

**NEW
AFRIKAN
VOICE**

Revolutionary Views & News
of the Obadele Society



Pregnant Detroit mother sent to prison for defensively standing her ground with an unloaded gun

Black Lives Matter co-founder seeks justice for pregnant mom incarcerated by Stand Your Ground law

By Patrisse Cullors
Reprinted from *TheGrio.com*

A case in Detroit raises several issues that are important to me in this moment. Siwatu-Salama Ra, a 26-year old pregnant, Detroit mother and community leader was just

sentenced to two years in prison.

Last July, while she and her toddler were visiting her mother, Siwatu was confronted by a neighbor. The neighbor rammed her vehicle into Siwatu's car while her two-year old was inside and then tried to use the vehicle to run Siwatu and her mother over. Fearing for their lives, Siwatu, who is a licensed concealed gun owner, held her weapon in plain

SIWATU cont'd on page 10

After 45 years in prison, help 70 year old political prisoner HERMAN BELL come home. [Go to page 10 for more info.]



U.S. Gov't Criminalizes Black Struggle Against Oppression

Rakem Balogun unjustly becomes first target of the FBI's 'Black Identity Extremist' designation

By Kwasi Akwamu
OBADELE SOCIETY

"Power responds to all threats. The response is repression."
~George Jackson, *Blood in My Eye*

One common mistake among the newly awakened is the perpetuation of the idea that COINTELPRO started in the 1960s in response to the Black Panther Party. It is true that in 1969 J. Edgar Hoover once declared that "the Black Panther Party, without question, represents the greatest threat to the internal security of the country." And it's likely that the U.S. government expended more resources in reining in this threat than with any other FBI investigation, particularly as Party chapters rapidly spread across the country.

Still, COINTELPRO, an acronym for the FBI's Counter-Intelligence Program, began in 1956 as a covert means to disrupt and foster divisions with the Communist Party

USA. In ensuing years, the FBI began to include other organized groups in what appeared to be a new and effective initiative to combat forces disruptive to the status quo. While it is true that it was in 1967 when COINTELPRO began to focus its attention on what it termed "black nationalist - hate groups," the FBI's covert attacks on black liberation efforts date back as far as the Harlem Renaissance.

Straight out of college, J. Edgar Hoover joined the FBI in 1917, the same year that Vladimir Lenin led the successful Russian Revolution and Marcus Garvey opened the Harlem chapter of the Universal Negro Improvement Association. By 1919, Hoover was appointed head of the newly formed Intelligence Division, organized to identify and investigate radicals. Among the first to get his attention was Marcus Garvey and Cyril Briggs of the newly formed Afrikan Blood Brotherhood. Both leaders and groups suffered enormously from infiltration and the dirty tricks that began to characterize the FBI's long-running assault on black liberation efforts.

Hence, it was with little surprise to some to learn about the FBI's most recent initiative that, for all intents and purposes, seem designed to intimidate and suppress

the rapidly emerging social and political consciousness among New Afrikan people. The internally circulated Intelligence Assessment of the FBI's Counterterrorism Division, dated August 3, 2017, argue that there is "an increase in premeditated, retaliatory lethal violence against law enforcement" led by what they refer to as "black identity extremists" (BIE).

BLACK IDENTITY EXTREMISTS

The abominable designation of "black identity extremist" is defined by the FBI in its Intelligence Assessment as "individuals who seek, wholly or in part, through unlawful acts of force or violence, in response to perceived racism and injustice in American society and some do so in furtherance of establishing a separate black homeland or autonomous black institutions, communities, or governing organizations within the United States. This desire for physical or psychological separation is typically based on either a religious or political belief system, which is sometimes formed around or includes a belief in racial superiority or supremacy. The mere advocacy of political or social positions, political activism, use of strong rhetoric, or general-

FBI ATTACK cont'd page 9

FBI ATTACK, cont'd

ized philosophic embrace of violent tactics may not constitute extremism, and may be constitutionally protected.”

This lengthy definition is both conflated and contradictory. It practically lumps together all New Afrikans who – in the words of the FBI – “perceive” to be victims of racism or injustice in America. If you somehow believe in or seek to develop anything related to having “autonomous institutions, communities, or governing organizations,” you are regarded as a “black identity extremist.” If you disapprove or demonstrate against acts of injustice, you fit the profile. Such is how Rakem Balogun of Dallas, TX, fell under FBI surveillance in 2015, nearly two years before the FBI assessment was drafted.

ILLEGALITY OF BLACK STRUGGLE

Balogun had no idea he was being tracked by the FBI. Knowing the history of government repression, he may have been suspicious but his activism involved nothing that was directly threatening to the U.S. government.

Despite the unsparing use of “criminal” in FBI documents when alluding to New Afrikan activists and organizers, Balogun had no criminal record. That is, unless you, as did the FBI, reach back a full decade, when Balogun was a 20-something year old convicted on a misdemeanor charge of domestic violence. It isn’t argued here that domestic assault isn’t a crime, but that the U.S. government followed Balogun for two years with nothing to indicate he was a threat to society in general or the U.S. government in particular. In the absence of any evidence, the FBI dug up a decade-old misdemeanor from a different state to ramp up charges against Balogun.

But why would they do that? Why go to such lengths to convict an innocent person?

The first thing to consider is the history of relations between New Afrikans and Americans. From the 1619 docking of the Dutch Man of Warre in what the settlers called Jamestown, Virginia, the English settlers have always harbored a sense of justified fear and hostility towards the captured and subjugated Afrikans. This fear clearly derived from the criminal acts against Afrikan humanity. Surrounded on all sides by

victims of what the soon-to-become Americans referred to as “manifest destiny,” they armed themselves to the teeth and began shaping a culture of unquestioned white supremacy. All signs of dissent or protest were dealt with in brutal and often unimaginable ways. The objective has always been to “kill one, frighten a thousand.” Such is clearly the motivating force behind the detainment and prosecution of Mr. Balogun.

THOUGHT POLICE

It is pure propaganda to assert that New Afrikans who “perceive” themselves as victims of racism or other forms of official injustice are “black identity extremists.” The very notion of black discontent is framed as illegal and doesn’t insist that a person be a militant to be a target.

It might be worth recalling that the FBI maintained a very extensive dossier on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Well-known for his nonviolence and pacifist approach to organizing, he opposed both the militancy within the civil rights movement and the militarism of the U.S. government itself. The very fact that he challenged the status quo and elevated the importance of human dignity made him an open threat to the white supremacist and capitalist infrastructure of America.

But let’s not cut corners. One didn’t have to be directly involved as an activist to become a target of the FBI. Harlem Renaissance poet and writer Claude McKay had an extensive FBI file. At the height of the Red Summer of 1919, when settler Americans in over 25 cities launched murderous pogroms against New Afrikan communities, McKay published his classic poem “If We Must Die.” He also joined the Afrikan Blood Brotherhood, whose very organization was precipitated by the widespread violence aimed at New Afrikans.

Similarly, as well documented in William Maxwell’s 2015 book, *F.B. Eyes: How J Edgar Hoover’s Ghostreaders Framed African American Literature*, the FBI monitored and kept files on practically every New Afrikan author of note from the Harlem Renaissance forward. Not only did the FBI subscribe to nearly all liberation-oriented newspapers, magazines and journals appealing to New Afrikan reading audiences, but they also managed to obtain lists of publication subscribers.

The young, gifted and black playwright Lorraine Hansberry, who gave us *A Raisin in the Sun*, too, was targeted for FBI monitoring. So was poet Langston Hughes and novelist Richard Wright, to mention but a couple prominent figures who few would consider threatening to the U.S. government.

The point is, the U.S. government attempts to paint ghastly images of persons who they want to influence us to view as dangerous and expendable. They seek to foster divisions even in how they frame their counter-intelligence narrative. But there are no innocents in the eyes of the settler state. All black people are potential revolutionaries, and the slightest disagreement in anything social, economic, religious, or political can trigger a ferocious backlash from the defenders of the status quo.

FRAMING A STATE OF MIND

Balogun is a member and trainer with the Huey P. Newton Gun Club in Dallas. It is a public organization that teaches Pan-Afrikan consciousness as part of its grassroots trainings in the knowledge and proper use of firearms, armed self-defense, and hand-to-hand self-protection.

In Texas, like in much of settler America, guns and the staunch advocacy of unrestricted 2nd Amendment rights are part and parcel to the culture. Rakem acquired his firearms legally, brandished them publicly, and when he flew to Detroit in November 2017 for a training event he packed and declared his .38 calibre handgun in full compliance with TSA guidelines.

The FBI was following Balogun. And when he missed his flight due to miscellaneous issues (unrelated to his firearm) with TSA, he didn’t see his luggage again until days after he returned home. On first inspection, the luggage appeared untouched. But in the pre-dawn hours of the next day, FBI was kicking down his apartment door with a search warrant in pursuit of firearms, ammunition, travel documents, photos of Balogun in or around possession of firearms, and any documents related to “firearms training, concealed-carry licenses, hunting licenses, or documents relating to the purchase, transfer, or repair of firearms or assessories.”

In full awareness of Balogun’s role as a trainer with the Huey P. Newton

Gun Club, for the entire two years that it had him under surveillance, the FBI had yielded nothing nothing remotely criminal or threatening. They had clearly hoped that a raid on his apartment might result in something tangible.

It didn’t. They found a legally acquired assault rifle, the .38 cal. handgun, and less than 100 rounds of ammunition.

And they seized a book to be entered into evidence – *Negroes With Guns*, a 1962 autobiography of Robert F. Williams, which chronicles his involvement in the civil rights struggle in his native Monroe, North Carolina. A former U.S. Marine during World War II, Williams organized a local chapter of the National Rifle Association and trained community members in self-defense. The black community in Monroe were subjected to regular harassment from the local Ku Klux Klan, and Williams, who also headed up of the local NAACP chapter, believed that human dignity demanded that a people have the courage to defend themselves against vicious and unprovoked attack.

Short on evidence, and having blown their cover, the FBI was now grasping at straws. Despite settler Americans widespread encouragement of settler youth to learn how to handle and use firearms, whether for hunting or self-defense, FBI argues that Balogun is a threat to the safety of the community because there was a minor in his apartment at the time of the raid. It is being argued that Balogun was being an irresponsible adult, despite the fact that he actually trains in the safety and use of firearms.

So, what else did the government find that could be used against this obvious threat to American society? The most circumstantial and questionable evidence available anywhere: Facebook posts.

In two years of surveillance, the best that the FBI could find was a couple posts where Balogun exalted the name and memory of Micah X Johnson, the former military marksman who, in a frustrated and rare instance of retaliation to police violence upon New Afrikans, shot eleven police in 2016, killing five.

Not a single threatening statement was found from Balogun. Not a single post incited violence against police or anyone else. That simply wasn’t the work



HWE MU DUA "Measuring Stick"

West Afrikan Adinkra symbol
of examination and quality
control.

This symbol stresses the need
to strive for the best quality,
whether in production of goods
or in human endeavors.

In a revolutionary culture,
**CRITICISM &
SELF-CRITICISM**
are core values. It is only
through the responsible
practice of these values that we
can effectively:

- **discover** truth
- **overcome** mistakes &
- **resolve** contradictions

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Obadele Society addresses the gay issue within the liberation struggle

For many in the struggle for New Afrikan/black liberation – which the Obadele Society understand to be the achievement of national self-determination on land that We govern independently of other authority and in accordance with internationally recognized human rights law – there is an aversion to engaging persons identifying as LGBT. Many view activists identifying as LGBT as seeking to usurp the moral authority within the so-called “black” liberation struggle. There are concerns that “gay issues” are emphasized over “black issues,” that LGBT activists are seizing the leadership of the “black struggle” and are redirecting the focus to matters of their unique oppression in society.

Others in the “black struggle” claim that LGBT is unnatural and therefore undeserving of our attention, regardless of the obvious oppression they face in this society. Some of these anti-LGBT “black activists” use culture as a reference, saying that LGBT is unAfrikan, that “traditional” Afrikan societies never boasted of any such unnatural human relations. Such claims imply – wrongly, of course – that pre-colonial Afrikan society and culture had evolved into the perfect model of human society. Yet, that would fly in the face of horrific practices such as female genital mutilation, which still exist in some Afrikan cultures to this very day. There were also cultures at various times in history that saw the birth of albinos as a curse to Afrikan society, and as a result they were either killed at birth or banished at a certain age. Certainly, Afrikan societies were still evolving when, through armed force, the colonialists came in and, as Walter Rodney so well documented in his classic *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, disrupted our historical development. Of course, it is through struggle against oppression and for our humanity that We return as actors, as opposed to victims, in our history.

Denial of Humanity is Oppression

In the struggle for true human liberation, which the “black struggle” in the western hemisphere has always personified as a result of the deep and

pervasive oppression and exploitation We've suffered via white supremacy (capitalist-imperialism), tolerance of difference must prevail. To subject the LGBT community to the same bias as white settlers projected on New Afrikans is a counter-step to freedom. To not understand what makes other people tick is no excuse for intolerance, especially and particularly when the thing one don't understand has little to no impact on your personal life.

New Afrikan activists become hypocrites when We say We oppose oppression yet oppose gay activists mobilizing against various forms of oppression, both unique to their experience and matters affecting all of us as black people.

Some argue that the very presence of persons identifying as LGBT and engaging in the struggle is a bad example for New Afrikan children; that mere exposure to LGBT activists has a corrupting influence on impressionable minds. Few argue the preponderance of exposure to unhealthy male/female relationships in the New Afrikan community; the abuse of women and abandonment of the family, most often by men. How corrupting is that? Although many persons leaving prison have adopted Islam as their religion, nearly all entered prison claiming Christianity as their faith. How corrupting are any of us who advocate one thing yet practice another? Our children are witnesses to it all, and are shaped by it all. Could it really be bad for a child to be a witness to a gay person who struggles for the liberation of all human beings, who is genuinely committed to ending oppression and exploitation across the board? It is in the struggle that We discover Our best selves, Our humanity.

Capitalism Commodifies Everything

Oppression impacts all: perpetrators, victims, and even witnesses. In a culture of oppression, humanity is alienated from itself and, as a result, become deeply disfigured. Capitalist oppression is especially disfiguring, particularly as it commodifies human relationships. Nothing in a capitalist culture is natural,

rather they become subject to the forces of the marketplace. Over time, some things that once were perceived as unnatural becomes the new norm. Inter-ethnic relations (“race mixing”), for instance, once was frowned upon but today is a widespread practice. The natural pursuit for happiness, and hence love, has prompted many individuals to explore options.

The notion that women were inferior to men was a deeply held notion around the globe, including many Afrikan cultures. Yet, women have proven themselves in a myriad of contexts to be not only the equal of men but as highly qualified and often very extraordinary in their leadership. That the Movement for Black Lives was sparked and continues to be led by New Afrikan women exemplifies this; they just happened to be lesbian. Keep in mind, it wasn't an LGBT issue that led gay women to exclaim that #blacklivesmatter but the extrajudicial murder of straight black men.

Who can deny that New Afrikan women suffers a deeper level of oppression than New Afrikan men? They were/are oppressed as a result of their nationality and their gender. Capitalism isn't merely a system led by white people, but is a system led and shaped specifically by white men.* Hence the emergence of the feminist movement in general, and the “black” feminist movement in particular. Patriarchy – male dominance – is real. The exorbitant number of New Afrikan households led by single women – while not ignoring the impact of colonial oppression – is an indirect act of oppression by New Afrikan men.

If any single thing could be identified as the primary internal weakness of the “black struggle” it is the commodification of our relationships, what Maulana Karenga once referred to as the “cash connection.” That is,

GAY ISSUE cont'd on page 9

* *New Afrikan men have long been shaped and influenced by patriarchal settler culture and, towards fostering healthier male/female relationships, must shed this degenerate trait adopted from the oppressor culture.*

The Rosa Parks they don't teach in school

By Jeanne Theoharis. Excerpted from her webpage, "The Rebellious Life of Mrs. Rosa Parks."

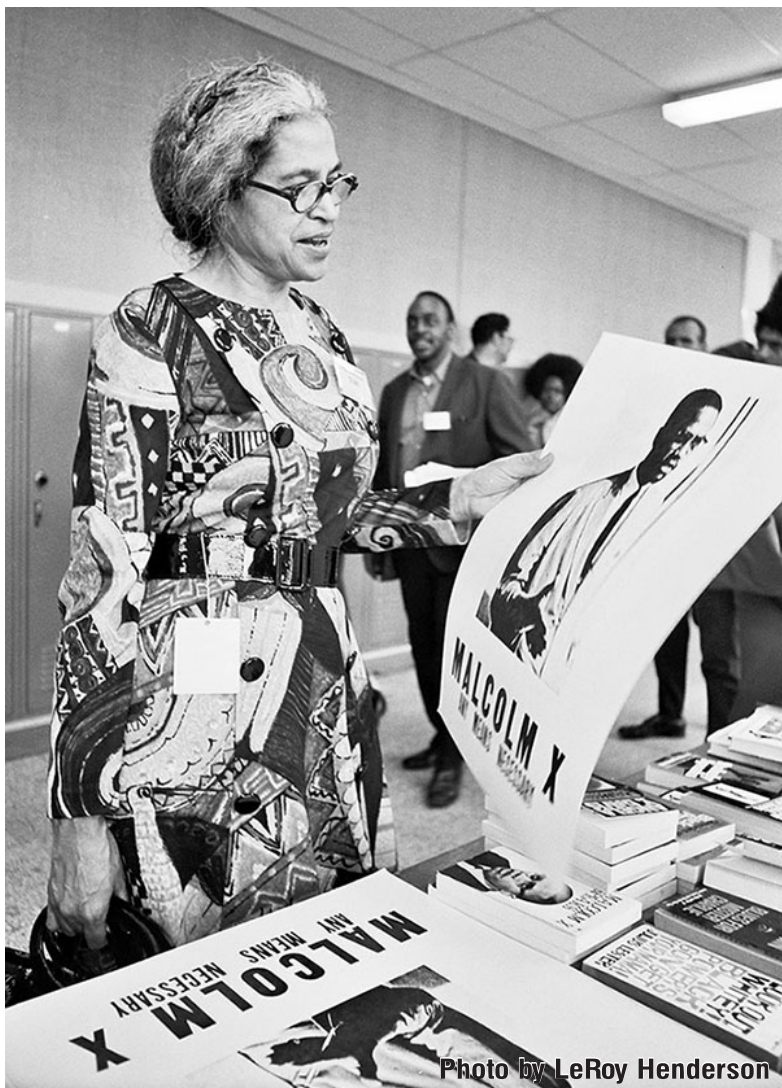


Photo by LeRoy Henderson

Rosa Parks viewing Malcolm X poster while attending the 1972 National Black Political Convention held in Gary, IN.

Mrs. Parks & Black Power

Believing that it was "better to protest than to accept injustice," Rosa Parks stood with young people who were organizing and their attempts to get justice. She had long hated the ways that black rebels were seen as freaks and demonized for their refusal to submit.

Likemanyoungeractivists, Parks too had grown frustrated by white intransigence toward black demands for equality and justice in schools, housing, jobs and policing. A longtime

believer in a black united front, Parks embraced multiple approaches and chafed against white admonitions that black people were demanding too much. "I don't believe in gradualism or that whatever should be done for the better should take forever to do." Many of the tenets of Black Power – self defense, demands for more black history in the curriculum, economic justice, internationalism, independent black political power – were not new to her.

Referring to Malcolm X

She stood up more than she sat down; attended Black Power conferences; considered Malcolm X her hero; and regularly called Mississippi prison to make sure Imari Obadele was safe

as her personal hero, Rosa Parks and Malcolm X met on a couple of occasions – the first in November 1963 because Malcolm, awed by Parks's courage, wanted to meet her. Their longest conversation occurred just a week before his assassination when Malcolm X returned to [Detroit] to give the keynote at an event by the Afro-American Broadcasting Company, where Rosa Parks also received an award.

Parks was part of a "militant group of blacks," according to the Pittsburgh Courier at the Democratic Party convention in 1968 that refused to endorse any candidate for president. She spoke at the Solidarity Day rally of the Poor People's movement, attended the 1968 Black Power conference in Philadelphia and the 1972 Black Political Convention in Gary, Indiana. She began wearing African inspired clothing, turned out for numerous Black history lectures, and promoted after-school programs teaching black history and culture. She actively worked for black candidates in the [Detroit] and across the country and took part in a variety of groups and mobilizations challenging US involvement in Vietnam. In the 1979-1980 school year, she visited the Black Panther Party School in Oakland. Students performed a play they had written in her honor. The school's director Ericka Huggins recalled Parks' delight at the visit and how "touched"

students and teachers were that Parks "came all the way."

The Call for Reparations and Police Harassment

On March 29, 1968, five hundred people gathered in Detroit, convened by Parks' friends Milton and Richard Henry, to discuss the need for justice, reparations, and black autonomy - and the potential

I'm in favor of any move to show that we are dissatisfied."

—Rosa Parks

for creating a black nation within the United States. Two days later, one hundred people signed a document forming the Provisional Government of the Republic of New Afrika (RNA), outlining a doctrine for the black nation and naming a provisional leadership. The RNA advocated a separate state for African Americans to be formed in the five "black belt" states of Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana, Georgia, and South Carolina as land due black people as reparations for the legacy of slavery. Parks followed and occasionally participated in the RNA's activities and was called on for help at key moments.

By most accounts, Parks did not attend the RNA's second annual convention on March 29, 1969, which resulted in a historic confrontation between black radicals and the Detroit police. Three hundred people gathered at Reverend C.L. Franklin's New Bethel Church.

As the meeting finished, a shooting occurred outside the church. In response, the police broke down the doors of the church, poured hundreds of rounds of ammunition into the church, and brutally arrested all the men, women, and children gathered. Several convention members were wounded. One young policeman was killed and another wounded. The remaining 140 New Afrikan conferees were arrested en masse.

Reverend Franklin called black judge George Crockett to inform him of the mass arrests. Many black activists, including Parks and Franklin, had worked hard to see Crockett elected to Recorder's Court in 1966. A bold legal advocate, Crockett had defended the eleven members of the Communist Party charged with violation of the Smith Act; represented Coleman Young and others before the House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC); and worked with the National Lawyers Guild in Mississippi. As a judge in Recorder's Court, Crockett had been devoted to rooting out police misconduct and establishing firmer judicial oversight.

In the middle of the night, Judge Crockett proceeded to the police station, where he found legal disarray. The 140 people from the RNA convention were being held incommunicado. In disregard

Cont'd on page 5

ROSA PARKS cont'd

of customary procedure, everyone was being treated as suspects but no one had actually been charged. An indignant Crockett set up court right in the station house, demanding the police either press charges or release people. He had handled about fifty cases, releasing most of the men, women, and children, when the Wayne County prosecutor, who had been called in by the police, interceded and promised a return to normal procedures.

Crockett came under tremendous criticism for this intervention. White politicians and citizens called for his impeachment. 200,000 people signed a petition spearheaded by the Detroit police officers’ association accusing Crockett of ”gross misconduct.” In response, a Black United Front of nearly sixty organizations ranging from the NAACP to the RNA coalesced to support Judge Crockett. On April 3, 1969, over three thousand people demonstrated on behalf of Crockett.

Greatly disturbed by the police action at New Bethel, Parks was active in the campaign to defend Judge Crockett. On a slip of paper for a speech to Detroit’s Alabama Club, she highlighted the similarities between police brutality in Montgomery and Detroit and then noted “my experiences with Judge Crockett,” perhaps suggesting some personal tie to the events at New Bethel or Crockett’s actions at the police station.

The Arrest of Imari Obadele

After the police roundup at New Bethel Church, a section of the RNA decided to move its operations to Mississippi. Richard Henry, now known as Imari Obadele, led a group south to begin acquiring land, settling on a farm in Jackson, Mississippi. Milton Henry, now Gaidi Obadele, stayed behind in Detroit.

Following the New Bethel incident, the FBI had stepped up its monitoring of the group. The RNA’s Mississippi

farm was threatened and raided, and in August 1971 the FBI and the Jackson Police Department attacked with arms, tear gas, and a tank. A shoot-out between the RNA and the police ensued. One Jackson police officer was killed, and another patrolmen and an FBI agent were wounded. Eleven RNA members, including President Imari Obadele (who was not at the farm during the shootout), were arrested, and the police began to brutalize the suspects, including one of the women who was pregnant. The defendants were paraded half-clothed through downtown Jackson.

A neighbor phoned RNA Minister of Justice Chokwe Lumumba back in Detroit. Fearing what would be done to the people in custody, Lumumba frantically called Representative Conyers’s office to ask the congressman to intervene. According to Lumumba, Conyers’s office “got back to us immediately” that they had gotten assurances from the Justice

Department that the suspects would be humanely treated. Lumumba found out later that it was Rosa Parks who had acted so quickly: “She intervened and really saved their lives.” Conyers corroborated Lumumba’s account.

Eight members of the RNA were convicted of murder; a year later, Obadele, who became one of the first American political prisoners who case was to be taken up by Amnesty International, was convicted of conspiracy and served more than five years of a twelve-year sentence. Obadele later said that during his five years in prison Parks would periodically call the prison to check on his well-being, being clear [saying] that this was “Rosa Parks calling” and informing prison officials they were being watched.

Jeanne Theoharis is author of THE REBELLIOUS LIFE OF MRS. ROSA PARKS, Beacon Press, 2013. It is available at The Shed at Martz Park in Detroit.

FBI ATTACK cont'd

he felt he was charged to do.

CRUSHING SYMBOLS

The government attack on Rakem Balogun is an attack on all black people. He courageously rejected a plea bargain that would instantly turn him into a felonious statistic.

The government charge of Illegal Possession of Firearms is weak but if they could get a conviction, then it would fulfill its primary purpose of “kill one, frighten a thousand.” The double standard applied to First and Second Amendment rights when invoked by eople of color is anything but startling. Settlers can say and do nearly anything and be protected by constitutional rights; whereas New Afrikans continue to experience the verdict in the Dred Scott v Sanford case of 1857, where Supreme Court Justice Roger Taney declared in the court record that New Afrikans had no rights that white men were bound to respect.

PREPONDERANCE OF DEATH

What’s especially troubling about the prosecution of Balogun and the “black identity extremist” designation is that the U.S. government could find

it necessary to identify a threat against law enforcement officials with only six disparate examples of alleged retaliatory attacks against police since 2014. In the same time frame, over a thousand black lives were buried due to police violence. The entire Black Lives Movement has been declared terrorist in nature, while police murder New Afrikans and other non-white nationalities with complete immunity. In nearly every instance of police violence against innocent and/or unarmed civilians, protesters only sought justice.

That the government could use six separate and isolated incidents to conclude that there is a “movement” of “black identity extremists,” rooted in an ideology that the FBI says could be either political or religious in nature, is highly suspect. It clearly is groping in the dark, leaving open the possibility for any New

Afrikan, from whatever walk of life or nature of struggle, to be stigmatized as a threat to law enforcement in particular and the U.S. settler government in general. There is no such ideology of “black identity extremism” today no more than it was when J. Edgar Hoover designated the Black Panther Party, Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, or Nation of Islam as “black separatist extremist - hate groups” in the 1960s. And We must resist the stimatization that makes our activists and revolutionaries into criminals.

FIGHTING BACK

We must all stand up for Rakem Balogun. To do so transcends the impact the “BIE” designation has on one individual and challenges both the legality and morality of such a designation. We,

as a people, must speak loud and clear that our pain and suffering as a result of a longstanding white supremacist culture is valid and that no one, including government agencies or officials have any right to tell us when and where We can express our discontent, our frustration, our rage.

One thing We could do to fight back is to join the Raken Balogun Defense Committee in a campaign to push U.S. Congresspersons to rescind the FBI Intelligence Assessment that seeks to intimidate us from engaging in struggle against oppression, exploitation and degradation by labeling usn a manner that is socially unacceptable.

In any case, as Malcolm X once said, “the only way one can really determine whether extremism in the defense of liberty is justified, is not to approach it as an American or a European or an African or an Asian, but as a human being. If we look upon it as different types immediately we begin to think in terms of extremism being good for one and bad for another, or bad for one and good for another. But if we look upon it, if we look upon ourselves as human beings, I doubt that anyone will deny that extremism, in defense of liberty, the liberty of any human being, is no vice.”

How You Can Help Rakem and End BIE Designation

Write directly to Rakem at:

Christopher Daniels
ID 5660I-I77
FCI Seagoville
P.O. Box 9000
Seagoville, TX 75159

Support Rakem’s Legal Defense:

PayPal:
www.paypal.me/gmf214

Cash App:
app/\$gmf214

Visit freerakembalogun.org for updates and more information

NEW AFRIKAN REFUGEES

The truth about the so-called "migration" out of the Black Belt South

By KWASI AKWAMU

Within the New Afrikan Independence Movement (NAIM) we recognize the southeast region of the United States Empire as the rightful land of the black nation, as the New Afrikan national territory. In specific, we claim, as the core minimum, the five states presently known as South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana. And there is a historical basis with this claim. First, the New Afrikan Nation was born in this territory; born of a medley of Afrikan nationalities and ethnic groups during the period of our colonial bondage ("slavery"). Secondly, we not only made this territory habitable through our labor – fertilizing the land with our blood, sweat and tears – but we also made up the majority population prior to being driven into exile and dispersed throughout this settler empire. Hence the name of this region as the "Black Belt." In 1860, it is recorded that some 90% of the four million Afrikans in America resided in the Black Belt South.

* * *

New and improved ways of national oppression were implemented over one hundred years ago with the hoax of "Reconstruction." And it is from this point that we should begin our study of the colonialism that is prefixed with "Neo." ...we must begin our study of this "new and improved" form of colonialism from 1865. —Sanyika Shakur¹

Historian Eric Foner begins the era of "Reconstruction" in 1863 with the signing of the "Emancipation Proclamation." Other historians start it in 1865 with the ratification of the 13th amendment to the U.S. constitution. And, yet, while there may be differences as to when it began, it is clear to all that "Reconstruction" ended in 1877 with the "compromise" between Rutherford B. Hayes and southern settler whites; the "compromise" being a

deal between former Confederates and the Union administration, whereby the ex-Confederates would support the presidency of Hayes providing that he promise to pull Union troops out of the South. Following its Civil War victory, the Union maintained a military presence in the South primarily to prevent Confederates from re-organizing their military capacity. By removing the Union troops, it enabled the southern Confederates to forcibly re-claim plantations and other land that was seized under the Confiscation Acts, a significant portion of it reallocated to the newly "freed" New Afrikans.

Simultaneous to the re-ascendancy of Confederate power was a growth in numerous white supremacist terrorist organizations bent on re-subjugating New Afrikans to their former degraded status.²

New Afrikans emerging from colonial bondage sought self-determination. Historian Lerone Bennett Jr. described the period of "Reconstruction" as an era of "Black Power." And, indeed, it was a clear manifestation of New Afrikans struggling to harness their social capacity towards self-determination during the entire period of the so-called "Reconstruction." And whereas the opposition to this "Black Power" – i.e., the white settler population of the South – contended that Afrikans could not support themselves without the guidance and support of white folks, formerly enslaved New Afrikans disagreed: "We used to support ourselves and our masters too when we were slaves," said one, "and I reckon we can take care of ourselves now."³

Afrikans in America had long seen themselves as a distinct nation apart from settler America and had from the earliest period of our experience in the

West struggled to free the nation *as a nation*.

With I.AND being the basis of all true independence, we mustn't presume that this was lost on New Afrikans during "Reconstruction." As historian Nell Irving Painter points out, with the ending of colonial bondage "the issue of land remained one of the most crucial [matters in new race relations in the South], to both blacks and whites."⁴ The white settlers did not want New Afrikans to have the capacity

"We used to support ourselves and our masters too when we were slaves, and I reckon we can take care of ourselves now."

for self-determination the murderous refusal to allow the land to remain into New Afrikan hands. To do so would

mean a confirmed end to the colonial form of New Afrikan national oppression. And as one New Afrikan fresh out of colonial bondage articulated: "Gib us our own land and we take care of ourselves, but widout land, de ole masses can hire us or starve us as dey please."⁵

In the decade or so of "Reconstruction" a significant portion of land ended up in New Afrikan hands. Whether it was through General Sherman's Field Order #15 or other government-sponsored land distribution programs, or through the thrift and purchases of New Afrikans themselves, New Afrikans came to possess vast portions of land. And where New Afrikan labor had previously benefited white settlers, production began to benefit the New Afrikan people themselves, who were struggling to be self-reliant and self-determining. All sorts of cooperative enterprises (ujamaa) arose during the "Reconstruction" period, expressing the growing national consciousness among New Afrikans. And even though this effort towards self-determination was taking place while still under the colonial rule of settler America, the

sentiment of the New Afrikan masses had always leaned towards distancing themselves from their former enslavers who continued to express violent hostility towards them. The goal was separation on their own land and the governing of their own lives. However, this brief period of "Black Power" in the National Territory came to an end when the Union soldiers packed-up and left the South, leaving New Afrikans subject to the whims of the white supremacist ex-confederates.

* * *

In 1867, the Ku Klux Klan held its first national meeting in Nashville, Tennessee. This same year the Knights of White Camellia, another paramilitary white supremacist group, was founded in Louisiana, to be followed in 1874 by the White League. With these groups and others, before and after them, came organized violence against New Afrikan self-determination. The terrorism was so rampant and brutal, that in 1871 some 930 settlers were actually indicted in the Mississippi federal court KKK trials; included among those indicted were many prominent doctors, lawyers, ministers and college professors. In South Carolina, some 1,180 indictments were handed-out, and 1,849 in North Carolina. And, yet into the next century, the casualties of New Afrikans – victims of lynchings and "race riots" initiated by white settlers – continued to mount.⁶

* * *

You see, I was in debt, and the man I rented land from said every year I must rent again to pay the other year, and so I rents and rents, and each year I gets deeper and deeper in debt.

—John Solomon Lewis, 1879⁷

Physical terrorism was necessary to deter New Afrikans from becoming self-determining, but economic exploitation (the original basis for



kidnapping Afrikans and bringing us here) was a means also to keep New Afrikans in a subjugated, colonial relationship to the ever-expanding United States Empire.

When John Solomon Lewis "in a fit of madness" confronted the white settler who was exploiting him, to inform him that he would "go somewhere else and try to make headway," the settler replied: "If you try that job, you will get your head shot away." The settler didn't want Solomon or any New Afrikan to become self-reliant, but neither wanted him to go anywhere. Whereas even if colonial law prevented white settlers from claiming personal ownership to any New Afrikan, they could and would lay claim to our labor, not omitting violent and extralegal means. Yet, in this particular case, at the suggestion of John Lewis' wife, the Lewis family took to the woods at night and fled towards Kansas in the mass exodus of 1879.⁸

From the earliest to the latest period of colonial bondage New Afrikans were known for fleeing from the National Territory to the North and West;

we have "always been moving from one part of the country to another, and also out of the country, looking far freedom and opportunity."⁹ The Underground Railroad developed as a result of the need to escape the daily rigors and brutalities and super-exploitation of New Afrikans by the settler slave institution. Harriet Tubman – a.k.a. General Moses – was the most widely known conductor active with the Underground Railroad, delivering more than 300 New Afrikan refugees to the North (many of whom continued northwards into Canada).¹⁰ TPrior to the Civil War, the settler government developed a series of "fugitive slave laws" that enabled slave-owners to "legally" re-kidnap escaped refugees and re-subjugate them.¹¹

After politically castrating and economically subjugating New Afrikans in the National Territory, after the attempt at "Black Power" was undermined, many of the new freed people saw no use in remaining in the Black Belt. Not much different than the Vietnamese, Haitians or Syrians, who fled war-torn homelands, in order to re-es-

tablish their lives elsewhere – some even "migrated" to the enemy of their homeland, the United States!

In 1879, there began a mass "migration" – the participants known to history as Exodusters – out of the National Territory into Kansas and towards the west. Thousands of New Afrikans left at a time. And yet the terror continued against New Afrikans. In 1883, there were 53 lynchings of New Afrikans reported. By 1893, the number had climbed to 118. "Race riots" and other clashes between southern settlers and New Afrikans continued, with New Afrikan casualties reaching yet higher and higher numbers.¹²

Political historian Manning Marable said of settler lynchings: "Lynching is a peculiarly American tradition. From the nineteenth to the late twentieth century, the modern auto-de-fe parallels the development and maturation of capitalism in an oppressive, biracial society. Technically, the teen is often used to describe the hanging of a person outside the legal sanction of the police and criminal justice system. Historically, and in actual practice, it is the ulti-

mate use of coercion against blacks to insure white supremacy. The form it assumes – hanging by the neck, shooting, castration, burning at the stake, or other spontaneous and random forms of violence – is secondary to the actual terror it evokes among the black masses, and the perverse satisfaction that it derives for white racists. Lynching is neither irrational nor illegal, in the sense that the white power elite tolerate and encourage its continued existence. Lynching in a racist society becomes a legitimate means to check the activities of the entire black population in economics, culture and politics."¹³

The mass "migrations" of 1879 and onward slowed down by the end of the century. Yet by 1917 the urge to leave the Black Belt re-emerged in full force. The *Chicago Defender* newspaper, owned by a New Afrikan with neo-colonial sentiment, encouraged New Afrikans to leave the National Territory and to settle in the North, enticing them with false promises of "better opportunities" being available for "the race."¹⁴ And in some of the responses to the *Defender's* Northern enticements, New Afrikans in the South openly expressed their feelings of despair, dissatisfaction and fear of living in the National Territory:

*After twenty years of seeing my people lynched for any offense from spitting on the sidewalk to stealing a mule, I made up my mind that I would turn the prow of my ship toward the part of the country where the people at least made a pretense at being civilized. You may say for me, through your paper, that when a man's home is sacred; when he can protect the virtue of his wife and daughter against the brutal lust of his alleged superiors; when he can sleep at night without fear of being visited by the Ku-Klux because of refusal to take off his hat while passing an overseer – then I will be willing to return to Mississippi.*¹⁵

Mobile, Alabama. April 26, 1917
...There is nothing here for the colored man but a hard time which these southern crackers gives. We has not had any work to do in 4 wks. and everything is high to the colored man so please let me hear from you by return mail. Please do this for your brother.

Cont'd on page 8

REFUGEES cont'd

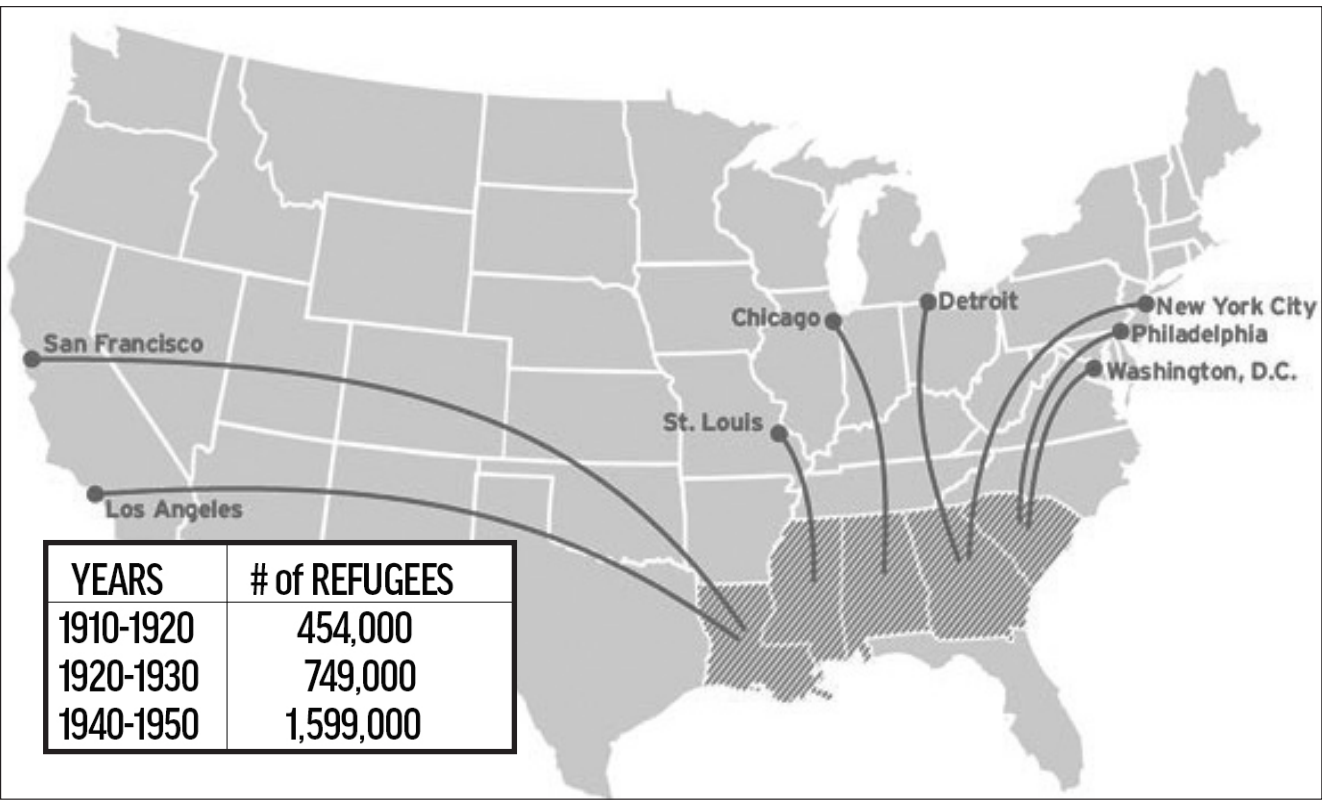
Augusta, Georgia. May 12, 1917
Dear Sir: Just for a little information from you i would like to know whether or not i could get in touch with some good people to work for with a firm because things is awful hear in the south let me here from you seat as poseable. what ever you do dont publish my name in your paper but i think people as a race ought to look out for one another as Christian friends. i am a [chauffeur] and I cant make a living for my family with small pay and the people is getting bad with us black people down south hear. now if you ever help your race now is the time to help me get my family away. food stuff is so high. i will look for answer by return mail. dont publish my name in your paper but let me hear from you at once.

New Orleans, Louisiana May 2, 1917
...Nearly the whole of the south is getting ready for the drive or excursion as it is termed. Please write at once. We are sick to get out of the solid south.¹⁶

After 1901 the number of reported lynchings began to decrease.¹⁷ But, again, as Dr. Marable points out, it was the threat and not the lynching itself that terrorized New Afrikans: *"Terror becomes real in one's mind only when a person recognizes that, at any moment and for any reason, he/she can be brutally tortured. Slavery left many Black people and their descendants unafraid of death. But there are many things that are indeed worse than death. It is the random, limited and spontaneous use of coercion that tends to afflict the mind and spirit of the oppressed. It is the omnipresent fear of a fate worse than death itself that creates the terror."*¹⁸ However, various studies and reports from that period helped to explain the overall driving motive for New Afrikans to abandon the National Territory.

George Edmund Haynes, one of the founders of the Urban League, reported in 1912 that some 47.1% of the New Afrikan so-called "migrants" – actually refugees – in New York City sought better jobs. A 1917 study by the U.S. Secretary of Labor gave mostly economic causation to the "migrations," listing low-wages, injustice and evils of tenant farming, bad treatment from whites, and more dissatisfaction with those conditions than before. The *Crisis* magazine of the NAACP gave poor pay as the leading reason for "migration" out of the National Territory in a 1917 survey, with bad treatment, bad schools, discrimination, and oppression (in general) following on the list. And, so, as historian Florette Henri summed it up, "most blacks left the South simply to be able to feed themselves and their families."¹⁹

It is estimated that between 1890 and 1910 that around 200,000 New Afrikans fled the South. In 1900, the total New Afrikan population in the U.S. was 8,834,000 (or 11% of the total U.S. population); of these, 7,923,000 lived in the national territory. Yet,



over the years the pursuit for a safe refuge outside the white supremacist South continued to increase:²⁰

In choosing where to migrate, many New Afrikans simply followed the popular train routes. Those from Mississippi generally ended up in Chicago, whereas folks from Alabama often fled to Detroit, and if you hailed from Georgia you probably stopped in Harlem.

* * *

The cities of amerikkka are full of New Afrikan refugees who entered then during the '30s and '40s, escaping the klan and the southern prison. One step ahead of the hounds, a few minutes ahead of the lynch mob is how many New Afrikans came north. Refugees from the National Territory. –Owusu Yaki Yakubu²¹

The Black Belt South is the National Territory for Afrikans in America (New Afrikans), for citizens of the Republic of New Afrika. the Black Belt South is "down home," where Granny and Great-Granny still live. No, not all New Afrikans fled, many persevered, tried to hold on to the farm; that is why many of us – descendants of refugees – still have aunts, uncles, and cousins in Atlanta, Birmingham, Jackson, Baton Rouge, and in the small "Black Towns" that stretch across the rural South. Our people fled the National Territory seeking refuge from economic deprivation and exploitation, social degradation and racist/colonial terrorism; and for "better educational and employment opportunities, for "where a man will be anything Except a Ker ... where a man is a man." ²²

Still, true freedom is not outside of home. And leaving the Black Belt South didn't/don't mean that we were becoming free or that We are even free today. Further, if "down home" is home – and if we have

succeeded in getting "better" education and regaining our lost dignity in the generations since we first began to seek refuge away from home – then We should return home now and continue the struggle for political self determination and economic self-reliance; in a word, for National Independence.

As Owusu Yaki Yakubu reminded us, We are simply refugees, and not yet free.

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GAY ISSUE cont'd

"no romance without finance." The New Afrikan family and extended family has greatly deteriorated over the generations. And while settler oppression can be targeted as a culprit, New Afrikan men ultimately must accept accountability for the widespread abandonment of the family unit, and the disfiguring upbringing of

Widespread alienation of the self and the corresponding lack of self-love sends many scrambling outside themselves looking for whoever and whatever can satisfy their natural longing for belonging and self-worth. As a male, I am not aware of many New Afrikan men of today's generation – or, in fact, any at all – that openly pursued homosexual relations as a "curiosity."

Those that may have likely done

"Oppression is what oppression does. It suppresses natural human instincts, exploits human vulnerabilities, and disfigures what it means to be human. So, what is liberation if not the elimination of conditions and practices that stifle natural, healthy human development?"

children in an unnatural environment absent a father.

Oppression is what oppression does. It suppresses natural human instincts, exploits human vulnerabilities, and disfigures what it means to be human. So, what is liberation if not the elimination of conditions and practices that stifle natural, healthy human development? What is liberation if not the fostering of human tolerance and the creation of a safe and healthy space where human beings can discover what is truly natural, where human relations are non-exploitative and void of material influences? "If I went back to a hoopty from a Benz/would you poof and disappear like some of my friends?"

Liberating Our Humanity

The gay question is important. It speaks to who We are as human beings. It speaks to Our own self-awareness and confidence in who We perceive Ourselves to be. Oppression cultivates mental and emotional states of insecurity. It does so that the marketplace can invent and sell you something that promises to solve all your problems. If you don't like your body there are surgical remedies; liposuction, implants, fat replacement to more desirable areas of the body, etc. Of course, material remedies never sufficiently resolve matters of the emotions or spirit. An enhanced physical appearance cannot guarantee emotional stability or an authentic sense of self-worth. Why? Because it is unnatural.

so "on the down low," mostly from fear of castigation from merciless male peers, themselves shaped by patriarchal capitalist society. Conversely, many New Afrikan women have been open about such "curiosities" without identifying as gay or lesbian. The absence of authentic New Afrikan men – freed of the commodification of relationships, self-aware of their indispensable role in the family unit, and committed to the liberation of the New Afrikan family and nation – is partially to blame for this.

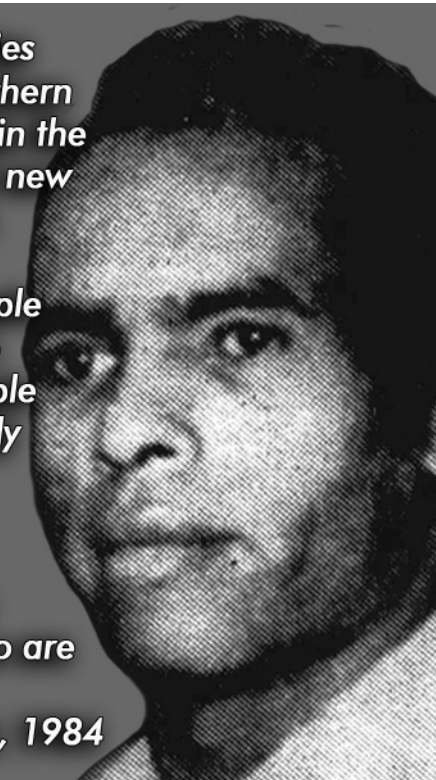
If logic says that being "pro-black" doesn't necessarily make one "anti-white," then how is it that being tolerant of persons self-identifying as LGBT automatically makes one "anti-Afrikan"? The struggle against oppression is a struggle against all the social forces that limit and disfigure us as human beings. Our struggle is ultimately seeking to liberate us that We can truly discover what it means to be human and humane. Of course, this discovery of our suppressed humanity doesn't start after liberation but in its pursuit.

Kuwasi Balagoon

The historic struggle for black liberation has always had voices from the LGBT community, e.g., Langston Hughes, James Baldwin, Bayard Rustin, Audre Lorde, and Angela Davis. Of course, when I hear a reactionary statement such as "gays cannot be involved in the struggle" I immediately think of Kuwasi Balagoon,

It's a small circle of revolutionaries in this hemisphere or in the Northern half of it. We can't just deal within the same small circle. At some point new recruits must be won over, youth must be ignited. All the rallies have got basically the same people showing year after year. i ask do these activists [even] talk to people outside the movement? Obviously they don't talk to people about the movement—we got to build a movement of activists who... address people who are already committed as well as people who are into other things.

~ KUWASI BALAGOON, Jan. 22, 1984



an extraordinarily committed New Afrikan revolutionary who happened to be gay. Kuwasi was a Black Panther, one of those railroaded in the Panther-21 case; and eventually joined the Black Liberation Army, went underground, and courageously engaged the enemy in armed combat. He identified as a New Afrikan anarchist, struggled to "free the land," and was a co-defendant in the 1981 Nyack Brinks expropriation case with Dr. Mutulu Shakur and several others, including revolutionary North Americans (whites) who supported the New Afrikan Independence Movement.

Sentenced to 75 years to life in 1981 for the armored truck expropriation and gun battle with police, Kuwasi's commitment was unquestionable: "That bullshit about seventy five years wasn't designed to effect me, i had been sentenced to twenty five to thirty before... That sentence was to effect others, to frighten others into giving up their lives altogether without fighting for real control of their lives. But if i worked thirty years at the post office and went bowling on Thursdays or doing anything but opposing the U.S. i'd be worse off, it would be like making a rope so my children and myself could be tied up." In 1986, he died in prison from AIDS.

Widely respected in the struggle, Kuwasi was never rejected because of his sexual orientation. Albert Nuh Washington, former BLA member and New Afrikan POW who died in 2000 in prison from cancer, made it clear that

"We must never forget that Kuwasi's history was one of struggle, consistent struggle, and a frontline soldier who was always there. We must never forget that Kuwasi having freed himself from prison was captured trying to free another comrade and later freed himself again. He stayed in the midst until he was captured again. His stance at trial was (that) he was a freedom fighter, and everyday for the rest of his life he thought of freeing himself and fighting oppression. He wasn't a bloodthirsty sociopath but a warm caring human being who knew that armed resistance to racist terrorism was/is a legitimate means of struggle. Kuwasi was a good soldier and comrade."

As a gay person, Kuwasi stands heads and shoulders above many straight self-proclaimed revolutionaries. He stood on principles consistent with forward movement, and understood that all hands were needed on deck if independence was ever to become a reality.

Ultimately, the trajectory and mandate of all legitimate New Afrikan revolutionaries and freedom fighters is, as stated in the New Afrikan Declaration of Independence, to "support and wage the world revolution until all people everywhere are so free; to build a society that is better than what We now know and as perfect as human beings can make it; to assure all people in the New Society maximum opportunity and equal access to that maximum..."

SIWATU-SALAMA RA cont'd

sight, hoping it would stop her neighbor from running them over.

The weapon was unloaded and no one was hurt. Siwatu didn't have any intention of using it. She was not engaging or thinking of engaging in deadly force. All she wanted to do was to protect herself and her family and defend herself without causing injury to any other person.

Michigan has a specific law, popularly known as the Stand Your Ground law to protect people who act by using a firearm to defend themselves from another person who they believe is going to cause unlawful harm to them if there is "an honest and reasonable belief that force is imminent." However, instead of the law working for Siwatu, it was used against her.

STAND YOUR GROUND

As President Donald Trump swings wildly in his positions—everything from arming teachers to taking guns away without due process, Black gun owners know that very little in the public debate speaks to their issues. Case after case, we are reminded that legally owning a gun if you're Black doesn't guarantee your right to self-defense and may land you in jail or the morgue. From high profile cases like Marissa Alexander to Philando Castile, we



are reminded the Stand Your Ground Law is an empty, cruel joke.

Before she was sentenced, Siwatu said, "The prosecutor convinced the jury and judge that I lacked fear and that's not true. I was so afraid, especially for my toddler and mother. I don't believe they could imagine a Black woman being scared, only mad."

This double standard can be traced back to the founding of our country. When our most famous self-defense legislation was signed into law, the second amendment only applied to white,

property-owning men. While the law changed, the underlying fear of armed Black people never ceased being the foundation for almost any conversation Americans have about guns. When Black Panthers rallied in Sacramento wearing unloaded rifles, the NRA led an aggressive gun control reform campaign.

Definitive gun ownership stats are hard to find, however in recent years the Pew Research Center has found that African Americans' perception of gun ownership has drastically changed. A 2012 Pew survey found that less than a third of Black households viewed gun ownership as positive. However, by 2015, another Pew study found that 59 percent of Black families saw owning a gun as necessary.

PREGNANT BEHIND BARS

Siwatu's story is just one of many that shows if a Black woman asserts her rights and arms herself from potential violence, she is putting herself at risk of being criminalized, prosecuted and incarcerated.

Due to the racial and gender biases that plague our criminal court system, women of color are the fastest growing population in U.S. prisons, and they are twice as likely to be incarcerated than their white counterparts.

Those dismal prospects only apply to Black women who aren't pregnant. For women who are with child and find themselves behind bars, the situation is even more dire.

While there is no current data for pregnant women who face prison time, in 2004 the Bureau of Justice Statistics found that 3 percent of women in federal

prisons and 4 percent of those in state prisons were pregnant upon arrival. In all likelihood that number has continued to rise over the last decade as the number of Black women in prison has risen.

Siwatu is now incarcerated. She is one more woman added to this unknown statistic. Currently five months pregnant, Siwatu is not only fearful of having to serve time but also giving birth while in prison. She has all the right to be. There is very little data on the kind of medical care pregnant prisoners receive, but these women prisoners have said that at best, the quality and timing is inadequate and at worst it is harrowing. After already going through one high-risk pregnancy, Siwatu's doctor warned the judge of the serious health threats she will face while in prison.

In addition to the usual stressors that all incarcerated women face, pregnant women are at risk of further mistreatment from correction officers, traumatizing strip frisks, poor housing conditions, insufficient emotional support and inadequate amounts of food. And when they do have their baby, in most states, the infants are taken away from their mothers in a matter of two to three days after the birth. In the few days since her trial, Siwatu has already reported that she has not received water after asking for it multiple times.

WHAT'S NEXT FOR SIWATU?

Siwatu's legal team will be pursuing various tactics, including requesting she be released pending appeal, reversal of the conviction, and a commutation and/or pardon. Local Detroit activists, who've known Siwatu through her environmental justice and youth organizing work for years, are demanding the abolition of all mandatory penalties, which remove all discretion by the sentencing judge.

We can't expect gun lobbyists to come to this Black woman's defense for standing her ground and we know that anti-choice activists will never lift a finger to prevent an unborn Black child from going to jail. Siwatu's case only highlights the linked contradictions of these two right wing movements. We must take on her case ourselves and navigate within a criminal justice system that unfortunately continues to be steeped in hypocrisy.

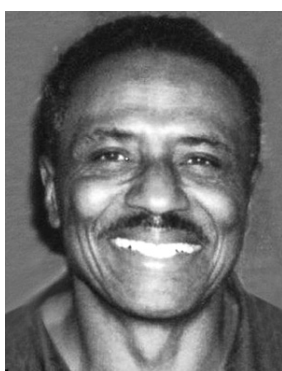
Patrisse Cullors is the founder of Dignity and Power Now, a co-founder of Black Lives Matter, and a fellow at MomsRising.org

A Few Ways to Help Defend Herman Bell's Parole

Herman Bell, a former member of the Black Liberation Army, needs your help today!

Bell was granted a parole after 47 years as a prisoner of war, and is scheduled for release on April 17, 2018. However, New York's Patrolmen's Benevolent Association and NY Mayor Bill De Blasio, as well as several NY newspapers are aggressively seeking to have the parole decision revoked.

It is our collective duty to fight for those who fought for us. As political pressure mounts against Bell, the only person who could revoke parole decision is New York State Governor Coumo. So, please consider doing one



or more of the following to help ensure our brother is released:

• **EMAIL** NY State Gov. Cuomo's Office <https://www.governor.ny.gov/content/governor-contact-form>

• **CALL** NY State Gov. Cuomo's Office NOW 518-

474-8390

• **TWEET** to Gov. Cuomo: using the following sample tweet as a guide: "@NYGovCuomo: stand by the Parole Board's lawful & just decision to release Herman Bell. At 70 years old and after more than 45 years of incarceration, his release is overdue. #BringHermanHome."

New Afrikan Declaration of Independence

We, the Black People in America, in consequence of arriving at a knowledge of Ourselves as a people with dignity, long deprived of that knowledge; as a consequence of revolting with every decimal of Our collective and individual beings against the oppression that for 300 years has destroyed and broken and warped the bodies and minds and spirits of Our people in America; in consequence of Our raging desire to be free of this oppression, to destroy this oppression wherever it assaults mankind in the world; and in consequence of Our indistinguishable determination to go a different way, to build a new and better world, do hereby declare Ourselves forever free and independent of the jurisdiction of the United States of America and the obligations which that country's unilateral decision to make Our ancestors and Ourselves paper-citizens placed on Us.

We claim no rights from the United States of America other than those rights belonging to human beings anywhere in the world, and these include the right to damages, reparations due Us for the grievous injuries sustained by Our ancestors and Ourselves by reason of United States lawlessness.

Ours is a revolution against - Our oppression and that of all people in the world. And it is a revolution for a better life, a better station for mankind, a surer harmony with the forces of life in the universe. We therefore, see these as the aims of Our revolution:

i believe in the spirituality, humanity and genius of Black People, and in our renewed pursuit of these values.

i believe in the family and the community and the community as a family, and i will work to make this concept live.

i believe in the community as more important than the individual.

i believe in constant struggle for freedom, to end oppression and build a better world. i believe in collective struggle, in fashioning victory in concert with my brothers and sisters.

i believe that the fundamental reason our oppression continues is that We, as a people, lack the power to control our lives.

i believe that the fundamental way to gain that power, and end oppression, is to build a sovereign Black nation.

i believe that all the land in America, upon which We have lived for a long time, which We have worked and built upon, and which We have fought to stay on, is land for Us to use as a people.

i believe in the Malcolm X Doctrine: that We must organize upon this land and hold a plebiscite, to tell the world by a vote that We are free and the land independent, and that, after the vote, We must stand ready to defend ourselves, establishing the nation beyond contradiction.

Therefore, i pledge to struggle without cease, until We have won sovereignty. i pledge to struggle without fail until We have built a Better condition than the world has yet known.

i will give my life if that is necessary. i will give my time, my mind, my strength and my wealth because this IS necessary.

i will follow my chosen leaders and help them.

i will love my brothers and sisters as myself.

i will steal nothing from a brother or sister, cheat no brother or sister, misuse no brother or sister, inform on no brother or sister, and spread no gossip.

i will keep myself clean in body, dress and speech, knowing that i am a light set on a hill, a true representative of what We are building.

i will be patient and uplifting with the deaf, dumb and blind, and i will seek by word and deed to heal the Black family, to bring into the Movement and into the Community mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters, left by the wayside.

Now, freely and of my own will, i pledge this Creed, for the sake of freedom for my people and a better world, on the pain of disgrace and banishment if i prove false. For, i am no longer deaf, dumb or blind. i AM, by the inspiration of our Ancestors and the grace of our Creator a New Afrikan!

- To free Black People in America from oppression;
- To support and wage the world revolution until all people everywhere are so free;
- To build a New Society that is better than what we now know and as perfect as man can make it;
- To assure all people in the New Society maximum opportunity and equal access to that maximum;
- To promote industriousness, responsibility, scholarship and service;
- To create conditions in which freedom of religion abounds and man's pursuit of God and/or the destiny, place and purpose of man in the Universe will be without hindrance;
- To build a Black independent nation where no sect or religious creed subverts or impedes the building of the New Society, the New State Government, or the achievement of the Aims of the Revolution as set forth in this Declaration;
- To end exploitation of human by human or the environment;
- To assure equality of rights for the sexes;
- To end color and class discrimination, while not abolishing salubrious diversity, and to promote self-respect and mutual respect among all people in the Society;
- To protect and promote the personal dignity and integrity of the individual, and his natural rights;
- To assure justice for all;
- To place the major means of production and trade in the trust of the state to assure the benefits of this earth and man's genius and labor to society and all its members; and
- To encourage and reward the individual for hard work and initiative and insight and devotion to the Revolution.

In mutual trust and great expectation, We the undersigned, for ourselves and for those who look to us but who are unable personally to fix their signatures hereto, do join in this solemn Declaration of Independence, and to support this Declaration and to assure the success of Our Revolution, We pledge, without reservation, ourselves, our talents, and all our worldly goods.

[Declared and signed in Detroit, Michigan, on March 31, 1968]



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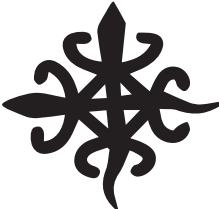
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