result of his actions, international focus was brought to bear on U.S. hypocrisy. The ensuing international exposure and condemnation shamed U.S. government officials into pressuring U.S.-backed corporations into divesting, a move that was fought tooth and nail by the so-called “great communicator,” Ronald Reagan, and his entire racist regime. Robinson explains later, however, how after all their efforts to free South Africa from apartheid, free Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners jailed for decades for opposing apartheid, once these former political prisoners gained power, it was these same corporations they would have dealings with, rather than the black-led organizations

that freed their nation.

Randall Robinson, as head of an organization named TransAfrica, attempted to apply similar tactics, both abroad and locally to other predominantly Black nations that faced dire existences headed by either maniacal leaders or labouring under foreign oppressive policies: Angola, Rwanda, Uganda, Nigeria, Haiti, and Grenada. TransAfrica attempted to help expose all their plights, although obviously none achieved neither the support or initial success of the ousted apartheid. These nations and many others named in the book continued to receive TransAfrica's efforts of exposure and justice.

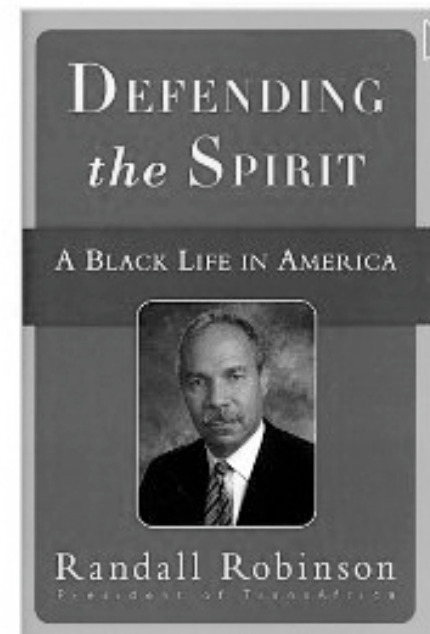
In support of his efforts, Robinson cites a who's who list of celebrities and politicians, most who have been on the scene for years, but save for a very few, seldom speak out for more progressive issues, or the people that advance them.

Maybe if they would support the true soldiers who have dedicated their lives and freedom for the cause of justice, groups like TransAfrica would have a more consistent and sustainable support system than is usually offered by those celebrities, most of whom are employed to uphold American imperialism anyway – people who themselves believe that U.S. policy only has errant moments that need exposing, rather than confronting this nation's inherent unconscionable-ness.

I have seen Robinson on several tv interviews and have always found his views to be concise and informative. *Defending the Spirit* was pretty much the same as those interviews. And I really do applaud all of his efforts to do

something, feel compelled to say something in an era when so many are paralyzed with indecision or worse, apathy.

However, after a while, many of these books start to have the same feel as that deplorable Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa, where the explicit details of the horror was exposed to the victims, but there was no planned exacting response for justice. How many details are needed? How many roundtable discussions by intellectuals, before justice is not just demanded, but committed to by those being victimized?



The historical records of our dragon hydra are clear. The choice is yours as to which you will choose.

Recommended Books

The Boni Maroon Wars in Suriname by Wim S.M. Hoogbergen (1997, Academic Publishers)

Voodoo in Haiti by Alfred Metraux (1972, Schocken Books)

The Serpent and the Rainbow by Wade Davis (1985 Simon & Schuster)

Hidden Americans: Maroons of Virginia and the Carolinas by Hugo Prosper Leaming (1995, Garland Publishing)

The Black Jacobins by C.L.R. James (1963, Random House)

Full Spectrum Disorder by Stan Goff (2004, Softskull Press)

Sex and War by Stan Goff (2006, Stan Goff). PDF available at www.insurgent-american.net/download/StanGoff/Sex-n-War.pdf

Marxism for Our Times: C.L.R. James on Revolutionary Organization edited by Martin Glaberman (1999, University Press of Mississippi)

New Book

Fanon's Wretched of the Earth: New Afrikan Revolutionary Writings, by James Yaki Sayles. \$20

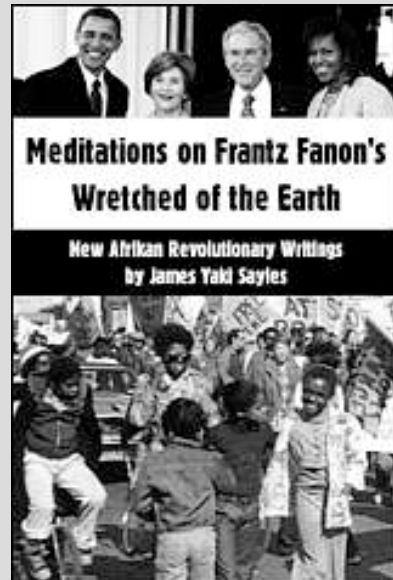
"This exercise is about more than our desire to read and understand Wretched (as if it were about some abstract world, and not our own); it's about more than our need to understand (the failures of) the anti-colonial struggles on the African continent. This exercise is also about us, and about some of the things that We need to understand and to change in ourselves and our world." James Yaki Sayles

Like the revs that he most considered his teachers—Malcolm X and George Jackson—James Yaki Sayles grew up poor and found his maturity in prison, the place that Malcolm called "the Black man's university." And it was in the prison movement that he found his place in the battlefield. Although he made revolutionary theory his work, his life was rooted in a time of urban guerrillas and the armed struggle.

Yaki soon became a leading activist in the small prison collectives in his state. There were groups in Stateville, Pontiac, and Menard prisons, as well as individual members in other prisons outside Illinois and rads on the street. Yaki also became an influence in less public organizations.

One thing he never became was well-known. There were definite reasons for this. In part, because Yaki was a very private person who rarely talked about his inner life or childhood, and who never wanted to write about his own past to a curious public. When Yaki started out in prison, he had amassed a real library of political and history books, together with magazines and files of documents and correspondence. By the start of the 21st century, he was limited to one thin cardboard case, only a few inches high, which had to hold any books, magazines, newspapers, notebooks, files, letters, blank paper, pencil and pens he had in his cell. And he had to work mandatory eight-hour shifts every day at the usual makework prison jobs (such as counting out and counting in the checkers pieces in the day room), which cut down on his intellectual hours. All this led him to decide to center himself on one major project which only required two books, a reappraisal and explanation of Frantz Fanon's great revolutionary writing, *Wretched of the Earth*...

Here, Yaki is on a mission. To make up for the misunderstanding of Fanon's politics that he and so many of his young rebel comrades once had. To help guide the study by newer rebels of this complex and difficult reading.



4strugglemag,

Wow! I'm blown away by the entire movement. I'm in North Carolina dealing with issues spoken consistently by your mag. It gives me insight and know how to put into my own perspective to handle these ongoing occurrences. I'm 22, was a soldier in the army and a student at an HBCU in Raleigh, now doing 36-48 months for not being able to positively control my actions. Your mag gives this young brother of the same struggle hope. I'm inquiring on getting my own issue as soon as possible; I've read Issue #15 while in segregation. Your articles are powerful. Here in seg, I recite a motto, since words are powerful and can be spoken into existence: "This is not my destiny. My destiny is to be free; free my people! Uncuff the shackles that re-enslave us. Power to the people!!"

You really inspire me to greatness and teach the youth. I surround myself with the truth.

Peace and Blessings,
Anonymous

Open Letter to the Collective 4strugglemag

Greetings and anti-imperialist salutations! 4strugglemag is a jewel to the oppressed and millions enslaved in penal KKKolonies in the united snakkkes. I have some questions concerning history. For some examples:

Questions

1. Legally speaking between both the united snakkkes and Canada what is the history of radical lawyers fighting injustice individually or as a member of a group such as in the U.S. there is Chokwe Lumumba of the Republic of New Afrika, Tariq Warren and his wife also now imprisoned and Lynne Stewart, but what other people's lawyers and/or groups between the U.S. and Canada have challenged the system of imperialism on behalf of the oppressed in courts?
2. Between the U.S. and Canada what anti-Imperialist groups or Anarchist collectives, Pan Afrikan Associations, Black Nationalist or New Afrikan movements have announced their support of foreign groups such as say Hamas when the U.S. and United Nations along with congress in amerikkka made joint resolutions against Hamas supporting Zionism and Imperialism?

Out of these 2 questions I know that political prisoner/prisoner of war Mumia Abu-Jamal from Pennsylvania death row has written about what he coined as Hypocrites on the Hill referring to U.S. policy to even torture its own protesters while denouncing the treatment of marchers in Iran.

However, as young revolutionaries in the U.S. there is

much missing history politically to common grounds that may be elaborated on and bridge some gaps. Like explaining in the publication of 4strugglemag some relative connections between the two governments' borders:

1. What do the masses in the U.S. know about Canada? Things like size comparisons, population, and ethnicities.
2. What is Canada's historical relationship with the U.S. say since Abraham Lincoln or Christopher Columbus to date in the 21st century? For an idea the roles, if any, Canada played in the run away slaves underground railroad, the Niagara Falls movement, NAACP history, and John Brown and Fredrick Douglas travels there with other abolitionists of that era.
3. Are there "Oppressed Peoples" there in Canada today in 2010? Maybe an elaboration of who they are – the distinct nations of people living there.
4. Are their Latinos, Asians and other Native Indians and are there immigrants? Perhaps showing how many and circumstances that may or may not be similar to life in the U.S. under imperialism.
5. What about prisoners? The numbers in general. The names of political prisoners and prisoners of war in Canada.
6. The struggles over Canada on the streets and in prisons. Also the theories going into and coming out from the prison's walls.

Such questions with answers could draw a common line with oppressed classes on both sides of the borders as to the relationship historically the oppressed have in common and the historical role of the Imperialist powers around the world.

In solidarity and struggle!
Sehu-Kessa Saa Tabansi
Alkla Alfonso Percy Pew # BT 7263
Maximum Security Restricted Housing Unit
Building Grange B2 Cell 23
Box A Belletonte , PA. 16823-0820

[Great questions! we'll be working on an article about Canada's radical, anti-colonial and anti-imperialist history and cross border connections for Issue 17. Stay tuned!]

Dear 4strugglemag,

First and foremost, I say my revolutionary greetings.

I have come to recognize I must join the revolution – the revolution of knowledge, the revolution of the mind, and the revolution to bring freedom to the enslaved and oppressed. My brother Solomon has helped me increase my

interest in what I have come to realize. I want to broaden my revolutionary thoughts to do something for the people who are oppressed through the third world countries such as Africa, North America, Latin America and all who need our endurance and fortitude. Many men and women have sacrificed many things – even themselves – for liberation of all kinds such as free political thought and cultural expression. To do this, there must be a level of awareness that corruption and oppression is everywhere and to overcome it, one must have strong unity and stand strong against it. I just started getting into the revolutionary mindset, so I ask for resources of any kind – books, newspapers, and 4strugglemag.

I have a poem for motivation and the upliftment of all the Brothers and Sisters in the struggle.

The Warrior

Who am I? I am the warrior. I see the world through the eyes of the lion. I am the intellectual savage who concurs the battlefield of the mind. I declare war on myself. Everday I must defeat the primitive Demon that lives within me, in order for me to fully understand the world that surrounds me. I see the dangers that come at me from all directions. I hear the whispers of the warriors who have come and gone. I take their wisdom from the grave. I must stay strong. I refuse to be oppressed! I am the angel who was baptized in fire, the flames will consume all that stands for oppression, and burn always the pain of the oppressed. My will is unbreakable. I throw myself fully & completely into the fight so that my sacrifice will be an example for the warriors of the future. I am king so that others may be kings, for the world belongs to us. We are the rulers of ourselves. My cause is everlasting, for I the warrior am spiritual. I live in the hearts of our children I burn in the blood of men, I fight for freedom! So ask again who am I? I am you and you are me!
the Warrior
I'll close for now, striving for liberation of the mind and freedom from the oppressor.

In love, strength and sacrifice,
Landi Benitez
Florida State Prison

Book Review:

WHO AM EYE: A Spokenword Memoir by A. Castlin. \$15

BY JAAN LAAMAN

Who Am Eye is a compact new book by Aron Castlin, aka Akili Mtumishi. Many 4SM readers will be familiar with Akili's sharp revolutionary analysis from various articles and essays he has contributed to this magazine. Akili is the person who started an ongoing year long dialogue on hip hop, youth, revolutionary culture and politics in our pages a couple of years ago. He also has a new article on Black August, in this issue.

Who Am Eye is unlike most of Akili's 4sm writing. It is a book of reflective and personal poetry. Of course political insight and revolutionary attitude comes through and is well put in certain lines, lines that resonate like:

‘While guzzling down
E pluribus Unum backwash
from a 40 oz.
melting pot of
Constitutional swill.
Regurgitating fantasies
about:
“Delivering democracy” and
“The audacity of hope,”
mimicking drunken sailors
telling war stories
at a tail-hook party...’

Most of this book and its poems are very personal. The poetry grapples with and reflects Akili's multi-ethnic heritage. I believe others with multi-ethnic backgrounds will find this book very real, and all readers will learn something. This book and some of its poems might take a little bit of work for some readers. A couple of men I shared the book with, here in this penitentiary, said they had to go to their dictionary at least a few times for word definitions. Some of Akili's poems are layered and call for thought and reflection.

This little book is worth checking out. Akili writes some good verse. I have only one suggestion for any future books this brother writes. Next time, I hope he will include at least one or more of his insightful analytic essays, to go along with the poetry.

To order: www.akilicastlin.wordpress.com
or write 4strugglemag

by Alfred Metraux (1972, Shocken Books), paints a fascinating picture of how these decentralized elements went from centuries of being Maroon guerrillas, to revolutionary fighters, later to be forced underground only to surface as today's Bizango, Zobop, Bossu, Macandal, Voltigeurs and other semi-secret Vodun societies, thereby constituting a major segment of Haitian society that no domestic or foreign oppressors have ever been able to eradicate; although the dictator “Papa Doc” Duvalier was able to manipulate some of them by integrating them into dreaded “ton ton macoute” secret police.

And in another Stan Goff book, *Sex and War*, he tells us, “there are Maroons in Haiti again, with the wave of repression sweeping the country in the wake of the last U.S.-crafted coup d’etat (February 29, 2004)... twice in 2004 I visited one of these Maroon communities in the Central Plateau” (8).

And it's hardly the case that we must restrict our study of the strengths and weaknesses of centralized and decentralized groups as I have. What about the history of how decentralized forces defeated Napoleon's army in Spain; how decentralized forces have defeated every known invader in the border regions of what is today Afghanistan and Pakistan, and how decentralized insurgents are today defeating the U.S. and her allies in Iraq?

Some Parting Words from a Farsighted Marxist

C.L.R. James penned *The Black Jacobins* many years before he would later crystallize his theories about the ideas here. Yet on this in the *Introduction to Marxism for Our Times: C.L.R. James on Revolutionary Organization*, edited by Martin Glaberman (1999, University Press of Mississippi) we learn, “in 1948 James wrote what was eventually published as ‘Notes on Dialectics.’” This was a study of working class organization in light of dialectics and marked the ultimate break with Trotskyism, the rejection of the vanguard party. The importance of this break and the theoretical validation of the James viewpoint was demonstrated eight years later in the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 and later the French revolt of 1968, the Czech spring of 1968, and the solidarity movement in Poland in 1980... On the one hand, no group of the left or of the right was in any way prepared to accept the possibility of proletarian revolution in totalitarian dictatorships of Eastern Europe or in a democratic country such as France. All of their assumptions proved false: that the working class needed a party to lead it in revolution; that the working class needed a press and a network of communication; that what was needed was some crisis in the society such as a depression or a war. With none of these factors in place, the workers of Hungary in forty-eight hours took over all of the means of production in that society, created a form of dual power, forced the Community Party to re-organize under another name, and was crushed by nothing in Hungarian society

but by an invasion of Soviet tanks.”

[And in his own words] “James wrote: ‘Now if the party is the knowing of the proletariat, then the coming of age of the proletariat cans the abolition of the party. That is our universal, stated in its boldest and most abstract form... The party as we know it must disappear. It is disappearing. It will disappear as the state will disappear. The whole laboring population becomes the state. That is the disappearance of the state. It can have no other meaning. It withers away by expanding to such a degree that it is transformed into its opposite. And the party does the same... for if the party does not wither away, the state never will’” (C.L.R. James, *Notes on Dialectics*, London: Allison and Busby, 1980 175-76).

“On the other hand, even after the fact, the left could not deal with events that demolished their theories of the necessity of a vanguard party, and proceeded to ignore the movements in Hungary, in France and in Poland – movements which Marx or Lenin would have pounced on to study and to hone and bring up to date their revolutionary theories” (Glaberman's *Introduction to Marxism for Our Times*).

Conclusion

It's clear that today's center of gravity, the aspects on which all else is dependent and rests is the shared (global) consciousness of the multitudes of the earth's workers and oppressed peoples, that their lives are daily becoming more and more intolerable, hence, solidifying them ideologically around the necessity for revolutionary change (like our earlier Maroons were solidified around the need to escape enslavement), and the ability of these multitudes to communicate with each other and share ideas and methods about the best ways to proceed towards that goal.

Therefore, the global hardships brought about by today's imperialists and their voracious accumulation of wealth, and their destruction of the environment and cultures will propel the multitudes to use any and all means to bring about the needed changes –or perish. And modern means of communications will provide them with the means to both update and imitate the earlier hydra's strengths, avoid its weaknesses –while guarding against the tendency of the dragons to concentrate oppressive power in its hands.

Thus, since both the shared needs and necessity for change is already present, along with the tools to communicate, then our final consideration is whether or not these masses must centralize their organizing (not to be confused with the obvious need to coordinate their efforts!). To that I answer with an emphatic, ‘no!’ and further, I contend that such centralization will only make it easier for our oppressors to identify and level repression upon us –prolonging the crisis our generation must deal with.

district summoned Blacks to revolt” (James, 327).

So, here we see the hydra doing battle with the (now) traitorous dragon and the French imperialists.

“It is a recurrent tale this (Dessalines and his generals hunt down these ‘Brigands’). Once more, the masses had shown greater political understanding than their leaders” (James 338-339 and footnote 39). Our formerly heroic revolutionary army had been reduced to suppressing the revolutionary masses and forcing the latter into, “...fighting Black generals [who were] trying to crush the ‘Brigands’ for the French,” [propelling our hydra back to center stage]. “The little local leaders...beat off [their and the French] attacks...causing the French to be more open to yellow fever” (James, 346-347).

Consequently, we witness the decentralized hydra elements launching the revolution, being displaced by Toussaint’s army – the dragon – only to resume their leadership roles during a crisis that saw the dragon capitulate to the French, thus showing itself as the most indispensable weapon the revolutionaries developed.

Later, as is well-known, Toussaint was kidnapped and taken to France where he later died in prison, opening the way for his chief lieutenant Jean Jacques Dessalines to (again) switch back to the rebels’ side, rally the revolutionary army to also switch back to the masses’ side, and along with the hydra forces go on to totally annihilate the remaining French forces on the island and declare independence and appoint himself the new country’s emperor.

An excellent soldier, Dessalines showed himself to be a cruel tyrant over the Haitian people. Thus, he was assassinated by them within a few years of assuming power.

He was replaced by another general from the dragon forces: Henry Christophe, who was appointed president in 1807, but by 1811 had declared himself king. He too would be killed by his own people in 1829.

Thus, we can clearly see how Haiti’s dragon forces played a very ambivalent role in the rebel fight for independence: They start-

ed out as tenacious and brilliant fighters against all of the European imperial and colonial elements, and the traitors amongst the Mulatto’s, who were all but bent on keeping the enslaved Africans underfoot. During the course of the revolutionary struggle, they all opportunistically switched to the French imperialist’s side, and went on to attempt to drown the still revolutionary masses and their decentralized group in blood; hoping that way the French would allow them to serve as a new elite class of African policemen against a re-enslaved African worker’s class.

Failing to suppress the rebels, the dragon forces rejoined the hydra elements and lent their weight to totally defeating the French, only to once again turn against the revolutionary masses by establishing themselves as a dictatorial and exploitative African elite.

For its part, the decentralized hydra forces never veered from their objectives of winning as much freedom from servitude and oppression as possible. From the pre-revolutionary times of Mackandal, up through the 1791-1804 Haitian revolutionary war, and even down to our time, they’ve continued to struggle towards those ends. And it’s highly instructive to know that in addition to fighting the French during their revolution, they were also under attack by Toussaint’s dragon forces,

who displayed hatred and fear of everything from their refusal to relinquish their maroon/decentralized organizational formations, to their practice of their traditional Vodun (Voodoo) spiritual systems, the latter which did a great deal to inspire their soldiers to martyr themselves for the cause of freedom. And the treacherous attacks carried out on them by Christophe and Dessalines – even while both sides were allied against the imperialists – were early signs that the dragon forces were ultimately concerned with power for its own sake.

Then, after being pushed to the side after the French were driven out, the decentralized hydra elements were forced to – again – go underground and eventually morph into semi-secret Vodun societies that until today remain a little recognized or understood autonomous element amongst the oppressed Haitians. Wade Davis’ classic *The Serpent and the Rainbow*, as well as *Voodoo in Haiti*,



Jean Jacques Dessalines

Black August: A Celebration of Freedom Fighters

BY DOC HOLIDAY ET AL.

Black August originated in the California penal system in the 1970s. Many significant events in the New African Nation's struggle for justice and liberation have occurred in August. The commemoration of Black August particularly hails the advances and sacrifices of Black Freedom Fighters. Following are several pages of authentic information on Black August provided by Doc Holiday, an original comrade of George Jackson and a longtime figure in the Black Liberation and prison struggle. Doc is presently in prison in Marion, Illinois.

History of Black August Concept and Program

The month of August gained special significance and importance in the Black Liberation Movement beginning with a courageous attempt by Jonathan Jackson to demand the freedom of political prisoners/prisoners of war which the Soledad Brothers’ case were the center of attention.

On August 7, 1970 Jonathan Jackson, William Christmas, James McClain, and Ruchell Magee were gunned down at the Marin County Courthouse in that attempt for freedom. Ruchell Cinque Magee remains the sole survivor of that bid for liberation, he also remains a POW at Folsom prison doing life. Though this rebellion was put down by gory pigs and their agents it was internalized within the hearts and minds of the people on the outside in the larger prison as well as those in the concentration camps (prison), internalized in the same fashion as we honor other heroic African Freedom Fighters, who sacrificed their lives for the people and the liberation.

On August 21, 1971, almost exactly a year following the slave rebellion at Marin County Courthouse, George L. Jackson (older brother of Jonathan Jackson as well as one of the Soledad Brothers) whose freedom was the primary demand of the Marin rebellion, was assassinated at San Quentin prison in an alleged escape put forth by prison administration and the state to cover its conspiracy. Comrade George Jackson was a highly respected and pur-

posely influential leader in the Revolutionary Prison Movement. Jackson was also very popular beyond prison, not only because he was a Soledad Brother, but also because of the book he authored appropriately entitled “Soledad Brother.” This book not only revealed to the public the inhumane and degrading conditions in prison, he more importantly, correctly pointed to the real cause of those effects in prison as well as in society, a decadent Capitalist system that breeds off racism and oppression.

On August 1, 1978 brother Jeffery “Khatari” Gualden, a Black Freedom Fighter and Prisoner of War, captured within the walls of San Quentin was a victim of a blatant assassination by capitalist-corporate medical politics. Khatari was another popular and influential leader in the Revolutionary Prison Movement.

An important note must be added here and that is, the Black August Concept and Movement that it is part of and helping to build is not limited to our sisters and brothers that are currently captured in the various prison Kamps throughout California. Yet without a doubt it is inclusive of these sisters and brothers and moving toward a better understanding of the nature and relationship of prison to oppressed and colonized people.

So it should be clearly understood that Black August is a reflection and commemoration of history; of those heroic partisans and leaders that realistically made it possible for us to survive and advance to our present level of liberation struggle. People such as: Nat Turner, Harriet Tubman, Gabriel Prosser, Frederick Douglas, W.E. DuBois, Marcus Garvey, Paul Roberson, Rosa Parks, M.L.

King, Malcolm X, and numerous others in our more contemporary period. It must be further clarified that when we speak of “Culture Development,” we are not advocating Cultural Nationalism and/or merely talking about adopting African names, jewelry, dashikis, etc. Our primary interest lies not only in where we came from, but the nature of “WHY” we were forcefully brought here, understanding the character of “CONTINUOUS”

struggle with the recognition that it is a Protracted struggle and developing the necessary life-styles to guarantee its success.



August 20, 1619: First born Afrikan captives were brought to England's North Amerikan colony of Jamestown, Virginia.

August 16, 1768: Charlestown, South Carolina rebellious Afrikan slaves (known as maroons) engaged British military forces in bloody battle defending their camp which was a haven for fugitive slaves.

August 30, 1800: Day set for launching Gabrier Prossers revolt. On this day over 1000 armed slaves gathered to endeavor to secure their liberty, however bad weather forced them to postpone the revolt and betrayal ultimately led to the crushing of their physical force.

August 21, 1831: Slave revolt launched under the leadership of Nat Turner which lasted four days and resulted in fifty-one slaveholders and their loved ones being subjected to revolutionary People's justice.

August 29, 1841: Street skirmish took place in Cincinnati between Afrikan and Euro-Amerikan, wherein for five days Afrikans waged valiant struggle in defense of their women, children and property against brutal racist terror campaigns.

August 1854: Delegates from eleven states met in Cleveland at the National Emigration Convention of the Colored People, to advance the position that an independent land base (nation) be set up for the absorption of captive Afrikans in Babylon who wanted to return to Afrika.

August 1, 1856: North Carolina, fierce battle erupted between fugitive slaves and slaveholders who sought their capture and re-enslavement. Only recorded casualties was among slaveholders.

August 1860: Freedom (slave) conspiracy uncovered with the discovery of an organized camp of Afrikans and Euro-Amerikan co-conspirators in Talladega County, Alabama.

August 2, 1865: Virginia a statewide conference of fifty Afrikan delegates met to demand that Afrikans in Virginia be granted legal title to land occupied during the Civil War. Numerous off-pitch battles ensued during this same month as terrorist mobs moved to evict Afrikans from the land and were met with resistance.

August 17, 1887: Honorable Marcus Garvey, father of contemporary Afrikan Nationalism was born.

August 1906: Afrikan soldiers (in service of Babylon) enraged behind racial slurs and discrimination struck out and wrecked the town of Brownville, Texas.

August 1906: Niagara Movement met at Harpers Ferry, Virginia and issued W.E. Marcus Garvey DuBois' historic manifesto against racist discrimination in Babylon against Afrikans.

August 1, 1914: Garvey founds Universal Negro Improvement Association, advancing the call for Land, Freedom, and Independence for Afrikan people.

August 23, 1917: Afrikan soldiers in Huston engaged in street skirmishes that left more than seventeen Euro-Amerikan racists dead.

August 1920: Over two thousand delegates representing Afrikan from the four corners of the earth gathered in New York for the International Convention of the Negro People of the World, sponsored by UNIA convention issue a bill of rights for Afrikans.

August 1943: Slave revolt took place in Harlem as result of a K-9 shooting a brother defending the honor of Afrikan womanhood. More than 16,000 military and police personnel was required to quell the rebellion.

August 1963: 190,000 Afrikans (250,000 people all toll) took part in the March on Washington led by Dr. Martin Luther King to petition for the extension of the rights and privileges due to them mandated by the U.S. Constitution.

August 1964: Afrikan launched comparatively large-scale urban slave revolt in the following cities: Jersey City NY, Paterson NJ, Keansburg NJ, Chicago IL, and Philadelphia PA. These slave revolts were for the most part sparked by either police brutality or disrespect shown toward Afrikan womanhood.

August 16, 1965: Urban revolt took place in Northern Philadelphia.

August 7-8, 1966: Large-scale urban revolt was launched in Lansing, Michigan.

August 28, 1966: Waukegan, Illinois, urban slave revolt launched in response to police brutality.

July 30-August 2, 1967: Urban slave revolt launched in Milwaukee.

August 19-24, 1967: Comparatively large-scale urban slave revolt was launched in New Haven, Connecticut.

August 7, 1970: Jonathan Jackson killed in firefight while leading the Marin County Courthouse raid.

August 21, 1971: George Jackson shot and killed in San Quentin by tower guards.

Most standard history books tend to either play down or ignore New African resistance as a factor in the destruction in the slave economy. On the other hand, when one understands New Africans are still an oppressed nation, the reason for such deception becomes clear. Black August contends that not only was such resistance a factor in the destruction of the

By that time, in just about all of the areas, original Amerindians had been exterminated, only to be replaced by an endless supply of enslaved Africans. The latter produced so much sugar and other agriculture crops that San Domingo became the crown jewel of the French empire and the backbone of the French economy. So Mackandal's terror campaigns were quickly pushed to the back of the exploiters' minds.

But within two years of the outbreak of the French revolution, and the subsequent turmoil caused by it in that colonial possession, a new generation stepped into Mackandal's shoes.

One dark night, a large assembly of the colony's Africans met at a secret ceremony; both enslaved workers and Maroon guerrillas met on a mountain outside of town. They represented thousands of other Africans – both on the many plantations and in the fugitive communities in the mountains. The ceremony and last minute plans were being overseen by Boukman and an enslaved female – they were both Vodun (Voodoo) spiritual leaders. There was no need to haggle over any last minute plans. They knew better than Karl Marx's (later) "wage slaves" that "they had nothing to lose but their chains." And the horrible treatment that their 'masters' heaped on them added a sense of desperation for them to kill or be killed once they revolted!

Yet, Boukman and the female offered more inspiration than centralized leadership. And when the revolt was launched shortly thereafter, it was led by scores of decentralized bands of African workers, Maroon guerrilla groups –who were all joined shortly thereafter by separate Mulatto-led groups.

Before the well-known Toussaint L'Ouverture came on the stage, the Haitian revolution was being led by figures that the decentralized groups propelled forward: the Maroons Jean Francois, Bissou and Lamour Derance, and the rebel-enslaved workers Romaine the Prophetess and Hyacinthe the fearless leader of the battle of Croix des Bouquets. And the Mulattos had a number of their own independent groups and distinguished leaders plus there was also a small segment of whites who were in league with the anti-slavery wing of the French Jacobins, and who loosely allied themselves with one rebel group or another.

Within two years of the beginning of the French revolution, and continuing for twelve harrowing years, the Haitian revolutionaries would go on to militarily engage and defeat first their colonial enslavers, and afterwards a succession of armies fielded by Spain and England, as well as a traitorous Mulatto army, and finally tens of thousands of Napoleon Bonaparte's veteran French 'revolutionary' troops.

The victorious Africans would go on to found the country

of Haiti in 1803/1804; the only country in world history established by formerly enslaved workers.

What better example could we use to weigh Marx's words about the "workers" engaging in, "fifteen, twenty, fifty years of civil wars and peoples struggles... in order to change yourself and make yourself fit for political rule?" (ref. cited)

The Marxist giant, C.L.R. James, who penned the classic *Black Jacobins* (1963, Random House) dissects that struggle. In it, James compares the Haitian revolutionary army led by Toussaint and later Jean Jacques Dessafines and Henry Christophe with the later Russian Bolshevik party: "[Toussaint and]...his Black army generals filling the political role of the Bolshevik party" (James, 283). This brilliantly led, tightly organized and courageous army represents my dragon here. And James' book does much to rescue them from the shadows of history from our study. They are the ones who would surface as the most notable elements, while scores of the decentralized receded to the background.

So on first reading about them, you would think that this centralized dragon was the revolutionaries' best weapon. But, the European empire builders of France, England, Spain – and the U.S. wannabes – were not going to give up, even though they all had been defeated, or were afraid to directly intervene (in the case of the U.S.).

As it turned out, however, with Toussaint – backed by the 'revolutionary' army – assuming the governance of the island, the imperialists pressured and maneuvered him into a position where he and his (dragon) army began to impose intolerable conditions on the revolutionary masses of workers. And, "in the north around Plaisance, Limbe, Dondon, the vanguard [masses] of the revolution was not satisfied with the new regime" (James, 275-276).

And astonishingly, in the teeth of Napoleon's renewed threats and the hostile machinations of the British and Americans, "Toussaint submits, along with his generals" (James, 325-327).

Thus, at one swell swoop, these leaders had been forced to play the role of neo-colonial compradors, our dragon had been corralled, hand-cuffed and chained, and they subsequently then set out to use the 'revolutionary army' to deliver the masses back into slavery! Simply because Napoleon feared them, his secret plan was to place all of Haiti's Africans into chattel slavery, and he sent his brother in law and (eventually) sixty thousand more French troops to accomplish his aims.

Recognizing the weaknesses of the dragon forces, and the true intentions of the French "[Lamour] Derance and the petty chieftains, North, South and West, each in his own

indians and Europeans (in some areas) allied themselves to fight against the imperialist and expansionist powers. That phenomenon was also evident in the Caribbean and South America, but due to the large percentages of enslaved Africans, compared to enslaved Amerindians and Europeans, most of those struggles were primarily between the enslaved Africans and the European imperialists.

Thus today in the U.S., such emotionally charged epithets as hillbilly and poor white trash are totally divorced from their historical roots. The first people to be labeled as such were the descendants of the indentured European workers, who had escaped that status and allied themselves with both the Amerindian and Africans who had also escaped from slavery or servitude, all of whom combined into Maroon communities in areas that are now a part of the United States.

Initially, the derogatory ‘poor white trash’ label was reserved for the rebellious, unexploitable and non-conformist early Europeans who the colonial and imperial elites could neither control, nor use, to increase their power; thus the ‘trash’ label. And later the hillbilly label and imagery were used to similarly isolate those runaways who moved into the southern Appalachian mountains to also escape their former indentured status. Both segments were staunch enemies of the imperialists and colonists, who many times allied with Africans and Amerindians, also fugitives from enslavement. At times, these three groups formed tri-racial Maroon communities. At other times, they were firmly allied, though living separately – except in the case of the Amerindians and Africans who mixed freely.

Consequently, from the 17th century until the abolition of slavery in the U.S., there were also Maroon communities in areas stretching from the pine barrens of New Jersey, down the east coast to Florida, and in the Appalachian mountains and later to migrate to Mexico’s northern border regions. The best known (but little studied) ones were those that occupied the dismal swamp of Virginia and North Carolina and the Seminoles of Florida, which contrary to popular belief have never been an Amerindian tribe, but instead – from their beginnings – an ethnic group made up of Africans and Amerindians who came together to form the ethnicity: just like the Boni Maroons were formed in Suriname.

All of this replicated the decentralized organizing forms of the Maroons in Suriname and Jamaica. And although their political histories fall short of them winning and maintaining the degree of autonomy achieved in Suriname or Jamaica, the descendants of the Seminoles in Mexico and the U.S. still fiercely guard their communities against the Mexican and U.S. governments: in Florida they’re recognized as a semi-autonomous tribe, and the Africans (Seminoles) in Oklahoma, Texas and Mexico also distinguish themselves from their neighbors – while calling Blacks in

the U.S. ‘state negroes.’ According to New Afrikan nationalist cadre from the U.S. who have worked around them, the African Seminoles never considered themselves citizens of the U.S. like African-Americans do.

Finally, the legendary history and present posture of the people of the Southern Appalachians – in still refusing to fully integrate into the fabric of the U.S. – rests more on a forgotten history of their ancestors’ struggle to remain free from any servitude or domination, than they or we understand. Instead, we’ve adopted the bourgeoisie myth about them being hopelessly backwards and ultra-racist, although in reality true hillbilly culture and practice is really isolationist and independent, reflecting the autonomist spirit of their ancestors.

Haiti

The history of Haiti provides an excellent laboratory in which to test my thesis.

What would become the country of Haiti was once known as San Domingo or Saint Domingo, the western part of the island of Hispanola in the Caribbean. Today the country of the Dominican Republic occupies the larger eastern part of the island.

There, between 1791 and 1804, we witness one of the most titanic struggles ever engaged in between (enslaved) workers and their overlords. It is through an examination of the events surrounding that struggle that we can clearly measure the strengths and weaknesses of our dragon and hydra: centralized and decentralized forces of change. Here is a much neglected goldmine of historical contribution to our search for historical lessons – on par with the great French revolution of 1789.

For generations prior to the French revolution – that set the stage for the Haitian revolt two years later – Maroon guerrillas and communities had been operating throughout the entire island of Hispanola. And later many of their descendants would distinguish themselves amongst the multitudes of the little-known heroic figures of those times. Most notably, the intrepid Mackandal, in the pre-revolutionary period (CA 1750s), organized and led a select group of African Maroons and enslaved plantation workers in a conspiracy designed to overthrow the French and colonial powers by massive and bewildering use of a vast array of poisons: against individuals, livestock, supplies, water and any African workers who were believed to be sympathetic to, or in league with, the French.

After years of terrorizing the island, Mackandal slipped up and was betrayed and subsequently burnt at the stake, fatally crippling his tightly organized, centralized movement.

slave economy, but New African resistance to slavery continues to inspire New African resistance to national oppression. Herbert Aptheker (the author of “American Negro Slave Revolts”) recounts the personal remark of one New African involved in the civil rights struggle:

“From personal experience I can testify that American Negro Slave Revolts made a tremendous impact on those of us in the civil rights and Black Liberation movement. It was the single most effective antidote to the poisonous ideals that blacks had not a history of struggle or that such struggle took the form of non-violent protest. Understanding people like Denmark Vessey, Nat Turner, William Lloyd Garrison etc. provided us with that link to our past that few ever thought existed.”

Black August contends that from the very inception of slavery, New Africans huddled illegally to commemorate and draw strength from New African slaves who met their death resisting. Black August asserts that it is only natural for each generation of New Africans faced with the task to liberate the nation, to draw strength and encouragement from each generation of New African warriors that preceded them. It is from such a rich heritage of resistance that Black August developed, committed to continuing the legacy of resistance, vowing to respond to the destruction of colonial oppression with our George Jacksons, Malcolm X’s, and Fred Hamptons etc.

New African resistance moved decisively into the 1920s and 1930s. Evidence of this was movements like: The African Blood Brothers, The Share Croppers, The Black Bolsheviks, etc. Unduly there is an incorrect tendency to confine the discussion of African Nationalism to the well-known Garvey movement as the sole manifestation of national consciousness. The Garvey movement was the point of the emerging politics of New African resistance.

In labor, national consciousness, (i.e. literature, jazz, art, etc..) in the struggle for the land, in all areas of politics, like a great explosion of previously pent-up National Consciousness took place among New Africans.

The sixties was a further example of New African resistance to national oppression. It should be emphasized here that that struggle of non-violence was at that time a strategy of illegality, of danger, of arousing New Africans to direct confrontation with the colonial oppressor. Whether it was a sit-in at a segregated lunch counter or bus station, the movement deliberately broke the colonial law.

Inevitably the anti-colonial struggle moved to a higher level, growing beyond the initial stage of non-violent civil rights protest. Non-violent civil rights strategy was tried and discarded by New Africans, who found that it was a failure, incapable of forcing an entrenched settler’s colonial regime to change.

Black August purports that it is important to briefly mention such events to counter the colonial propaganda that the riots of the 1960s was due to anger brought on by overcrowdedness and summer heat. Black August asserts that in order for New Africans to arise to the historical task of defending the Nation, it is imperative that New Africans have a historical perspective of themselves resisting colonial oppression.

Black August avers that at a time when the Black Nation is experiencing the destruction of its community through planned gentrification, at a time when the quality of New African life is being blunted through unemployment, prison, drugs, high infant mortality and poverty, the call of New African organization should be one of resistance.

Black August is the antithesis to “celebration” and empty “homage.” Black August attempts to place struggle and sacrifice on center stage. In this respect, Black August summons all progressive people who identify with the legacy of resistance to colonial oppression by actively participating in Black August. Thus during the entire month of August in commemoration of those Africans who have made the supreme sacrifice for the cause of African Liberation and reflect upon the significance of those contributions as well as to draw closer to the continuing necessity for resistance, we embrace the following as tenets to be practiced during Black August.

Tenets of the Black August Program

1. A fast which historically has been used as an expression of personal commitment and resistance. Hence, from the sunrise until evening meal we will abstain from eating.
2. We abstain from consuming any type of intoxicants for the entire month of August. The necessity for this should be self-evident for all serious participants of Black August.
3. We limit our selection of television and radio to educational programs, i.e. news, documentaries and cultural programs, etc.
4. During BA we emphasize political and cultural studies for individuals involved in BA. Participants in BA should pair off with someone else you know to study and share knowledge of African Affairs.
5. As an outward expression of BA we wear a Black arm band on the left arm or wrist as a tribute to those Africans who have died as a result of their sacrifice for African Liberation. The arm band can be worn either on the inside or outside of your clothing.
6. Black August (BA) is a revolutionary concept. Therefore, all revolutionaries, nationalists and others who are committed to ending oppression should actively participate in Black August. Such participation not only begins to build the bridges of international solidarity, but it is through such solidarity that we strengthen ourselves to struggle for victory.

One Man’s Terrorist is Another Man’s Freedom Fighter

BY KAZI TOURE, former political prisoner

I was asked by my comrade Jaan Laaman to put down a few lines about the events that led up to August 7, 1970, and in particular Jonathan Jackson, younger brother of George. These two men more than any other have influenced my thought and practice to this day. The organization that I joined and went underground with, the United Freedom Front, (UFF), marked our time by the death of Jonathan. August 8, 1970 was day one. It is now 391132ADJ.

As many of us know about history, things do not happen in isolation. Its usually a list of actions or events that culminate into a larger action. It was not too different with what happened on August 7. The latter part of the 1960s, from 1967 to 1970, there had been a number of racist attacks by white supremacists inside and outside of what is known as prison. What usually occurs in the micro gets replicated in the macro, larger society. If we are to be astute and learn the lessons of those who came before, Brother Malcolm taught us that the entire united states is one big prison. We on the “outside” are in minimum security.

So, as the klan, Oakland pigs, L.A. pigs, Chicago pigs, N.Y., Boston, N.C., New Orleans, Selma, and all the pigs, in this PIG nation collectively waged WAR on all indigneous, national organizations, struggles and movements so did their counterparts inside maximum security. We really need to look at things in context. The Black Panther Party was formed in 1966. The country was embroiled in social unrest, people on a move from Chavez and the farm workers, Young Lords, Martin Luther King jr., the Yippies, hippies, dippies, the white women’s movement, everyone was riding the backs of the most oppressed, taking example and liberties. As the Vietnam war progressed so did the racism in the united states. Soldiers left these shores calling the Vietnamese “gooks,” while the pigs (national occupying army) called us “niggers” and spics. This country made sure its foreign policy mirrored the practiced of its domestic policy, in minimum security.

According to the aryan nation, on January 16, 1967, Martin’s birthday, one of their nazi members was killed by someone in the Black Guerilla Family in San Quentin. The next day a riot broke out on the prison yard and a prison guard opened fire from the towers, wounding five prisoners. Over the next three years attacks intensified every day. As prisoners went out onto the main yards of Soledad, and San Quentin, Black prisoners were strip searched and disarmed, while white prisoners were allowed to carry their shanks to the yard. During the three years numerous attacks occurred escalating to January 13, 1970.

On January 13, 1970, several Aryan brotherhood members, along with Mexican Mafia members, beefed with members of the Black Guerrilla Family members on the exercise yard in Soledad prison. The tower guard, pig Opie Miller opened fire with a high powered rifle, killing W.L. Nolen, Alvin Miller, and Cleveland Edwards. Three days later on January 16, 1970, a white pig guard John V. Mills, was thrown from the third tier of Y wing and died.

On February 16, 1970 George Jackson, Fleeta Drumgo, and John Clutchette were indicted for the murder of pig Mills. Just nine days later on February 25, 1970 a Black prisoner Fred Billingslea, was gassed and beaten to death in San Quentin. Two weeks later a guard was stabbed in retaliation. Jame McClain was charged with stabbing the pig guard.

In July of 1970, another pig guard was killed in Soledad, and seven Black prisoners were indicted for his death. Now you know it did not take seven brothers to kill one pig, but they probably did not know who did it, and charged seven people who were organizing something they did not approve of. That is the way it usually goes down. The price one pays for standing up.

On August 7, 1970, George Jackson, Fleeta Drumgo, and John Clutchette were supposed to appear in court for a hearing. Jonathan planned to free his big brother that day. His actions that day made thousands of people watching proud and ashamed at the same time. Proud of a Black man, and I have to say man, because though he was only seventeen years old, he showed more courage than many grown men twice his age. After realizing that his blood brother George would not be brought in to court, he took it to a higher level. He said these also are my brothers, and took them. Jonathan was prepared. But, he was not prepared for how the state reacted. He took the judge, some jurors, and the pig prosecutor as shields. The judge told the pigs not to shoot. But, as soon as they got into the van the pigs opened fire, killing Jonathan, the judge, James McClain, and William Christmas. The only surviving prisoner was Ruchell Magee, who is still in prison today. The state showed us that day they would rather kill their own than to let freedom fighters win.

Jonathan showed us, if we want our comrades, sisters, brothers, friends and lovers, free from these concentration camps in amerikkka, then we had better get busy making plans to free them as Sista Assata was freed. Thirty-nine years, eleven months and thirty-two days after the death of Jonathan. Soon to be 40 years. Long live the spirit of Jonathan in our hearts, minds, and struggle.

Big clenched fist salute, brother. All power to the people. “Settle your quarrels, come together, understand the reality of our situation, understand that fascism is already here, that people are already dying who could be saved, that generations more will live poor butchered half-lives if you fail to act. Do what must be done, discover your humanity and your love in revolution.” George Jackson, *Blood in My Eye*

and European mercenaries, accompanied by thousands more Colonial soldiers and enslaved African workers and ‘free negro rangers’ was also unsuccessful, causing the commander to return to Europe with less than a dozen of his force he’d led to Suriname; and to die himself within a year.

From then until the ending of slavery, the Dutch relied on treachery, trying to manipulate the various treaties and (still) fighting Maroons against each other. And although they did succeed in getting a younger, less-experienced generation of treaty Maroons to assassinate Boni, Chief Puja and Kormantin Kodjo (who were old men, who had turned over their leadership to younger maroons), the other fighting Maroons continued to exercise their autonomy until slavery was abolished. And today the Boni Maroons still live autonomously in Suriname proper, where there’s more than 70 thousand direct descendants of the ‘bush negroes.’

The Dutch imperialists tried their best to slay the Hydra! They failed. Was it because the Maroons decentralized formations prevented the Dutch from concentrating their superior resources against any one centralized leadership – any bright star? I think so.

Have the various bush negroe ethnicities been able to maintain their autonomy over hundreds of years, against all oppressive forces, through their refusal to allow themselves to be subjected by any broad centralizing forces? I think so again.

Jamaica

Across the Caribbean from Suriname – in Jamaica – from as early as the 1650s there developed similar decentralized Maroon communities, only there they were fighting against the local enslavers of the British Empire. After generations of unsuccessful campaigns by the British against the Maroon guerrillas, they too hit upon the necessity of trying to divide the fighting Maroons from their main source of new recruits: the enslaved African workers. So the British offered the Maroons ‘treaties’ similar to those in Suriname.

To force the British to adopt such methods, the Maroons fought tenaciously, skillfully and bravely for over 100 years! And even though there (also) we witness a number of decentralized groups, they roughly became to be recognized as the Windward and Leeward Maroons: the former located in the eastern (windward) end of Jamaica, and the latter on the westward (leeward) side. And history records the most noted Maroon of the Windwards as an African womyn named Granny Nanny – who even had a town named after her in the Maroon’s liberated territory. Indeed, Nanny Town became the center of the resistance to British plantation imperialism in Jamaica, the headquarters from which the Maroon bands almost succeeded in driving all of the imperialists from the island altogether – even

though British soldiers captured and burned Nanny Town on a number of occasions.

The dominant personality amongst the Leewards was an African man named Kodjo. History records Kodjo as leading a tightly controlled and centralized operation. When the Windwards had to make a trek across the island during one fierce suppression effort, seeking the Leewards help, even Kodjo could not force them to abandon their autonomy.

Telling, it was Granny Nanny who led a segment of decentralized Windwards to resist signing the treaties the longest. She went as far as to have the British envoys killed on more than one occasion, and only submitted after Kodjo and all of the male Maroon heads had capitulated.

After that, these Maroons were used to help the British hunt and capture new runaways, as well as suppress revolts amongst the still enslaved African workers; although they fiercely clung to the freedom and autonomy they and their ancestors had fought for!

In fact, over a generation later their descendents would again engage the British in the Trelawny War in the middle of the 1790s, during which a mere 267 Maroon guerillas fought thousands of British soldiers, local militia and enslaved Africans to a complete stand still. They, however, were also tricked and placed on boats to be deported to Canada – and later to Africa after accepting a truce.

Even so, from then until our time, the descendents of those remaining Maroon communities in Jamaica still continue to occupy the lands they fought on, and they’ve never recognized any overlords; neither the later British or black governments!

The United States

It’s ironic that those of us who live in the U.S. continue to neglect to thoroughly study and critique the wealth of documented history about the anti-imperialist and anti-expansionist struggles that have occurred here since the Europeans first started colonizing this area, other than the well-known Native American suppression and genocide.

Like the volumes of works written about the Civil Rights, Black Liberation struggle of the 1960s and 1970s, the early Labor Movement, Womyn’s Suffrage Movement, Abolitionist Movement and Reconstruction period, there’s a mountain of other revolutionary material we can learn from. And not surprisingly, that information concerns the struggles of enslaved workers on these shores prior to the abolition of chattel slavery. In fact, it mirrors the already mentioned struggles in Suriname and Jamaica, with the important distinction that it encompasses multi-racial aspects – more so than either of the former cases. Namely, in the U.S. – until the abolition of slavery – Africans, Amer-

discussing in 1975. In fact, the descendents of the early Maroons were again forced to fight another guerilla war against the newly-independent government in 1980: a successful effort on the part of the Maroons to maintain their autonomy and control over the lands they’ve historically occupied.

Their decentralized methods had their drawbacks. Their enemies in the imperialist camp were able to manipulate various Maroon communities into signing ‘treaties’ that gave those communities their freedom from enslavement and land to use – in exchange for them cooperating in the hunting down and capturing of other fugitives. By doing that, the enslavers could avoid the all but useless wars designed to capture or kill the skillful Maroon guerrillas, and everyone on the Maroon communities fell in that category: at the drop of a hat, the women and children in those communities could pack their belongings and escape to pre-arranged and built-up alternative settlements, while the men (and some women) busied themselves in fighting rear guard actions against the pursuing colonial soldiers.

It turns out, however, that although the treaties did solve some of the imperialist’s problems, the Suriname Maroons never really fulfilled their obligations to help the imperialists hunt and capture other Maroons. A narrative of the Dutch forces’ generations-long wars designed to either capture or kill the Boni Maroons is instructive in that regard (see The Boni Maroon Wars in Suriname).

By the mid-18th century, the Dutch had been forced by over a century of Maroon guerilla warfare to sign treaties with three of the most powerful Maroon communities: the Ndjuka, Saramaka and the Matawai. All of these Maroon communities had evolved over generations from fugitive African – from any different backgrounds – into new ethnicities which adopted the already mentioned names. Most importantly, they had soundly defeated all of the imperialist forces fielded to capture or kill them, while continuing to expand their numbers and offer an ever-growing threat to the Dutch colony.

The treaties came with yearly ‘gifts’ of all kinds that the Dutch would deliver to the Maroons: textiles, pots and pans, guns, powder, axes, knives, mirrors, nails, liquor and just about anything agreed upon during the periodic sit-downs between the parties. The underlying objectives of the imperialists were to both rid themselves of a dangerous enemy and turn them into valuable allies.

Yet once it became known to the still enslaved African workers that they could no longer rely on the Njuka, Saramaka and Matawai for refuge and protection, they began to seek out smaller Maroon concentrations. In the early 1700s, one of those small groups was headed by an African named Asikan Silvester. Born into this group was a child called Boni. His mother was a fugitive African and his fa-

ther either African or Amerindian. Subsequently, the group chose Boni to be its new head, after Asikan became too old to serve in that position. This group of Maroons would eventually become known to the Dutch as a new center of resistance, and for the next two generations Boni would lead them, and they would be known to history as the Boni Maroons – becoming an ethnicity. Thus, the Boni Maroons just replicated what the imperialists thought they were suppressing by the signing of the treaties with the other Maroons. Consequently, they would not sign any more treaties with either the Boni’s or any other Maroons – up until the end of the slave period.

Boni – for his part – would lead his group to aggressively wage war on the imperialists until his death in his mid-sixties.

Yet even while the Boni’s became the main fighting force amongst all of those Maroons who were still at war with the Dutch, they still observed and respecer the democratic wishes of any fugitives or Maroon groups they dealt with; never trying to centralize all control in their hands. Although they were past masters in the use of coordinated guerilla campaigns amongst all of the decentralized groups – during which a unified command was essential – they still never demanded that everyone integrate themselves into the Boni community; or put themselves directly under Boni outside of when participating in agreed-upon guerilla campaigns and during raids. Thus, the Dutch recorded their knowledge of the frequent coming together of the decentralized fighters of Kormantin Kodjo, Chief Puja, Boni and Baron during large campaigns, while separating and remaining decentralized and autonomous otherwise.

Unlike the ‘treaty Maroons,’ they never became dependent upon the imperialists for anything, instead relying on their raiding capabilities to capture guns, powder, cannons, and other useful items. Moreover, they had perfected methods of large-scale open field agriculture that allowed them to raise harvest and store more food than they could consume – along with more farm animals than they could use to supplement their diets.

Dutch soldiers recorded discovering Boni and related Maroon fields that took them an hour one way and 30 minutes the other way to mark off for destruction, along with so many domesticated chickens they had to slaughter the excess after feasting on them for days. They and their Maroon foes always noted how much better the Maroons were fed, and how much better physical specimens the Maroons showed themselves to be. It became a prime motivator of the Dutch-led troops to hunt for and locate Maroon food stores and farm animals in order to supplement their own poor diets.

During the Dutch’s final major campaign in the second Boni war, an expeditionary force of 1600 Dutch regulars

Debts Owed: A Generational Perspective on a Time of Remembrance

BY AKILI CASTLIN

[Editor’s note: Akili had to write this article without mentioning ‘Black August’ by name, because Pelican Bay State Prison erroneously considers any mention of George Jackson or related individuals/events as participation in a prison gang. 4strugglemag wholeheartedly denounces this criminalization of politics and the persecution of our readers for voicing their political beliefs.]

As the illusion of a post-kleptocratic, post-racial corporative Amerika, “a tide which will lift all boats” dribbles from the tobacco-stained lips of the commanding thief (i.e. commander and chief), the muddy quicksand of its domestic and foreign policies continues smothering the lives of poor people the world over.

To protect their booty, rabid watchdogs have been chained to the people’s consciousness, as evidenced by the increasingly repressive forms of isolation and sensory deprivation, under which we suffer in the short corridors and CMUs [1]. The mere mention of certain revolutionaries, movements or the memorial which has been developed over the last 30 plus years to honour them, will arouse the K9’s madness, causing another vicious attack.

Nonetheless, this is our time of remembrance, re-member-ing

the goal
the struggle
the pain
the possibility

and preparing ourselves to face down and deal with all contradictions head up. As Assata Shakur is quoted to have said, “If you’re deaf, dumb and blind to what’s happening in the world, you’re under no obligation to do anything. But if you know what’s happening and you don’t do anything but sit on your ass, then you’re nothing but a punk” [2].

This remembrance is the love-inspired footprint upon our hearts, left to guide us back to who we are meant to be, driving us forward to who we know we can be, reminding us in tangible, objective, political, economic, social, cultural and spiritual terms that ‘impossible’ is a fleeting moment of weakness in which we can ill-afford to indulge.

It teaches us that there are no things with qualities in and of themselves – that there are no conflicts that are absolute

and that the law of equilibrium (maat) won’t allow this imbalance to continue much longer.

Therefore, our generational responsibility in advancing revolutionary culture, custom and consciousness is to come full circle, taking the entire historical record, the living legacy of our elders, PP/POWs and applying it to the war situation as we face it today. With an eye towards tomorrow, two points must be foremost in our minds as we practice this remembrance:

1. “Consciousness is the opposite of indifference, of blindness, blankness. Promoting consciousness involves the general dissemination of the concept that each of us is part of a universal action and interaction; that poles are somewhere connected, that there are material causes for trauma, vertigo, degenerative disease. Connections, connections, cause and effect, clarity on their relation and interrelations. The connection with the past, continuity, flow, movement, the awareness that nothing, nothing remains the same for long. And it follows that if a thing is not building, it is certainly decaying. That life is revolution – and that the world will die if we don’t read and act out its imperatives.” [3]
2. “People must become their real selves, in spite of this profane and insane, spiritually polluted social environment we’re stuck in. It’s in there, somewhere and people can access it, practice it, develop it and become their real effective anarchist selves. It’s vitally necessary for everyone who wants to live a real life and I’m telling you, it’s possible.” [4]

The reading of these two points leads to a series of questions that will help define the purpose of our practice:

- 1a. Where are the poles of action and interaction connected?
- 1b. How do we read and act out the world’s imperatives?
- 2a. What/who is our “real selves”?
- 2b. How do we access it, practice it, develop it?

The poles are connected in a web of interdependence and inter-relationships at the core of all existence. They are supported by past and present and future, not as distinct measurements of time but as a continuity, a flow, in the manner explained by Newton’s third law (every action has an equal and opposite reaction). Their connection is made at the point of our action or inaction. The establishment of consciousness at this level determines a person’s or society’s degree of wellness (i.e. freedom from trauma, vertigo, degenerative disease, etc.)

The world’s imperatives are read by constantly weighing the individual and collective wellness of a person/society against the feather of Maat. Maat (the law of equilibrium) is a major theme in the spiritual cultivation system developed by our Afrikan ancestors of Kamit. Maat is best de-

fined as “man’s ability to perceive the order underlying his/her make up and all things in the world, and to translate it into laws of living (morality, science, religion, etc.)” [5].

We should note the historical record reveals that “poetic language and dialogue were methods used by the ancient Afrikans all over Alkebu-lan (Africa) in every aspect of their recordings of their living experiences and that of their religious outlook; they, not distinguishing any difference between the spiritual and the secular, modern-day Africans to a great degree have continued this custom” [6]. Furthermore, “...Religion is basically the historical recordings of a people’s heritage with a preponderance of mythology surrounding their national heroes who were most instrumental in creating their political compact (nation); it being the height of ancestral worship...” [9].

Also, “...The ancestors of the African and Asian peoples, the ancients did not separate that which is today called “secular history” from “religious history...” [8] and “...the life of many of the Gods (who were for the most part actually deceased kings-pharaohs) had to do with much of their performance while they were still alive on this planet Earth, in Kimit (Egypt) North Africa” [9].

This reveals that communion with the ancestors through the practice of remembrance/memorial ceremonies and living according to Maat are prerequisite to accessing our “real (true) selves.”

Within the mythoscientific literature are key components that elucidate how to build upon the historic examples of our elders and ancestors, one of which is the 7 cardinal virtues: Truth, Justice, Harmony, Balance, Reciprocity, Propriety and Order. These virtues – summarized as “to know truth you must live it” – must be the colander through which our practice and actions are sifted.

Addressing ourselves to the world’s imperatives via the 7 cardinal virtues, and communion with the ancestors (memorials) develops another Maatian principle – we become Maakheru (true of word and deed). Inevitably, if our practice is sincere like the August body of example we memorialize, we become revolutionaries. Having reached the zenith in human evolution,

we earn the title of Ausar, which our Kamitic ancestors explained as having awakened the higher divisions of our spirit/consciousness and truly become one with all. This is the manifestation of our true or real selves, the egalitarian freedom fighter, the scientific socialist, the New Afrikan revolutionary nationalist, the communist, the anarchist.

Chairman Fred Hampton in more clear terms put it this way: “I don’t care how much theory you got, if it don’t have any practice applied to it, then that theory happens to be irrelevant. Right? Any theory you get practice it, and when you practice it you make some mistakes, when you make a mistake you correct that theory and then it will be corrected theory that will be able to be applied and used in any situation. That’s what we’ve got to be able to do” [10].

Practice is part and parcel of Franz Fanon’s instruction that “each generation must out of relative obscurity discover its mission, fulfill it or betray it.” Our practice of studying, meditating and physical training every day, and fasting on the specific movement days of the memorial must be seen as and used as our guideline.

It is an opportunity for self-reflection and communion with our sheps and dark deceased [11]. Inspired by those who made the ultimate sacrifice in smoothing the path, we are to move into another year of struggle with renewed vigor and determination to insure the debts owed them are paid in full and that the terror of injustice ceases.

Let us focus our collective consciousness on discovering our generational mission, and committing ourselves to establishing the means by which we will fulfill it and honour those who’ve come before and those who will follow. Remember “consciousness is knowledge, recognition, foresight; common experience, and perception; sensibility, alertness, mindfulness. It stirs the senses, the blood; it exposes and suggests; it will objectify, enrage, direct. There are no positive formulas for a thing so complex. We have guidelines only to help us with its growth. This means that after we are done, with our books, they must be put aside; and the search for method will depend on observations, correct analyses, creativity and seizing the time.”



KEVIN (KAMIT) JOHNSON

Amerindians, one could compare everyone else – but the small number of plantation operating entrepreneurs and administrators – with what we today recognize as the technologically-advanced countries’ labor aristocracy and petty bourgeoisie with those elements being fully dependent for their livelihood and protection of their persons and property, from the enslaved workers and remaining indigeneous people, on the Dutch military, militias, the imperial court and the big mercantilists.

I made those comparisons because we all too often fail to point out that the enslaved Africans were transported across the Atlantic to assume the role of workers, and just about everyone else associated with their plight were also – first and foremost – other workers, similar to our plight today. And the issue of race did not – could not – change that basic fact! So keep that in mind as we develop this work.

Amongst the Africans were many different ethnic groups from different areas of the continent, all speaking different languages and with many varied religious and cultural practices. To give an idea of the stratification of these Africans, the fact that they all had dark skins meant next to nothing to them in terms of solidarity. Where they originally came from everybody had dark skin: friends and enemies alike! Further, it was the practice of the plantation owners to try to purchase workers from different backgrounds in order to keep them divided as much as possible. And because the work was so brutal and the food was so inadequate, most plantations were really death camps, where the African workers were literally worked to death in a few years, only to be replaced with newly-imported enslaved workers, who would also go on to make handsome profits for the owners. Thus, the turnover itself was a powerful check on the formation of any solidarity between the enslaved workers.

Be that as it may, almost from the first importation of enslaved Africans, there developed a tradition of flight from slavery: Africans ran away to the forests, swamps and highlands. These fugitives came to be known as Bosch Creoles: Dutch for Bush Creoles, or “born in the forest” and later bush negroes, who we’ll call Maroons throughout our study, as a generic name that has come to be used as an accepted way to describe fugitive, enslaved people throughout the western hemisphere.

Throughout the western hemisphere, we witness these collective Maroons developing and using a very effective form of decentralized organizing that not only served to help them defeat their former enslavers, but has helped them remain autonomous from all unwanted overseers for hundreds of years – until our time.

It must be recalled that the Suriname Africans were from many different backgrounds, so when they would come together as Maroons that would have to be factored in. They had to organize using democratic methods, and the glue that held them together was their collective focus on defeating their enslavers’ attempts to control them; *that* centralized their efforts.

There remained, however, one class of their communities who did not fit into that category: those Africans who did not flee, but were forced by maroon raiders to leave the plantations. They did not enjoy a say in their communities’ affairs until they had proven themselves.

But as a general rule, individuals and small groups would flee the plantations to join the Maroons, and on occasions large conspiracies were organized that saw the enslaved workers preparing the ground work for maroon guerrillas to raid plantations and liberate scores at a time.

This example exhibits decisions arrived at by truly democratic means, and then carried out in a centralized manner, all done by otherwise decentralized groups. Long before our later Bolsheviks!

Over a 150 year period, the various Maroon communities of Suriname would wage a guerrilla war with the Dutch and English slavers to remain free. Today in Suriname their direct descendants still occupy the areas their ancestors fought on, and most of them have never suffered under slavery – even before the U.S. signed its own Declaration of Independence in 1776.

Even as this is written they remain autonomous from the government of Suriname – which gained its independence from the Netherlands – whose Dutch ancestors we’re



dress to the IWMA still holds true today. Albeit, he underestimated the degree of opposition the workers would face and the length of time it would take for them to overcome all of the obstacles in their path.

Marx, superb analyst that he was, due to the Eurocentric predilections that entrapped him, overlooked or dismissed important workers struggles that fell outside of Europe; or he at least failed to study them with the same intensity that he devoted to those European situations upon which he (primarily) based his otherwise well-based analysis. That set in motion other willful neglecting of formulating a proper evaluation of these ‘other’ struggles up until today even. A thorough study, evaluation, adaptation (wherever applicable) and understanding of some of these workers struggles will help us move forward in our struggle against imperialism. There, we’ll find proven, workable alternatives to the flawed DC forms of organizing: ones that mirror Stan Goff’s analysis of the strengths of the early Bolsheviks’ use of that form.

Back to the Future

First off, let me state that I’m not an anarchist. Yet, a lot of what you’ll read here is gonna look a whole lot like anarchism! To that I will only quote an unknown ancient, who after racking his brain to formulate answers to vexing problems, only later to discover that those who had come along before him had already expounded on what he thought were his intellectual inventions, is supposed to have blurted, “confound those ancients, they’ve stolen all of our best ideas.”

Therefore, to the anarchist reader, what follows cannot properly be termed anarchism, simply because the practitioners themselves never knew that word, nor were they in contact with people of that view, as anarchism is a European ideology and these parties – for the most part – were Africans and Amerindians with very limited input by a small number of outcast Europeans. Further, all of the struggles here written about had pretty much taken off and gained success prior to that concept’s spread – under its classical anarchist thinkers and practitioners.

Still, the affinity between anarchism and the following is not rejected; on the contrary, it’s welcomed as a sister set of ideas, beliefs and concepts – as long as the anarchists understand that they stand on equal footing, in a spirit of inter-communal self determination.

Historical overview

The following is a short outline of various workers struggles against early European imperialism, as practiced in Suriname, Jamaica, a number of southern areas of what is today the U.S., and finally Haiti. I’ll outline how workers who had been enslaved fought longer than Marx’s, “fifteen, twenty, fifty years of civil wars and peoples struggles...”

in order to ultimately be able to exercise their own forms of self-determination and ‘political rule.’ And although all of them were as stratified as we are today, they were still able to democratically derive methods and policies that were collectively pursued by decentralized formations of their own making. And once winning their freedom from the various imperialist powers, unlike the later states ruled by Marxist vanguard formations, they never again relinquished their worker’s-based autonomy, until this day, with one exception (Haiti) which deserves special attention.

Afterwards, I hope that you do your own in depth research and study, because to most people the bulk of this history will be unfamiliar. Then you can decide whether such organizational forms and methods would be useful to us in our struggle to save ourselves and the planet.

Suriname

“We must slay the Hydra.” That was the Dutch imperialists’ main concern in Suriname from their earliest days there.

(Hydra: In Greek mythology, a many headed monster whose heads regrew when struck off. It was finally killed by Hercules. Also the largest and longest constellation in the sky, but with no particular bright star.)

On the northern coast of South America, this tropical country borders Guyana and French Guyana and fronts the Caribbean Sea, with Brazil to its south. Geographically above one-third, again, as large as Cuba. The first European interlopers to visit the area were the British, which were followed by the Dutch. Always it changed hands between them, but the Dutch were the main imperial power to occupy the country from the mid 1600s, up until the 1970s. All during that period, the overwhelming majority of the indigenous Amerindian populations were either suppressed, forced to flee to less hospitable areas, or exterminated.

The Dutch at that time were one of the world’s major imperial powers, vying alongside of the British, Spanish, Danish, Portuguese and the French for control of North and South America, the Caribbean and other places in the world.

The Dutch West Indies Company was one of the first, and a major corporation in the world. And in Suriname, it launched plantation-based production of cash crops on a large scale, using enslaved workers imported from different parts of Africa. Added to that were a number of other plantations run by other European ‘entrepreneurs,’ along with their overseers, shop-keepers, militias, artisans, administrators, bureaucrats and sailors, and a small percentage of (mostly) poor white women who had been exiled from Europe.

Compared to the enslaved Africans and the suppressed

Footnotes

1. See Daniel McGowan’s essay “Little Guantanamo: Exposing the CMU” in 4strugglemag issue 13, Summer 2009, which discusses the implementation of Communications Management Units (CMUs) in federal prisons. In 2005, CDCR (California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation) and PBSP (Pelican Bay State Prison) began housing the most politically active/conscious of the indeterminate SHU (Security Housing Unit) class prisoners in a special section of the SHU, called the short corridor (units D1 to D4). This unit is identical to the CMU in purpose and function. It is, however, secretive, and therefore allows for experiments in “repression techniques” which will eventually become standard practice/policy throughout the prison industrial complex, just as the CMU did, if we fail to act and/or act without unity in purpose. This writer was moved to the short corridor under color of “correctional convenience” in December 2007, in violation of U.S. constitutional rights. But then again, when did the constitution ever serve as anything other than kindling for Amerika’s disposed and permanent slave class?
2. Assata Shakur as quoted in “The Unleashed Thoughts of an Anarchist: Another Interview” with Anthony Rayson.
3. George Jackson. *Blood in my Eye*. Page 22.
4. Anthony Rayson
5. Ra Un Nefer Amen: Tree of Life Meditation system, page 5.
6. Dr. Yosef A.A. Ben-Jochannan: Africa Mother of Western Civilization, page 270.
7. Ibid, page 633.
8. Ibid, page 636.
9. Ibid, page 637.
10. Chairman Fred Hampton, Sr. speech at Olivet church in Chicago 1969 (reprinted in *Allied Resistance Network* magazine, issue 18, winter 2007-08).
11. In Kamitic mythoscientific literature, sheps and dark deceased are the honoured living or honoured dead, related to ancestor communication rituals/practice. It is believed that although all ancestors have the ability to function as guides and unifiers of the people, only those who attained the level of Ausar (revolutionaries) and were found to be Maa Kheru earned the right and privilege of becoming sheps/dark deceased.

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FIRST

BY ISMAIL ABDUL RAHMAN

F.I.R.S.T. (For Institutional Reform & Systematic Tour de force)

F.I.R.S.T. is a prison based reform movement dedicated and committed to restoring prisoner’s rights and seeking the complete abolishment of Capital Punishment, as well as all Constitutional infirmities in all state and federal prisons in America.

F.I.R.S.T. is not an ethnic, racial or national based group. Our basis of unity is simple - PRISON REFORM.

We are however political based, seeking to redress the inhumane and unconstitutional conditions that exist in today’s prisons. We recognize all prisons as Industrial Complex and all executions as state-sponsored murder.

F.I.R.S.T. members consist mostly of Texas state prisoners, including those on Death Row. Our members are devoted to educating fellow prisoners on how to secure and defend their Constitutional rights.

We are not a security threat group and refuse to be identified as such. We recognize and adhere to all prison policies that are not oppressive in nature or violate our protected constitutional rights. We will seek redress of any oppressive policies instituted by prison officials in a peaceful and admirable way.

F.I.R.S.T. will work in conjunction with any civil rights or prison reform groups, organizations and panels, in hopes that our solidarity will establish and institute a Tour de force that will be effective in eradicating all inhumanities.

F.I.R.S.T. expects all members to exemplify the virtue of self-sacrifice, loyalty, honesty and bravery. Anyone can join us. We are a medium that if utilized properly, can promote justice in a peaceful manner. Our organization’s principal mission is to provide prisoners with a vehicle of strength to which their voices can be heard.

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Our Historical New Afrikan Origins

BY MUTOPE DUGUMA

First and foremost, I want to embrace you all with a revolutionary salute/greetings and may the work that you all do toward the liberation of all humanity, come to its realization in its purest form throughout our progressive struggle.

So, I say to all progressors: continue to educate the masses away from the monopolized capitalist structures and their functions that exist throughout this nation and the international community that leaves the majority of humanity living in conflict with one another, while living half-butchered lives...and toward our scientific practices/principles that will provide humanity with a ‘blueprint’ that allows them to evolve alongside one another without the current emotional, dividing factors that put humankind against one another (i.e. education, politics, religion, class culture demographics and race).

It is only through a progressive educational re-orientation of the masses that we can revolutionize our societies toward their ‘true’ humanity and interests.

As a New Afrikan nationalist, guided by the principles of revolutionary practice, it is important that those who classify themselves as New Afrikans (i.e. Blacks or Afrikans) understand that the education of our New Afrikan masses to their New Afrikan historical origins is key.

As a colonized people, we have to deal with that which has caused an identity crisis amongst our masses. New Afrikans lack political/ideological development, whereas culture and demographics play a significant role in the psychology of our identity-formation.

Most people disregard the fact that we’re a New Afrikan colonized nation inside the United States. Instead, we represent territories/cultures, believing that New Afrikans in Texas are different from those in California or Georgia or New York – or worse, focus on divisions between New Afrikans even within the same state.

For example, in the State of California, we have culture tenets that are different from one another, like in LA and Oakland. In Los Angeles, gang culture is the principle sub-culture, where you have a lifestyle (i.e. cliquism, tribalism, mobs, groups, gangs) predicated on dress code, hairstyle, slang language, colors, graffiti and hand signs that become the ideology/politics manifest and culminate in a culture of violence. On the other hand, in the Bay area (Oakland), you have a subculture also predicated on cliquism, where pimping, prostitution and drug dealing have a style unique to them, which is totally different from Los Angeles.

In Oakland or LA, it doesn’t matter if they don’t think or talk or live in the same area or share the same social functions: they’re still all New Afrikans. In the past, these two subcultures went through a struggle of unity of opposites, when an emerging revolutionary, progressive ideology – the Black Panther Party/New Afrikan ideology – challenged the backward ideology in Oakland (i.e. sidewalk escapism), transformed that city, and later Los Angeles, and spread its seed throughout the United States.

New Afrikans throughout this nation were embracing the progressive New Afrikan ideology and had begun to be responsible for guiding and self-determining the New Afrikan Nation’s livelihood. This new phenomenon was seen as a threat to the U.S. government, who was responsible for colonizing the New Afrikan Nation within the borders of the United States. The U.S. government has used every attempt possible - chattel, slavery, psychological warfare, class war, internal racial war conflict, demoralization and miseducation – to continue that repression.

We New Afrikans have been identified by others as niggers, negros, coloreds, Afro-Americans, Black, African Americans. We have always been a nation of New Afrikan people, unlike any other ethnic group in the United States.

We have been named various ethnic classifications over the past 363 years of our New Afrikan existence here in Amerikkka. We as New Afrikans must now put to rest this miseducation of our ethnic classification: we are a New Afrikan Nation within the borders of the U.S., knowing that in the tradition of our ancestors, a free New Afrikan People, not withstanding the consequences, called themselves as they see fit, and are not defined as others would have us.

We call ourselves New Afrikans for 3 reasons

1. The name gives recognition to our historical Afrikan heritage.
2. When we use the name, it is a rejection of attempts by the U.S. government (our colonizers) to Amerikanize us to the rest of the world (i.e. to capitalist, imperialist, fascist principles).
3. When we call ourselves New Afrikans, we identify ourselves as a historically-evolved and legitimate nation of people in the community of Afrikan Nations.

Yet millions of us do not know our historical New Afrikan origins, outside saying we’re ‘descendants of slaves.’

Our origins begin with the arrival of our ancestors – Isabella-X, Antonio-X and eighteen other Afrikan women and men – onto the shores of Amerikkka in August of 1619 in Jamestown VA. During Amerikka’s era of chattel slavery, slaves were descendants of the Afrikan human race, consisting of different tribes and countries throughout the continent of Africa, such as The Zulu, Yoruba, Cameroon,

The Dragon and the Hydra: A Historical Study of Organizational Methods

BY RUSSELL MAROON SHOATS

“You have fifteen, twenty, fifty years of civil wars and people’s struggles to go through, not only to change the conditions but in order to change yourselves and make yourselves fit for political rule.” – Karl Marx addressing the IWMA, the body that would later become the First International.

Marx’s words hit close to home. I’ve been involved in such movements for forty years, a product – originally – of the Black Liberation Movement of the 1960s, and subsequently being held as a political prisoner in the U.S. since 1972. Over that period, I’ve participated in a number of mass and party formations. It never fails to amaze me how much energy and time is dedicated towards establishing various groups’ claims to being the so-called vanguard of some struggle for justice, when in the end most of these exercises turn out to be sterile, when they don’t degenerate into fratricidal conflicts.

Furthermore, I’d hazard it to say, that the entire history of Marxist Leninist social change has known few other methods, leading me to further say that a sober analysis of that history points to a struggle for supremacy – not only over the bourgeois ruling class, but also against the working class and all other oppressed people; against any and all formations either of the latter pull together that escape their control. Thus, their mantra of doing everything to seize power for the working class and oppressed is a farce.

If there has ever been a Marxist Leninist Vanguard party who has found itself in power and did not subsequently follow that script, I’m not aware of it. While arguments can always be found to rationalize why it was/is necessary to resort to such measures, and many such arguments do make sense – initially – a closer look always seems to force adherents to fall back on the mantra of the flawed individual(s) who did not hold true to Democratic Centralism’s (DC) principles, which are themselves wide open to interpretation and manipulation, in order to seize the initiative in a struggle for domination – as opposed to trying to make a “concrete analysis of concrete conditions,” as V.I. Lenin instructed.

At the same time, history has shown that such ruthless methods are effective: if the objectives of those who used the DC methods were simply to seize power, then their record during the 20th century was impressive. It has proved itself as brutally efficient and capable of outdoing anything the bourgeois forces are capable of. Nevertheless, in the end those who gained power using DC

method have always ended up using it to defeat the aspirations of the workers and oppressed, and subsequently install the users of it as a new oppressive ruling class.

How could it be expected to produce any other outcome? DC concentrates more power in the hands of a relative few than any mechanisms the masses the former purport to be serving can muster: a recipe that’s bound to conflict with the vagaries of flawed humans.

Stan Goff, in his masterful *Full Spectrum Disorder* (2004, Softskull Press), believes that DC as practiced by Lenin and his Bolsheviks did have a democratic basis, whereby an open and intense democratic struggle was carried out in order to arrive at positions and policies. Then all the party workers would move in a decentralized, free wheeling manner to make possible the implementation of those decisions (in the teeth of czarist repression), which ultimately had the effect of centralizing their combined efforts, only later to change their methods. This led to a more all around centralization and very little democracy, if any. Without a doubt, any number of other Marxist/Leninist/Maoist (style) groups have had similar experiences.

Yet, if the clear historical tendency is to always gravitate towards less democratic and more oppressive forms of control, then quite frankly for one to say their use of historical materialism is leading them to formulate correct liberation ideas, theories and plans by using DC is ludicrous!

The Contemporary Situation

Here we are at the beginning of the 21st century, facing a global crisis unknown heretofore in the entire history of humankind. The threats to our collective existence are so multidimensional, it would take many other works to detail them all. Consequently, I’ll limit myself to those that I believe are paramount to helping us break out of self-imposed mental roadblocks that hinder our efforts to move forward.

The main threat to humankind, the flora and fauna and our entire biosphere, is capitalist imperialism: a totally out of control, predatory, global system of accumulation and oppression that’s on a collision course with the limitations of our planet: daily devouring children, women, people of color, the poor, workers of all stripes, wildlife and the environment in pursuit of profits.

All of our problems primarily rest on the artificial divisions that have been engendered between the oppressed for hundreds of years: divisions based on gender, race, ethnicity, culture, geography, sexual preferences, age and otherwise. These divisions have been fostered, historically, by those who have sought to use them in their pursuit of power and material gain.

Under imperialism, the overwhelming majority of our planet’s humans are, ultimately, workers. Thus, Marx’s ad-

Political Prisoner Profile - Tsutomu Shirosaki

Tsutomu Shirosaki is a Japanese national imprisoned as a political prisoner in the United States. He has been accused of being a member of Japanese Red Army and participating in several attacks, including a mortar attack against a U.S. embassy. He is currently serving 30 years in a U.S Federal prison.

He was born in 1947 in central Japan. In the 1960s, he went to Tokyo University, where he received a degree in engineering. Tsutomu began participating in the student movement in his college years, embracing a more left-wing philosophy. By the 1970s, he participated in various underground activities, including a string of bank and post office robberies to raise funds for Japanese radical groups. In 1971, Shirosaki was arrested in Tokyo and sentenced to ten years in prison for an attack on a Bank of Yokohama branch office.

Flight 472 Hijack

On September 28, 1977, five members of the Japanese Red Army hijacked Japan Airlines Flight 472 in Dhaka, Bangladesh. They demanded \$6 million from the Japanese government and the release of nine prisoners held in Japan. The prisoners listed included radical activists and members of the Japanese Red Army.

On October 2, six of the nine prisoners were released and taken to Dhaka. One of those prisoners released was Tsutomu Shirosaki. The released prisoners, the JRA hijackers and the remaining hostages then flew to Algeria, where the hostages were released. According to Shirosaki, the released prisoners and JRA members eventually ended up in Lebanon.

After the drama of the hijacking settled, the Japanese authorities announced that the released prisoners should turn themselves in to the nearest Japanese embassy. With no response from the prisoners, the Japanese government placed the freed prisoners on the Interpol wanted list.

Tsutomu Shirosaki, while choosing freedom, had no idea where to go. He had never traveled outside of Japan and spoke no other language than his own. According to Shirosaki, the Japanese Red Army assisted the freed prisoners in adjusting to the new region. Despite the generosity of the JRA, Shirosaki has stated that he never joined the organization. Instead, he became a volunteer fighter in the Palestinian revolution with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP). With the Palestinian movement being so strong in Lebanon, Shirosaki did not need a passport to stay in the country.

1986 Bombing in Jakarta

On May 14, 1986, two mortar-styled rockets were fired into the U.S. Embassy compound in Jakarta, Indonesia. Then, two rockets were fired from a hotel room toward the Japanese Embassy. Also that morning, a car bomb exploded in the Canadian Embassy parking lot causing injuries to three people. A group calling itself the Anti-Imperialist International Brigade (AIIB) claimed responsibility for the action. The attacks were in response to the G7 summit in Tokyo. Seven weeks after the incident, the Japanese government announced that they had found a fingerprint of Tsutomu Shirosaki in the hotel room where the rockets were launched at the Japanese embassy. They also claimed the Anti-Imperialist International Brigade was another name for the Japanese Red Army. During the time of the attack, Tsutomu Shirosaki was still in Lebanon. He was not in Jakarta and was not a member of either the JRA or the AIIB. Shirosaki did not respond to the claims of his involvement because he felt they were so ridiculous. He was in Lebanon and thought that he was in a safe haven.

After the Oslo Accords, it became difficult for the Palestinian armed resistance to exist in Lebanon, so Shirosaki decided to leave. Using a false ID, he traveled to South Asia. In December of 1987, Italian authorities announced international warrants for Tsutomu Shirosaki and another suspected Japanese Red Army member, Junzo Okudaira, for an attack on the U.S. Embassy in Rome six months earlier.

The Arrest

On September 21, 1996, local police in Kathmandu, Nepal arrested Tsutomu Shirosaki after he tried to contact some friends, whose phone was tapped by the U.S. National Security Agency. He was handed over to the FBI and extradited to the United States to stand trial. After arriving in the U.S., Shirosaki stood before a 15-day trial and was sentenced to two concurrent 20-year terms and also given 10-year terms on other chargers. The 20-year terms were ordered to run consecutively to the 10-year terms for a total prison time of 30 years. Tsutomu Shirosaki never took the stand at his own trial. He has stated he had no part in the attacks in Jakarta or membership with the Japanese Red Army or the Anti-Imperialist International Brigade. He has argued that his fingerprint had been placed at the scene. In his own words, “I did not know that planting a copied finger print from a file is easy work, even in the early ’70s a corrupted policeman did, but a few years later it became clear. But I didn’t know such information, as mentioned, I was in Japan’s jail, then in Lebanon, then in South Asia, so no news about such activities.”

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Mandingo, Ashanti and the Caribbean, such as Belize, Jamaica, Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Cuba, Haiti, Bahamas etc. They coalesced to form an Afrikan ethnic group of peoples, creating our New Afrikan ethnic group here in the 13 colonies of Great Britain (later titled the United States in 1776). As our New Afrikan nation fought against chattel slavery, our women folks were being raped by their captors during the years of 1619 to 1630 and throughout chattel slavery up to June 19 1865. We realized that the child of that vicious rape produced a beautiful new member to our New Afrikan nation. Even though those children had that dirty rapist blood flowing through their veins, that child was born to our New Afrikan nation and we welcome them all.

We must realize as a people, during the years of 1619 to 1630, our New Afrikan Nation developed and continued to evolve socially, culturally, politically, and we resisted the bondage and oppression brought by chattel slavery. The system of chattel slavery had been in effect for 22 years prior to Massachusetts becoming the first of Great Britain’s colonies to give statutory recognition to chattel slavery in 1641. This was followed by the slave colonies of Connecticut, Virginia, Maryland, New York, New Jersey, South Carolina, Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, North Carolina and Georgia.

There were a recorded 250 major campaigns of New Afrikan resistance to the slave system of chattel slavery. This included acts in August of 1619, Jamestown Virginia, and an even greater number of lesser-known courageous acts by the New Afrikan nationalist resistance movement for the survival of our New Afrikan Nation - throughout chattel slavery, until Juneteenth 1865, and to the turn of the century in racist Amerikkka.

In 1657, New Afrikan and Native people joined forces, thereby increasing the power and potential of these two nations in their protracted liberation struggle for total freedom, justice, retribution and their rights to an independent nation from their oppressors.

We (Afrikan and Indian/natives) nations understand the cause and effect of the Coco theory and how it can be effective only when these two nations do not allow themselves to be isolated from their perspective class of people, thus exposing themselves to the vastly superior fire power of the oppressors (i.e. slave owners).

Our combined resistance movements guided the liberation struggle’s military and political objectives, thereby mounting a vigorous campaign for our struggle and resistance in Hartford Connecticut that grew in force and depth to create the atmosphere of panic and fear that ended in the deaths of many slave owners and the Nat Turner Revolt that affected the whole entire state of Connecticut.

The 1700s would mark the advancement in the campaign

efforts of the New Afrikan nationalist resistance movement in all spheres of our liberation:

1. Our New Afrikan nation uncovered our new humanity.
2. We as a New Afrikan nation discovered new initiatives that redirected and advanced our New Afrikan revolt mentalities.
3. We as a New Afrikan nation constructed the new progressive Nat Turner’s revolt mentality’s strategic methods.
4. We, as a New Afrikan nation realized that our developed consciousness has a built-in scientific-social (family) orientation to survive this phase of our liberation struggle against chattel slavery.

Yet, our New Afrikan nation continued to rise and resist the social construction of chattel slavery.

In 1708, the New Afrikan and Native slaves in Long Island, New York organized a major campaign of protracted war and resistance to chattel slavery in which numerous slave owners and government troops were killed, thus creating fear and panic throughout the state of New York.

On August 21 1831, the Nat Turner Revolt organized and formulated a plan to seize control of slave plantations throughout Virginia. The nationalist campaign was brought to a premature conclusion with the betrayal of a New Afrikan Nation slave (rat, turncoat, snitch, informer, debriefer etc), who had exposed the plan to some slave owners, which resulted in the death of several New Afrikan nationalist fighters.

Our New Afrikan people have been forced to struggle through feudalism, chattel slavery, the industrial revolution (more slavery), the Black Code, Jim Crow, white supremacy, neo-colonialism and presently institutionalized racism. We shall fight against institutionalized racism, wherever we are faced with it, for we know that our ancestors have opened doors for us through their sacrifice, and it is our responsibility to handle present and future challenges, so that the generations behind us will be better equipped to address the challenges of their generation.

One Love/one struggle

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While Canada's Democracy Trembles, Police Launch Outrageous "Crackdown"

BY ANTHONY FENTON
from www.alternet.org

Nearly 600 people were arrested as global leaders and elites met behind a fortified perimeter during the G8 and G20 Summits in Huntsville and Toronto this weekend June 26-27). The tension was palpable on the subway as the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) announced that under a "police directive" all routes in and out of the downtown core would be suspended midday Saturday.

Several blocks north of the protests that were the assumed cause of the transit shutdown, IPS observed a police officer conducting random searches of pedestrians. Asked why he was doing so, the officer, who refused to identify himself, replied, "Do you want to be responsible for a terrorist attack?"

The officer stated that the transit system was shut down due to a "terrorist threat" posed by anarchists, that a cache of Molotov cocktails had been discovered, and that the crude weapons were "all over the city".

A spokesperson for the G8/G20 Integrated Security Unit later contradicted the police officer, stating in a phone interview, "There's no terrorist threat." The spokesperson would not clarify the reasons for the transit closure saying only that it was due to a "security precaution" and that it was "just part of the [security] process".

The stealthy side of this process revealed itself on Thursday, when police arrested an individual under the 'Public Works Act', a provision passed in secret by Ontario cabinet officials earlier this month that allowed police to question, search and potentially detain anyone within five metres of the G20 security fence.

In the weeks months leading up to the summit, protesters were under surveillance by the Canadian Security and Intelligence Service (CSIS). One of those protesters targeted by CSIS, Stefan Christoff, called this part of a broader "chill effect" and "culture of fear" that the security forces were allegedly seeking to foster in advance of the largest, most expensive, and most heavily secured meeting of global leaders in history.

Arbitrary and sometimes preemptive arrests became the norm as the weekend progressed, drawing denunciations from several prominent human rights organisations. Amnesty International decried the "curtailment of civil liberties" that accompanied "high fences, new weaponry,

massive surveillance, and the intimidating impact of the overwhelming police presence".

The Canadian Civil Liberties Association, some of whose members were swept up in the arrests, decried police tactics, and expressed concern about the conditions of those being detained. "It would appear that the presumption of innocence has been suspended during the G20," they said in a statement.

On Saturday, following a peaceful march of between 10,000 and 25,000 demonstrators, hundreds of Black bloc protesters wove their way through the streets, breaking windows of banks and other symbols of corporate power, torched police cars that police abandoned, and chanted anti-establishment slogans.

Decried as "thugs that prompted violence" by a spokesperson for Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper, the organisation No One is Illegal defended the protesters, stating that they were symbolically targeting global capitalism, and were merely "engaging in corporate property destruction".

While security forces did not step in to stop the bloc protesters, late on Saturday night, approximately 150 peaceful protesters were placed in detention after staging a sit-in.

On Sunday morning, supporters of the hundreds detained at a makeshift detention facility on Toronto's eastside rallied for their release. They were met with tear gas, rubber bullets, and more arrests. At the time of press, upwards of 600 mostly peaceful protesters had been detained, including several journalists.

A 'Movement Defense Committee' emerged by Sunday night, calling on supporters to 'Free the Toronto 500', and to "mobilise a show of political strength and solidarity for the nearly 500 people arrested in the last four days".

The final communiques of the G8 and G20 did little to assuage the central grievances that were expressed before the events during the 'People's Summit' held by activists Jun. 18-20, or in the many peaceful demonstrations held prior to and during the summits.

The major issues being protested - lack of commitment regarding climate change and clean energy, the mounting concerns regarding the development of the Albertan tar sands, ongoing wars and foreign occupations in Afghanistan and Iraq, and the imposition of fiscal austerity measures on member states despite continuing fallout from the global economic crisis which began in 2008 - were not resolved.

And perhaps the core concern - that a select, if somewhat broadened, group of elites are making decisions that concern all peoples around the globe largely in secret - ap-

Current Situation of Japan's Workers

BY TSUTOMU SHIROSAKI

About two decades ago Japan, was No.1 and almost all Japanese felt like middle class. In these days, capitalists needed cheap foreign workers and because Japanese youth did not want to do cheap, dark and dirty work, sometimes companies moved abroad - especially to Asian countries.

Traditionally Japanese youth got a job when they graduated school and worked in the same company until it was time to retire. At first the pay was cheap, but it rose year by year, thus at retirement age they could have their own house. And they used to get a pension, so people felt as though they were bound with a certain company.

But such a Japanese co-operate system has changed drastically since the Asian crisis in '97. Capitalists broadened the temporary worker systems. In most companies there are two or more types of workers. Here I'll tell you about temporary workers. At a glance you can't distinguish who is "ordinary" and who is temporary because they work almost the exact same conditions, and wear the same uniforms. But temporary workers get very low payment, usually only a third of ordinary workers, and no social security. And as the title tells, they work in very fragile work conditions. You must be aware that such fragile conditions also existed for foreign workers in the past (and now too).

It's said now that such temporary workers are almost 40% of the work force, and that the majority of them are young and living in companies' dormitories or housing facilities. Even decades ago so many young workers stayed in companies' housing facilities, but as mentioned above their pay went up yearly. Now the pay for those temporary workers do not increase at all in general, so they can't leave such housing facilities. Further, if something happened, their employment would be cancelled, and so temporary workers would lose their jobs and housing.

Needless to say, capitalists cannot do such a thing to "normal" workers due to the law, but to temporary workers, as well as foreign workers, they can do so freely. It's said openly that two temporary workers are cheaper than one ordinary worker. Sony's CEO said without hesitation, something similar to the following: "It's not expected for me (by shareholders) to make it a priority to take care of worker's conditions thus bringing a loss for the company." You can understand the capitalist's reality. They look for their own benefits, although they speak about national benefit or for all nationals many times.

It's said now that unemployment among the youth has reached nearly 10%. It's a horrible number because Ja-

pan's method of calculating unemployment is different from other countries, making their numbers lower.

For foreign workers things are worse, needless to say. Decades ago even illegal immigrants were over 300,000. But after the Asian crisis, authorities intensified the campaign that made people staying illegally equal to criminals and so people watched/informed on those strangers and then police would arrest and deport them. Thus making a stable society...as the result, it's said now about 100,000 are left. Even those staying legally are regarded as criminal in many cases. And some right wing nationalists tell them, "go back to your own country."

And their working conditions are similar to "temporary workers." In one of the Brazilian communities - there are Japanese origins, mostly third generational and their families, including kids, who have lived in Japan 15-20 years, and in only a couple of months, in the end of 2008, their population shrank nearly to half. Needless to say this was the result of job loss and being kicked out of housing facilities. For them, to find a new job is very difficult and their stay itself will be illegal, sooner or later.

One more astonishing story: Japan "invented" the training work force. They are mostly from Asian countries, and now it's said that there are about 200,000 "trainees" in Japan. Although they are called trainees, in reality most of them are very cheap labourers, similar to slaves. In some cases they are forced to work dirty and hard work for long, long hours, which is completely different from official training workers. And if these trainees complain, employers announce, "let's cancel the agreement, go back to your country." In some cases they forced "trainees" into airplanes using private security companies. Oh, it's worthy to tell, even the U.S. state department call this corrupted "training" system as "forced labour," needless to say it means the slavery system.

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This could result in one of two ways with the oppressed. They will either become domesticated drones to the new concepts the “revolutionaries” have deposited into them, or they may eventually become frightened by certain words, phrases, etc. that the oppressor “housed” inside of them and pre-programmed them to fear. In the first instance, the “revolution” is for them but an illusion; in the second, it is quite bluntly an impossibility.

He who does not, or no longer, “houses” the oppressor is able to critically recognize his natural relationship or antagonism toward the oppressor. In such a position of clarity he is able to take up the struggle to overcome the contradiction of the oppressor/oppressed relationship and replace “class necessity” (preached by the oppressor), with “class consciousness.”

It is most important for the revolutionary leaders to be able to identify the difference between the oppressed who still “house” the oppressor within, and he who has fully overcome this contradiction. As fundamental as it is for the revolutionary to trust and have faith in the oppressed people, it is also necessary for the revolutionary to be aware of those oppressed people who “house” an image of an oppressor that is stronger than they themselves. These kind inevitably pose the potential threat of coming to actually denounce the revolutionary leaders, desert and even betray the cause at any given stage of their still “housing” the oppressor within.

The ability to detect the phenomenon of “housing of the oppressor” is vitally important in light of the fact that it is essential in an authentic revolution that the oppressed participate in the overall process. If they do this, without having fully discarded the oppressor within, the likelihood is that the revolution will ultimately be undermined.

Their aspiration to accumulate power will be one of an aspiration for revenge opposed to that of a legitimate aspiration for true liberation.

Furthermore – and this is a historical problem for so many “revolutions” – those oppressed people who are under the illusion that they have risen to power in a revolution, without ever having fully ejected the “housed” oppressor within, present the greatest threat of all to the overall aims of the revolution itself. Where before the revolution, it was the oppressors themselves who directly invaded the minds, culture etc. of the oppressed and thereby dehumanized and dominated them, the oppressors, now through their existence still being “housed” in the oppressed, indirectly threaten to eventually invade the revolution itself. Because the oppressor is still “housed” in the oppressed people of the new “revolutionary” society, the people themselves will tend to accept a power that more so reflects the repression they are accustomed to, having existed in and still being

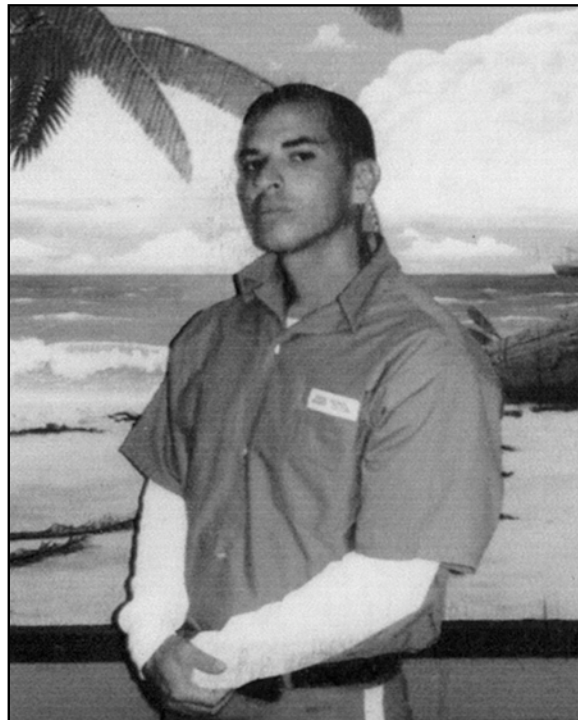
subconsciously submerged in the reality of oppression that still dominates their innermost being.

“Only as they discover themselves to be ‘hosts’ of the oppressor can they then contribute to the midwifery of their liberation. As long as they live in the duality in which to be is to be like, and to be like is to be like the oppressor, this contribution is impossible.” Paolo Freire

The task of the humanist revolutionary is to see that the oppressed become aware of the fact that as dual beings “housing” the oppressors within themselves, they cannot, nor can they ever be, truly human.

The oppressed must break this form of adhesion and internal “housing” of the oppressor in order to see himself in clear contradiction to the oppressor. Once he does, he can begin to consider the dehumanizing reality of the oppressor/oppressed structural relationship; and this change in his perception can be achieved through the praxis of revolutionary dialogue.

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peared to be flaunted by members of the corporate elite, dubbed the ‘B20’ (Business 20), who were on hand.

During the summit, several dozen of the globe’s most powerful CEOs were given exclusive, off-the-record meetings with the G20’s finance ministers and Prime Minister Harper. The G20 includes the “world’s most industrialised nations” (which also comprise the G8): Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, Britain and the United States.

Its other members are Australia, Mexico, Turkey and South Korea, Argentina, Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia and South Africa, plus the 27-member European Union. In concert with the eventual announcement by the G20 that they would seek to halve deficits by 2013 (with the exception of Japan), one business leader projected, “Stimulus is winding down and the private sector is going to have to come in and pick up the slack.”

Canadian Finance Minister Jim Flaherty praised the corporate leaders, saying “The advice we get from you is invaluable in terms of our deliberations and the deliberations of our leaders.”

Offering an indication of the B20’s influence, South Korean Finance Minister Jeung-Hyun Yoon told Toronto’s Globe and Mail, “I sincerely hope the business summit can serve as a platform for public-private collaboration and the starting point of the new normal in the global economic architecture.”

As the effects of the latest policy pronouncements begin to be felt, many fear that Toronto will become known as the staging ground for the security model that will be deployed to protect this new architecture.

UPDATE; The total number of people detained was 1090, with most being released without charge. Over a dozen remain in jail as this is written (July 6, 2010), facing serious charges. These people are serious community organizers who are being punished for their vocal opposition to the G20 and relentless pursuit of global justice.

Support Ottawa’s June 18th Defendants

BY OTTAWA MOVEMENT DEFENSE

During the night of May 18, a Royal Bank of Canada (RBC) branch was torched in an upper middle class neighborhood of Ottawa, Ontario. Following the attack on the bank, a group using the name FFFC-Ottawa posted a video of the attack on the bank online. The video showed the dramatic explosion followed by a short text explaining some of the reasons behind the bombing. They included RBC’s sponsorship of the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympic Games and its support of Alberta tar sands projects. As well, the communiqué indicated that further actions would be taken to coincide with the gathering of world leaders at the G20 Summit in Toronto in June.

Exactly one month later, on the morning of June 18, just one week before the G20 summit was to begin, 3 Ottawa activists were arrested.

Immediately condemned by the Chief of Police and media as “domestic terrorists,” the June 18th defendants currently only face property related offences, including arson and mischief. In fact, despite being repeatedly described in the media as a party to the May 18 bombing, one of the defendants is not currently charged with anything related to the RBC fire. This individual has been released on very strict bail conditions, while the two other defendants remain behind bars.

Friends, relatives and Ottawa activists were all shocked by the June 18 arrests and quickly came together to form the Ottawa Movement Defense committee, which has begun organizing courtroom support, coordinating jail visits, and fundraising for legal costs.

It is very important for those of us on the outside to make it very clear that the June 18th defendants have the support of a large community of dedicated activists and friends who love them and miss them and want them liberated immediately.

With all the frenzy around security for the G20 summit it is hard not to see these three arrests as politically motivated. Just like the Germinal Cell arrests before the Québec City protests of 2001, the June 18th defendants have been put on parade as dangerous villains bent on causing havoc and chaos in order to justify massive expenditures on policing and security.

It is still very early in this case, and in the coming months we will start to get a look at what kind of evidence the Crown has to back up its claims against the defendants. In the meantime our main task is to support the three June 18th defendants, help them with their legal costs, visit them and write to them and carry forth the projects they had been working on.

In solidarity with our friends who are not free.
You can get updates from Ottawa Movement Defense at the Toronto ABC website: torontoabc.wordpress.com

G20 Arrests and Organizing for Freedom

BY HARSHA WALIA

Excerpted from vancouver.mediacoop.ca

Many of the 900 arrested have thankfully been released without charges; many others will have charges that will eventually likely get withdrawn or easily be defeated. From my conversations with women inside, it became more and more apparent how ridiculous the arrests and charges were. Damning evidence for “possession of a dangerous weapon” or “intent to commit mischief” includes being found with bandanas, black t-shirts, anarchist literature, vinegar, eye solution, water bottles, or goggles, while simply speaking French landed many with the charge of “conspiracy to join a criminal organization” (presumably CLAC [Montreal’s Anti-capitalist convergence]). Charges were constantly being changed, added, or dropped.

The largest operation of mass arrests in Canadian history will be justified, and is already being justified, by pointing to and focusing in on a few key organizers (or as they call ‘ring leaders’).

The charges and multiple counts that I was specifically facing were extremely serious and fabricated. Throughout my detention it became evident that it was largely an exercise in intimidation and political targeting. I was consistently taunted by police officers saying “We have been waiting for you Walia”, “Oh you got her, I was looking forward to getting her”, “We’ve finally got the one from BC” etc. While I was being processed, one court officer suggested to me that “they have f*ck all on you but they are out for your blood.” Even after I was ordered released, several police officers were insistent on laying further charges.

Many long-time community organizers, including several people of colour, from Ontario and Quebec continue to face ongoing incarceration on similarly serious charges, with little chance of bail for possibly another few weeks. These clearly politically-motivated arrests, with flimsy evidence, are intended to criminalize and silence particular activists who are committed, effective, and unapologetic in their daily defiance of state and corporate exploitation. The particularly serious nature of the charges is intended to demonize and isolate them by characterizing them as ‘dangerous’ within their diverse communities.

Our response should be clear: that we do not allow the courts, the police, or the media to divide us into those who were unjustifiably arrested versus those who were justifiably arrested. All those who were arrested should be released immediately, and our support efforts need to focus on those facing these serious charges - with serious consequences for their deprivation of liberty - and developing strong public support to ensure their release.

The conditions of detention are already widely known: steel cage cells with upto 30 people per cell, sleeping on concrete floors with open bathrooms, denial of food and water, illegal confiscation of medications, sexual harassment, severe threats and intimidation, being refused access to legal counsel or phones, denying access to bail hearings in a timely manner; property theft, constant exposure to bright lights, and extreme exposure to cold. I went through multiple searches which I did not consent to including a strip search and more.

While I think it is important to highlight the inhumanity and violence of our detentions, it is critical to remember that humiliation and dehumanization is the purpose of the prison-industrial complex. I was personally not expecting a better ‘experience’ than the horrific one I did have given the inherent nature of the police state. For those ‘innocent bystanders’ (who were explicit about not being protestors), this is an opportunity to be made aware that the horrors they experienced at the hands of the police or while in detention are not unique moments in Toronto or Canadian history. We run the risk of exceptionalizing this moment, at the expense of normalizing the daily violence of police and prisons and the criminal (in)justice system for Indigenous communities, people of colour, low income neighborhoods, street-involved youth, and trans people.

In moments of movement repression, it is understandably difficult to develop pro-active and long-term strategies for winning. I believe our organizing to free all G20 arrestees needs to be rooted within the social movements that many of the arrestees are part of: labour, anti war, migrant justice, Indigenous self determination, anti-oppression, environmental justice, and anti capitalist. While this lends itself to the all the challenges of sustained community organizing, it has the potential of building a powerful revolutionary grassroots movement that incorporates the reality of social movement repression and criminalization of dissent within a broader analysis and experience of colonization, poverty, marginalization, and daily police violence.

“Our desire to be free has got to manifest itself in everything we are and do.” – Assata Shakur

and such. Because the oppressor wishes to invade the consciousness of the oppressed (to more fully dominate him) and because as a successful invader in this respect he is subconsciously viewed by the oppressed as being superior, the oppressed become more and more alienated from even themselves and hence grow to want to become more and more like their oppressors.

“The oppressor elaborates his theory of action without the people, for he stands against them. Nor can the people – as long as they are crushed and oppressed, internalizing the image of the oppressor – construct by themselves the theory of their liberating action. Only in the encounter of the people with the revolutionary leaders – in their communion, in their praxis – can this theory be built.” – Paolo Freire

The oppressor uses a practice of teaching that births and encourages a passivity of the mind of the oppressed. From childhood, they repetitiously fill the oppressed’s mind with ‘deposits,’ creating in the oppressed an inability to critically see the world. Because this practice ultimately corresponds with the oppressed’s inability to objectively view the oppressor (because he has internalized the oppressor), throughout the oppressed’s adult life, he continues to fill his resultedly passive mind with mechanized slogans etc. which create in him an even deeper subconscious fear of freedom.

The humanist revolutionary cannot use the same practice of ‘depositing’ slogans etc. but must both present the oppressor’s slogans, myths etc. as a problem (so that he can then begin to eject those slogans etc. from within his own mind) and do so through the revolutionary practice of dialogue and solidarity.

One of the myths of the oppressor is the “ignorance of the people.” The scientific and humanist revolutionary must never believe in this myth. They must never attempt to “impose” themselves and their knowledge onto the people with the mind that they know and the people don’t. They cannot “sloganize” the people, but must enter into dialogue with them. To fail to do this would not only be a threat to themselves, where opting for the methods of the oppressor could in essence actually turn them into future oppressors – products of their very own internalized concepts and practices of the oppressors. Each time they say their word without hearing the people’s word, they become more and more accustomed to an illicit form of power, misleading themselves into acquiring a taste for ordering, commanding and subsequently doubting the people.

Prisoners’ Justice Day (August 10)

On August 10, 1974, prisoner Eddie Nalon bled to death in the segregation unit of Millhaven Maximum Security Prison located in Bath, Ontario. On the first anniversary of Eddie’s death, August 10th 1975, prisoners at Millhaven refused to work, went on a one day hunger strike and held a memorial service, even though it would mean a stint in solitary confinement. Many of the alleged leaders in this one day peaceful protest would still be in segregation a year later. Inspired by their example, many years later, August 10 is still a day set aside to remember all the men and women who have died unnatural deaths inside Canadian prisons.

PRISONERS’ JUSTICE DAY IS...

...August 10, the day prisoners have set aside as a day to fast and refuse to work in a show of solidarity to remember those who have died unnecessarily -- victims of murder, suicide and neglect.

...the day when organizations and individuals in the community hold demonstrations, vigils, worship services and other events in common resistance with prisoners.

...the day to raise issue with the fact that a very high rate of women are in prison for protecting themselves against their abusers. This makes it obvious that the legal system does not protect women who suffer violence at the hands of their partners.

...is the day to remember that there are a disproportionate number of Natives, African-Canadians and other minorities and marginalized people in prisons. Prisons are the ultimate form of oppression against struggles of recognition and self-determination.

...the day to raise public awareness of the demands made by prisoners to change the criminal justice system and the brutal and inhumane conditions that lead to so many prison deaths.

...the day to oppose prison violence, police violence, and violence against women and children.

...the day to publicize that, in their fight for freedom and equality, the actions of many political prisoners have been criminalized by government. As a result, there are false claims that there are no political prisoners in north american prisons.

...the day to raise public awareness of the economic and social costs of a system of criminal justice which punishes for revenge. If there is ever to be social justice, it will only come about using a model of healing justice, connecting people to the crimes and helping offenders take responsibility for their actions.

...the day to renew the struggle for HIV/AIDS education, prevention and treatment in prison.

...the day to remind people that the criminal justice system and the psychiatric system are mutually reinforcing methods that the state uses to control human beings. There is a lot of brutality by staff committed in the name of treatment. Moreover, many deaths in the psych-prisons remain uninvestigated.



Examining the Internalized Oppressor Complex

BY MIGUEL MORIN, aka Rey Salomón of the ALKQN

“Every act of conquest implies a conqueror and someone or something which is conquered. The conqueror imposes his objectives on the vanquished, and makes of them his possession. He imposes his own contours on the vanquished, who internalize this shape and become ambiguous beings ‘housing’ another...” -Paulo Freire

Introduction

This article was written as a result of lessons learned in the reading of Paulo Freire’s *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. For the most part, the paper is a reflection on the work and is constructed around the theme of internalization – the theme that sounded to me the loudest, as a representative of the lumpen-proletariat of North America.

Throughout Freire’s *Pedagogy* this theme of internalizing the ways of the oppressor has rung out to me. But also throughout every day of my life – both within the concrete jungles of society that I was raised, and the ones now within the penal system in which I am being buried – I have noted this phenomenon and scourge amongst my kind: the lumpen.

Because of the example set by the oppressor, who is the possessor of power and wealth, the oppressed individual who is deprived of these things tends to aspire to become more like the oppressor himself. The oppressed individual would naturally aspire to become more of a ‘man,’ due to the model of ‘manhood’ projected to him by the oppressor, but this aspiration is mutated from its conception. As a result of this psychology, the oppressed individual more and more subconsciously or otherwise attempts to identify himself with the traits of the oppressor. In this move, the oppressed individual becomes unable to be clearly objective about his oppressor because he has embraced in himself those very same traits.

He may still be able to see himself as the oppressed, but because he now psychologically identifies with his oppressor, whatever quest he may endeavour towards true liberation will be hindered. Instead of striving for true liberation, he will ultimately strive to become the oppressor himself.

Furthermore, this identification (or adhesion) with the oppressor affects the oppressed’s concept of the ‘new man’ into one of a more individualistic nature. For him, the ‘new man’ is the new oppressor. Because they have adopted the traits of the oppressor through a process of psychological

internalization, they are bound – as long as they continue to ‘house’ the oppressor – to reach a point of actually accepting themselves as oppressors who are only aspiring to attain their ‘rightful place’ upon the throne of oppression. This is why an oppressed person who is promoted to any position of authority often tends to be actually more oppressive than the original taskmaster himself...

The oppressed are afflicted with a fear of freedom. This fear will either lead them to desire the role of the oppressor or bind them to their own existent state of oppression. True freedom would actually require them to eject the internalized image of the oppressor that they possess and thence awaken to a more clear reality. It would threaten the ‘security of conformity’ they have grown accustomed to and force them to act more independently, responsibly and critically toward the contradiction of the oppressor/oppressed relationship.

The oppressed individual who possesses this ‘fear of freedom’ is often evident in his personal preference for gregarious friendship, rather than for authentic comradeship. Because of his inability to clearly objectivize the oppressor, due to his own adhesion to him, the oppressed individual will desire the oppressor’s ‘freedom’ to oppress.

This is the tragic dilemma of the oppressed: their having to suffer from the duality which has established itself in their inner-most being. They see that without freedom they cannot exist authentically, yet although they may desire authentic existence, they fear it. In this way, and thanks to the oppressor’s consciousness, which they have internalized, they are at one and the same time themselves and their own oppressors.

Some of the outstanding characteristic flaws of those oppressed individuals (who have internalized the image of their oppression) can be seen in the senseless violence that they inflict upon their immediate peers. This may be an indirect attack on the oppressor, where the oppressed see in each other the reflections of the internalized oppressor. Their tendency to buy into the oppressor’s myths such as that destiny, fate, fortune (inevitable forces) etc. are to blame for their condition (leading to an overbearing and sad grasp on an overall attitude of fatalism); their self deprecation which comes from their internalizing the oppressor’s opinion of them; and their feelings of impotence which are expressed in their blindly submitting to and sympathizing with the dictates of those in power so as to feel as if they themselves are a part of that controlling (and oppressive) power...

The oppressed are so insecure, due to their duality as beings who actually “house” the oppressor, where on one hand they wish to resist the oppressor, but on the other, they are so attracted to him. As such, the oppressors easily reap their desired results from a number of tactics such as conquest, divide and rule, manipulation, cultural invasion

Community Organizer Jaggi Singh Detained and Charged with ‘Conspiracy’

A statement of support and solidarity by No One Is Illegal-Montreal & Solidarity Across Borders

nooneisillegal-montreal.blogspot.com

Tuesday, July 6, 2010, 5am -- This morning Montreal-based community organizer Jaggi Singh handed himself over to Toronto police custody due to an outstanding warrant for his arrest concerning the resistance to the G20 in Toronto. He will be charged with several serious counts of criminal conspiracy, including alleged conspiracies to commit mischief to property, assault police, and obstruct justice. He is currently in custody along with other G20 political prisoners who are awaiting bail hearings. Many people have had their bail refused. Jaggi’s situation is still unclear. We hope he’ll be released immediately. He could remain in custody for some time.

The 1-billion dollar ‘Fortress Toronto’ security operation that protected the G8/G20 leaders, multinational corporations and banking institutions from the peoples’ opposition during the week-long anti-G20 mobilization, brought unprecedented police violence and state repression to the streets of Toronto.

Over 1000 indiscriminate arrests, beatings, house raids, illegal searches and seizures, intimidation tactics, kidnappings and arbitrary detentions terrorized G20 protesters and everyday Toronto residents before and during the G20. After days in inhumane detention conditions, most G20 prisoners were released without charge, while many others are out on bail with stringent conditions and facing false charges, including members and allies of No One Is Illegal and Solidarity Across Borders.

However, at least sixteen people remain locked behind bars! The police evidence that is being used to hold them will be heard today, and at bail hearings to take place throughout the month of July. Jaggi Singh is now being held on serious charges, targeted for participating in the anti-G20 mobilizing efforts. Once again the state contrives to silence his voice and criminalize his uncompromising and steadfast commitment to social justice. He’s faced targeted arrests before, for which he’s become notorious, whether he likes it or not.

He beat charges after APEC in Vancouver in 1997, and after the Summit of the Americas in Quebec City in 2001. And, when the G20 was protested in Montreal ten years ago in 2000, resulting in arrests after police violence, Jaggi and his comrades were acquitted at a jury trial where he represented himself. We have no doubt he’ll relish the fight in court, but the recent charges against Jaggi represent a troubling escalation of the state criminalization of activists. They are still try-

ing to break him with exaggerated charges, while scaring new activists with police intimidation and brutality.

Like so many of us who are part of networks and organizations like No One Is Illegal & Solidarity Across Borders, Jaggi has dedicated his life to organizing for fundamental social transformation and genuine justice for all. He is part of our community and an inspiration to many.

For more than a decade he has been based in Montreal, his home, organizing with local migrant justice and indigenous solidarity networks, among an array of other political projects and movements. He supports political prisoners, Palestine liberation, anti-racism & anti-police brutality efforts. He believes an anti-colonial, indigenous solidarity perspective is foundational to social justice organizing. He helped to found and re-found the Anti-Capitalist Convergence (CLAC) and has been a tireless collective member of the Montreal Anarchist Bookfair since its inception.

Jaggi has been dedicated to No One Is Illegal-Montreal & Solidarity Across Borders since both organizations were formed in 2002 and 2003 respectively. Most recently, he has become a full-time employee with QPIRG-Concordia, working with both community and campus members to strengthen social justice networks, and promote community-based research beyond academia.

Jaggi is someone who dedicates an enormous amount of time to awareness-raising activities, popular education and support work that aims to break isolation and affirm collective empowerment. He is constantly involved in organizing workshops, public events, community dinners, legal and moral support networks, soccer games, as well as kids days for non-status families and activist parents. He also co-hosts the monthly No One Is Illegal radio show, researches and writes on a variety of political issues, and contributes actively to movement debates and discussions.

Jaggi is someone who perpetually offers his assistance, and always jumps into action to help someone in need, whether it be a newly befriended person who has survived an injustice, a colleague, a comrade, a friend or a family member. He works with new activists and older activists alike. He is a dreamer, a thinker, a doer, and a constant joker. He is our friend.

No One Is Illegal and Solidarity Across Borders denounce the political persecution and scapegoating of our comrades - the G20 political prisoners. We demand the immediate release of all the G20 prisoners, and that all charges be dropped. We will not be intimidated, we will not stop organizing until all the G20 political prisoners are free. We will not be dissuaded from the struggle to free our world from cages, fences, borders, and state controls.

no prisons! no borders!

Leonard Peltier: Statement for the Opening Ceremony U.S. Social Forum-Detroit

BY LEONARD PELTIER, from Censored News Page 2
censored-news.blogspot.com

Welcome to the traditional lands of my people, the Anishinabe. Greetings, my brothers and sisters. Greetings also to my relations from the many different Indigenous Nations who now call this place “Home”. Thank you for your warm welcome.

Hello to all the people of conscience in attendance at the US Social Forum. Thank you for taking the time and expense to attend an event that people will talk about for years to come. I know if you focus and believe, this event can be a major step in the development of a new society—one that turns away from fossil fuels, war and the rampant destruction of our universal home and, instead, focuses on the betterment of all... as opposed to the enrichment of a select few.

I ask that you work this week, in particular, toward full recognition of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as an essential component of a just and honorable U.S. human rights policy. As many of you may know, the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples was developed over many years with the participation of thousands of Indigenous Peoples. It is consistent with human rights principles as contained in international law, as well as the U.S. Constitution. And, yet, two nations with the largest Indigenous populations, Canada and the United States, have failed to endorse the Declaration. We call upon the United States government to finally endorse the Declaration in its entirety, without qualifications or exceptions, and to work in full partnership with Indigenous Peoples, Tribal governments and Nations to ensure its implementation.

I am Leonard Peltier, an American Indian political prisoner who fought against some of the same ideas and mechanisms many of you are fighting against today. Perhaps it was in a different way and a different time, but many years ago we were warning against the very realities many of you face today. The energy companies were raping Indian Country years ago - long before the oil spills, the mining disasters, and the poisoned waters America has come to know so well. So perhaps you can spare a few minutes to listen to the admonitions of an old man, an old warrior whose wisdom has come at a very high price.

I encourage you to find unity in your various causes, because all of your struggles are linked. Actually, you don't just find unity, you create it - each of you individually. Create unity within your specific organizations. And be-

tween them. Link your efforts and find ways to network and maximize those efforts. Making change has never been more important. Make the most of every second, for time is growing short, as so many prophecies have foretold. Educate others about the realities you are struggling for and against. Especially focus on educating the young people who will further your efforts tomorrow. Know that your sensibilities are a gift from Creator intended to wake up and shake up the world so that we may improve how we treat the Earth and each other.

We Indian people like to say “we are all related”. I pass that truth on to you now. Each and every one of you and the work you are doing are related. Let that be your greeting between groups and persons, as well as an ethic - the very spirit of what gatherings like this are intended to be. Practice thinking and saying it until it is automatic. We are all related, so put aside whatever differences you may have and make solidarity a new and constant reality. Remember, this is not your struggle. It is for everyone.

I thank you for taking the time to remember an old activist and perhaps learn from the experiences of another people from another time. Now go out and change the world! Make it a place you'll be proud to hand to the next seven generations!

Doksha. In the Spirit of Crazy Horse,

Leonard Peltier
#89637-132
P.O. Box 1000
Lewisburg, PA
USA 178371

New Book

Floodlines: Community and Resistance from Katrina to the Jena Six, by Jordan Flaherty, with an introduction by Democracy Now host Amy Goodman and a forward by civil rights attorney Tracie Washington

Floodlines is a firsthand account of community, culture, and resistance in New Orleans in the years before and after Katrina. The book weaves the interconnected stories of Mardi Gras Indians, Arab and Latino immigrants, public housing residents, gay rappers, spoken word poets, victims of police brutality, out of town volunteers, and grassroots activists. From post-Katrina evacuee camps, to torture testimony at Angola Prison, to organizing with the family members of the Jena Six, Floodlines tells the stories behind the headlines, from an unforgettable time and place in history.

America? Reagan and his cronies envisioned themselves riding white horses into foreign lands delivering the ravished population from the evils of socialism and any other “ism” that didn't elevate free market capitalism to the level of religion.

There is, however, a problem that proponents of American Exceptionalism cannot get around, and that is the rest of the world – fortunately – is not buying their nonsense. The people of the world recognize the United States for what it is: a mediocre society that wields a massive military. When the rest of the world looks at the United States, they see a nation that statistically ranks in the middle when compared to the standard of living in other Western countries in terms of health care, education, social services, personal income and civil and human rights. Incredibly, for all its talk about being the land of the free and leading the charge to bring freedom to other nations, the U.S. is not even ranked number one when it comes to the personal freedom its own citizens enjoy. The U.S. barely broke in the top 10 free countries of the world.

Unsurprisingly, the only number one rankings the U.S. enjoys – when compared to other Western nations (and all nations of the world) – is the amount of money it spends on its military, the amount of people it has imprisoned, and the rate of violence. Having failed to convert the rest of the world to the concept of American Exceptionalism, the United States has fallen back on the only exceptionalism it can count on – and that is its military might. In adopting the age-old imperial concept of “might is right” the U.S. itself has fallen in line, lock and step, behind the examples of imperial powers of the past, completely discrediting its claim to exceptionalism. The trajectory of the United States is nothing different than the rise of many other empires in the past, from city-states and republics to global or regional empires. What the United States is selling is the same snake oil the Romans, French, Great Britain and other imperial powers of the past sold to the conquered and colonized people of the world.

Tens of thousands (quite possibly hundreds of thousands) have been murdered at the beginning of the 21st century while being “liberated” by the United States. Coincidentally, these so-called liberated lands have become imperial outposts for the U.S. military, allowing the U.S. to maintain military bases in countries that occupy strategic positions both geographically and economically in the world. It would have been unthinkable, not to mention unattainable, for the U.S. to have bases in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Central Asia just ten years ago. However, the events of 9/11 provided an opening for the U.S. to impose itself in unwelcome regions through fictitious threats. Where the world saw tragedy on 9/11, the U.S. government saw an opportunity to pursue an aggressive foreign policy that would have the support of a significant portion of the U.S. public, interested in the age old quest for revenge.

If the 20th century was defined as the “American Century” due to the rapid rise of the United States to global superpower, it is almost certain that the 21st century will be defined by the demise of the United States as the world's superpower. While there is no absolute scientific formula to its collapse, it is absolutely certain it will collapse and in its collapse, we will continue to witness the demise of the myth of “American Exceptionalism.” We will witness the continued erosion of civil liberties; the continued merger of corporations and government until the two become indistinguishable; increased military spending in an attempt to maintain a grip on the world's resources and prop up an economy dependent on the military industrial complex; and the possible bankruptcy of the U.S. government which would reduce the U.S. standard of living to that of Argentina or Brazil. In short, the U.S. would be reduced to a banana republic with the remnants of a superpower military. This process could take decades, as did the collapse of the British Empire, or it could happen as swiftly as the collapse of the Soviet Union.

This does not mean that as revolutionary activists we should just sit on our hands and await its collapse or naively believe that its collapse will usher in an era of socialism, humanism and tranquility. Quite to the contrary, its collapse will most likely be chaotic and consist of a series of violent convulsions as the empire sheds its remnants, willingly or unwillingly. It may be in our lifetime, or it may not be. What is certain is we have an obligation to continue to chop at the empire's foundation by challenging its credibility and claim to possess the right to do with the world as it pleases. We have to continue to put forth alternative systems of government and solutions to the people. We have to continue to network and support other activists and movements challenging the U.S. empire around the world. We have to demonstrate that American Exceptionalism is nothing less than a concept employed to shackle the minds of the people in resource-rich regions of the world so the U.S. can seize their economies and resources, and it should be responded to in the same manner as if the U.S. military was invading their countries. If history has taught us anything, it is that the only response empire understands is resistance.

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We need to cease our cultural and commercial exchanges with “Israel” because oppressive societies thrive on our willingness to do business with them, and culture and commerce are significant elements of that business.

For 62 years, our willingness to dialogue with the Zionist colonization project, to engage in “cultural exchanges” with it, and to purchase goods grown on the land it steals from Palestinians, have cost the Palestinian people dearly. For our actions helped create what the Bushites would call a “new reality on the ground” that legitimizes the usurpation of Palestinian rights, and criminalizes their struggle to recover what is theirs.

Those who have supported other struggles against injustice know very well that said struggles are made even more difficult when one faces a world that sees the oppressors as the injured party. For 62 years, the Zionists have used their past with the Nazis to silence the slightest criticism of the crimes of genocide, invasion, and racism which they perpetrate against the people of Palestine, even though the Palestinians were in no way involved with the Nazis’ actions.

As the Zionists continue to steal land from Palestinians, destroy their villages and communities, force them off their land at gunpoint, and starve and massacre the Palestinians of Gaza, they behave as if what they endured with the Nazis makes them the sole arbiters of what constitutes oppression and what doesn’t.

It’s about time that the rest of us confront their use of that experience as moral currency to keep committing atrocities against people who were in no way responsible for it. It’s high time we stop trading, dancing, singing and painting with this murderous, racist regime. For our willingness to consort with it is part of what allows its atrocities to go unpunished.

Gil Scot-Heron did something worth emulating in his cancellation of the “Tel Aviv” concert. By canceling, he helped weaken the Zionists’ 62-year taboo of speech against their crimes in Palestine. He reaffirmed his long-held tradition of singing for justice. He refused to become a weapon in the Zionist arsenal against the Palestinians, and remained consistent with a long personal history of support for liberation.

Let us hope that others show his courage and follow suit. And most importantly, let us hope that the Boycott “Israel” campaign is able to build a movement that, rather than seeking a “happy medium” for the settlers and the oppressed, can genuinely defend the rights of Palestinians, without abdicating in their name, or dictating limits on what they should struggle for.

American Exceptionalism: A Convenient Myth for Empire

BY ROBERT SALEEM HOLBROOK

Throughout its brief but dramatic history, the United States has employed an arsenal of myths to create the impression, in the minds of its citizens and the world, that it is unique and superior among nations and peoples of the world. These myths played an important role in the early expansion of the United States from a republic of 13 colonies to the international Goliath that now straddles the world. It was the myth of “manifest destiny” that justified the extermination of Native American tribes under the idea that “God” had ordained that the United States conquer and cleanse the lands between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans for the establishment of Western civilization. The “Monroe Doctrine” was another myth that justified U.S. expansion by proclaiming the Western Hemisphere (Latin America) the backyard of the United States. This policy led to the seizure of Texas, California, New Mexico and Arizona from Mexico; the colonization of Cuba, Puerto Rico, and Haiti; and the continued interference in the affairs of Latin American countries under the guise of protecting or importing “freedom.”

As the United States embarks on its present imperial ambitions, practically unrestrained by any international competitor or opponent, a new term cloaked in old myths is being promoted to justify the expansion of U.S. power we are witnessing. The concept of an “American Exceptionalism” has found its way into the national language and has been at the root of U.S. foreign policy for the past 30 years. It is hard to pinpoint the exact origin of this term, yet its concept has been around a very long time. Citizens of the United States have always been led to believe that their country, lifestyle and values were superior to the rest of the world. What is different now is the rest of the world is expected to believe and fall in line behind this nonsense. This is what “American Exceptionalism” is: the absurd belief that the United States is somehow a unique creation in all the years of recorded human history.

Some credit former President Ronald Reagan with crafting the term during a speech in which he compared America to a bright shining city on a hill, deliberately invoking a biblical comparison with the city of Jerusalem summoning souls in the last days. In Reagan’s mind, and those of much of the ruling class of the United States, the people of the world would flock to and emulate the U.S. political and economic model just as lost souls would flock to the bright shining city on a hill in the Bible. Describing the U.S. in biblical terms was an important part of crafting the myth because it added to the U.S.’s image as an exceptional model. What lost person living in a dark and underdeveloped country wouldn’t want to be saved by

MOVE Parole Update

BY MICHAEL DAVIS AFRICA

On August 8, 1978 The MOVE Organization’s headquarters was attacked in a pre-dawn raid by over 600 Philadelphia cops and officials. They used machinery, grenades, shot thousands of bullets under screen of smoke, tear gas, and hundreds of thousands of gallons of water shot from water cannons. During the attack, one cop was killed and several other cops and firemen were wounded, all by police fire. However, MOVE members were convicted and sentenced for the assault we all miraculously survived.

We were sentenced to 30-100 years in jail in a railroad trial. That 30 year minimum was up as of August 2008, and we were given a parole hearing. The parole board has twice denied us our freedom, making it perfectly clear to all those that didn’t understand their role, that they fully intend to finish up where the cops, d.a. and courts left off.

Now we are about to have our third parole hearing. Their rationale for denying us parole the first two times were failure to accept responsibility for the offenses committed, failure to show remorse, and a negative recommendation from the d.a.’s office. Having always maintained our innocence and a mountain of evidence that proves we never should have spent one day in jail, the parole board feel they have what they need to deny us our freedom forever.

The point, though, ain’t what the parole board will decide on this third time around. Anyone claiming to be conscious knows full well that the ‘decision’ they claim to be contemplating after any parole hearing for MOVE members in 2010, was already decided in 1978. So again, the point ain’t what the parole board will decide; the real issue is what the people will allow. The parole board, like all public officials make decisions in the people’s name, and if the people demand a different outcome, it will happen.

I’m not talking about the half-hearted soul-less protests of the usual so-called activists. “Firemen” who appear quickly on the scene to douse the righteous fire and indignation of the people in response to yet another police assault. With empty phony chants of “no justice, no peace,” for a couple of days, doing exactly what they’re paid to do, before slinking back into the shadows. Didn’t they say no justice, no peace in the case of Sean Bell, Amadou Diallo, and on and on? You will often hear these so-called activists repeat the slogans of this system encouraging people to “support the troops,” while you have never heard them talk about supporting the real soldiers against repression. Have they ever campaigned to free the Move 9, the Angola 3, the San Francisco 8, the Cuban 5? Have you ever heard them shout for their masters to leave Assata Shakur alone, demand that this system recognize the righteous fight of Nat Turner, Marcus Garvey, Elia Muhammad, the Black Panthers, our beloved founder John Africa, John Brown, or any other true activist? No!!

It is the people who pay the salaries of the parole board and it is the people who must demand an end of the imprisonment of the MOVE 9 as well as all other political prisoners. All those who sit back in the face of oppression to your brothers and sisters, remaining silent as poor folks’ children are murdered and sent away like slaves to the many prisons scattered throughout this rotten country, while refusing to support those who do resist and fight, only further encourages the system to keep assaulting. Today it’s MOVE. Tomorrow, it could be you.

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Political Prisoner Profile: Michael Davis Africa

from www.onamove.com

I am MOVE's Minister of Confrontation. I was born and raised in West Philly, youngest of eight children, in an environment of poverty, gang war, and all the other afflictions of ghetto life. I started drinking at an early age to hang out with the crowd and eventually ventured over to drugs. I joined the Marines at age 16 to try to stem that spiral, but it definitely made things worse. I wasn't socially conscious about many issues and didn't really care to be. My whole life basically centered around locating the next happening party.

I was introduced to some MOVE members by my wife's family. MOVE members had come to aid them during a neighborhood dispute. I later saw some of those same MOVE people demonstrating against the 16th Police District, a notoriously racist gang known for terrorizing the community where I grew up. The same 16th District that had members of the Black Panthers strip buck naked in front of their HQ, including pregnant women in the early 1970s. Most people I knew hated them, we just feared them more, so while I wasn't immediately attracted to MOVE, I was immediately amazed by their courage. I had never seen people confront the cops the way MOVE did – directly, forcefully and never taking a step back.

In 1974 I attended a demonstration where MOVE was protesting the jailing of 2 or their younger members, ages 13 and 15. A judge had them thrown in jail for speaking out against them. The police arrested us all, literally, as we got off the bus, and jailed us on a whole slew of charges. It really scared the hell out of me, but it also let me see more clearly what MOVE was saying about the system.

From that moment on, I listened more carefully to the Teachings of JOHN AFRICA. I became more attracted to the strength it took to confront the system as MOVE did. And as I read more of the Guidelines written by JOHN AFRICA I did become motivated for the first time in my life by something other than diversions, drugs, and parties. The more I engaged in MOVE activity, the less I engaged in that other stuff. In the first couple years being around MOVE I went from being a young chain smoking, pill popping alcoholic, completely apathetic to the problems of virtually everybody, to doing none of those things and being motivated to become a strong revolutionary soldier because of the example I saw being demonstrated by JOHN AFRICA.

LONG LIVE JOHN AFRICA!
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In the Land of the Free... Robert Hillary King

Robert Hillary King was in London for the premier of *In the Land of the Free...*, a new documentary on the case of the Angola 3 and an important new piece in the campaign to free Albert Woodfox and Herman Wallace who have now been held in solitary confinement for thirty-seven years.

The Brixton debut of the film was presented by Brightside as part of the 2010 Human Rights Watch Film Festival. Directed by Vadim Jean, here is more from *The Guardian*: "The case of the Angola three first came to international attention following the campaigning efforts of the Body Shop founder and humanitarian Anita Roddick. Roddick heard about their plight from a young lawyer named Scott Fleming..." "I was born in 1973," he says. "I often think that for my entire life they have been in solitary."

About the film

Herman Wallace, Albert Woodfox and Robert King spent almost a century between them in solitary confinement in Angola, the Louisiana State penitentiary. They are known as the Angola 3.

Herman and Albert are still in solitary confinement after thirty seven years. How could this be? In America. Today.

See this film because they can't

In the Land of the Free... is a documentary feature narrated by Samuel L Jackson that examines the story of these extraordinary men who appear to have been targeted by the prison authorities for being members of the Black Panther Party and because they fought against the terrible conditions and systematic sexual slavery that was rife in the prison.

The film is directed by Vadim Jean (Leon the Pig Farmer, Terry Pratchett's Hogfather) produced by the Mob film company (Terry Pratchett's *Colour of Magic*, *Stone of Destiny*) Gold Circle Films (My Big Fat Greek Wedding, *White Noise*, *A Haunting in Connecticut*) and UKTV's *Yesterday* films.

Singing for Justice as a Life-long Commitment

BY MARTA RODRIGUEZ, long-time Puerto Rican independence activist and human rights worker

On April 26 those of us who care about justice received with great joy and relief the news that Mr. Gil Scott-Heron canceled his scheduled concert in "Tel Aviv." In view of the destruction and suffering the Palestinians have endured for the sake of that racist colonial enterprise known as "Israel," the cancellation of this concert couldn't have been more just and appropriate.

Some of the individuals who debated whether Mr. Scott-Heron should "play Tel Aviv," were Zionist settlers in Palestine, who tired us with their customary drivel of how "complicated" things are in "Israel," and tried to argue that music should be free of political considerations.

Free of political considerations indeed! Have they conveniently forgotten how often they themselves have used art and culture to advance "Israel's" political goals against the Palestinian people? How many of their "Stand with Israel" events have not been replete with "Israeli" art, "Israeli" food, (stolen from Palestinians, of course) and "Israeli" music? Why require the public to "stand with Israel" and appreciate Jewish culture if, in their view, culture should escape the exigencies of politics?

Not even Jewish religion seems to escape the politicization of culture that Zionists condemn in the Boycott "Israel" campaigns. How many Jewish synagogues can they honestly say abstain from conducting political and/or economic support for "Israel?" If the Zionists truly believed that culture should be "free of politics," they would refrain from using it as a weapon.

Some of the "Come to Tel Aviv" chorus remind us yet again of Jewish suffering under the Nazis of Europe. Still others try to argue that though they live in Palestine, they're only "innocent civilians" who are "not responsible" for the strife there.

Apparently they fail to register the fact that the Palestinians were not living in Europe when the Nazis were in power, the Palestinians are not the descendants of the Nazis, the Palestinians did not experience any material gain from the actions of the Nazis, the Palestinians did not in any way assist in the Nazis' ascension to power, and are therefore not responsible for damages inflicted by the Nazis.

They also conveniently miss the point that since their "innocent civilians" (read settlers) live in homes and on land forcibly taken from Palestinians, and engage in tours of duty in an army which uses violence to secure the dis-

possession of Palestinians for their benefit, they're in no position to call themselves "innocent," or to claim "non-involvement" in the conflict. It isn't as though they're in some other country, perhaps colluding with what their army does, but abstaining from direct involvement in the colonization of Palestine. Those "civilians" are the colonizers, the invaders, the direct beneficiaries of every inch of land, every orchard, and every historical relic that is forcibly taken from Palestinians. What's more, many of them take part in the mobs that hurl refuse into Palestinian communities, destroy orchards, shoot and beat Palestinian children trying to get to school, and write sadistic messages on bombs destined for Gaza. They are the problem! To buy into the notion that these settlers are "neutral" or "innocent" is to engage in willful blindness.

Why should we care about who performs in "Tel Aviv," or about buying goods from the "Israeli" settler project, or how many "Israeli" dance troupes tour the world? Because as those who urge us to "come learn about Jewish culture" and "stand with Israel" know, culture doesn't just affirm identity. It is a weapon in the pursuit of political and military objectives: from securing the conquest of a people, to resisting said conquest.

It's no accident that the first thing that invaders do is to suppress the history and culture of the people they invade. The U.S. Government's forcible placement of indigenous Native children in missionary schools, where everything about their history and culture was stamped out, was no accident. Neither was the imposition of English and white culture on Africans brought here as slaves. Neither is the Zionist attempt to clear places like Jerusalem of Palestinian culture and its inhabitants.

