

CROSSROAD

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“Don't be shocked
when I say that I was in prison. You're still
in prison. That's what America means —
prison.”



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LEST WE FORGET

This issue of Crossroad is dedicated to the memories and fighting spirits of Comrad-Brothers Kuwasi Balagoon, Joseph Waddell, John Andaliva Clark, Rema Olugbala, Ahmed Evans, George Jackson, and all others who served the people wholeheartedly, and died while Prisoners of War.

CROSSROAD: An Introduction

Crossroad: (1) a road that crosses a main road or runs cross-country between main roads; (2) (a) the place of intersection of two or more roads; (2) (b) (i) a small community located at such a crossroads; (2) (b) (ii) a central meeting place; (2) (c) a crucial point, esp. where a decision must be made.

CROSSROAD (CR) is a non-sectarian newsletter produced by and for New Afrikan Prisoners of War and Political Prisoners--captured combatants who were and are engaged in protracted people's war against the colonial domination of the united states of amerikkka, for national self-determination and independence of the Republic of New Afrika. CR also provides a perspective on the repression of the mass movement and genocidal, colonial violence waged against the masses of New Afrikan people. Although CR's primary focus will be on New Afrikans, we won't neglect Native Nation, Caribbean, Puerto Rican, or North American and other Prisoners of War and Political Prisoners. The "crucial point" for CR is the common struggle against all forms of oppression inspired by u.s. and world capitalist-imperialism, and for self-determination and socialism.

CROSSROAD has a strategic objective to: 1) increase awareness and active support inside the political borders of the u.s., and 2) to increase awareness and active support among the community of nations--for the release of captured combatants, and the struggle of the Republic of New Afrika for national self-determination.

CROSSROAD is not in opposition to, or competition with other vehicles or organizations which serve the nation and its captured combatants.

Since CR is produced by POW's, there are many things we can't do ourselves. However, we're confident that others will commit themselves to helping us go where we can't, and to helping us do and say what we can't.

Intensifying Struggle on Two Fronts

There are many things that need to be done, many things that we want to help do; none of them will be easy of realized overnight.

On the domestic front:

- We want to increase the communication between the captured, as well as their coordination of efforts made by them and on their behalf.
- We want to encourage networking by and between the family and friends of the captured.
- We want to encourage greater financial and socio-cultural movement support for the captured and their families.
- We want to "lobby" all relevant legal organizations on behalf of the captured (i.e., Amnesty International, National Lawyers Guild, national and state bar associations, and local human rights organizations, etc.).

--We want to "lobby" and initiate various campaigns on behalf of the captured, directed toward North American and New Afrikan media (i.e., national, state and local associations of newspaper publishers, editors, journalists; letter and petition campaigns to the same, along with constant flow of letters to individual owners, editors, journalists, and the "public forums" of newspapers and magazines).

-- We want to direct similar campaigns towards unions, and towards national, state and local associations of professionals (i.e., social workers, doctors, educators), clergy, students, politicians, etc.

-- We want to make our presence felt by grass-roots community organizations of all kinds.

On the international front:

-- We want to make our presence felt at the United Nations by: the Human Rights Committee and its subcommittees and each of its individual members; the Decolonization Committee and each of its individual members; the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and each of its individual members; the Secretary-General; all Missions to the U.N., and all Embassies and all relevant Non-Governmental Organizations and Observers.

-- We want to make our presence felt among all national liberation movements.

-- We want to have a consistent presence among the international media representatives and their services (print, audio, visual).

How will we do all this? Aside from our own efforts, we require much involvement and financial assistance from those of you who believe in us and in what we're trying to do. Let us hear from you.

ooo

A CASE AGAINST UNITED STATES DOMESTIC (NEO) COLONIALISM

by

Jalil Abdul Muntaqim

EDITOR'S NOTE: It goes without saying that the efforts now being undertaken by CR are not innovative, nor are we the first New Afrikans to initiate such a program. Below are excerpts from a pamphlet written by Comrad-Brother Muntaqim in the late 1970s, as the theoretical document for a POW Amnesty Campaign, under the auspices of the National Prisoners Organization/United Front of Political Prisoners Revolutionary Solidarity Movement. In coming issues of CR, we'll re-print other excerpts from Jalil's groundbreaking piece.

Although written nearly a decade ago, the basic principles and programmatic outline remain relevant and therefore automatically part of the guidance and practical work before us as we move into the 1990s. Re-Build! (A.S.)

THE COURSE OF STRUGGLE

Afrikan, Mexican-American, Native American, Asian, Puerto Rican and Euro-American political prisoners of war have been imprisoned or remain in prison because of the relationship of their oppressed nations to the colonial rule of the u.s. government. The oppressed nations are all fighting wars of national liberation, seeking independence and sovereignty, while Euro-Americans' class war is for national salvation from capitalist exploitation.

Afrikan, Native American and Puerto Rican nationalists have in the past submitted documents to the United Nations pertaining to the confinement of their respective nationals languishing in u.s. prisons. Each of these national liberation struggles has developed to the extent of having established revolutionary armed forces to combat the racist aggression of the united states against their nationalist movements. Euro-Americans have also organized armed combat units which in the past have committed acts of militant resistance to u.s. imperialism. Mexican and Asian nationals have resisted imperialist aggression in mass formations through political organizations. The essential aspect is that resistance to u.s. capitalist imperialism has been militant, employing armed units to combat u.s. colonial domination and capitalist exploitation.

In response to this resistance and the cries of the oppressed nations for freedom and independence, the u.s. government has implemented such aggressive policies as the Federal Bureau of Investigation's COINTELPRO (counterintelligence program). This program was originally put into effect in 1956 against the American Communist Party and the socialist Workers Party, but by the early 1960s counterintelligence operations had been extended to the Puerto rican nationalist movement, specifically against the Nationalist Party of Puerto Rico and the Movimiento Pro Independencia de Puerto rico. The u.s. government employing the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Central Intelligence Agency, and local police departments, set out to disrupt and destroy the nationalist movement.

By 1967 COINTELPRO operations had been extended to the civil rights struggle and national liberation movements of Native Americans, Mexican-Americans, Asians, and Afrikans inside the united states. In the case of Afrikans in amerikkka, the Federal Bureau of Investigation DECLARED WAR [as part of the u.s. government's undeclared war] against their national liberation movement. A memorandum issued by the former Director of the FBI., J. Edgar Hoover, dated February 29, 1968, stated:

1. Prevent the coalition of militant black nationalist groups....An effective coalition of black nationalist groups might be the first step towards a real "Mau Mau" in Amerikkka, the beginning of a true black revolution.
2. Prevent the rise of a "messiah" who could unify, and electrify, the militant black nationalist movement. Malcolm X might have been such a "messiah"; he is the martyr of the movement today.
3. Prevent violence on the part of black nationalist groups....Through counterintelligence is should be possible to pinpoint potential trouble-makers and neutralize them before they exercise their potential for violence.
4. Prevent militant black nationalist groups and leaders from gaining respectability, by discrediting them to three separate segments of the community....
5. A final goal should be to prevent the long-range growth of militant black nationalist groups, especially youth....

This synopsis of the FBI directive to destroy the Black Liberation Movement in North Amerikkka provides an insight into the extent to which the FBI used COINTELPRO and virtually declared war on the nationalist movement. The criteria used against black nationalists is basically the same policy used against all other nationalist formations within the united states.

u.s. government aggression intended to either contain and control or disrupt and destroy these national liberation movements, and the government's use of force and violence, made it necessary for these nationalists to arm themselves and organize revolutionary armed units to combat u.s. aggression. Thus the advent of the Black Liberation Army, the Armed Forces for the Liberation of Puerto Rico (FALN), the Symbionese Liberation Army, armed confrontations of the American Indian Movement and the forces of the Provisional Government of the Republic of New Afrika against u.s. racist colonialism and various other clandestine groups. Even in prison militant armed formations such as the Black Guerrilla Family were established to fight against racist attacks and prison guard brutality.

These revolutionary armed forces began to foment an armed presence in the various national liberation struggles, establishing armed struggle as a necessary means to secure national liberation from racist-genocidal colonial domination.

It is within the context of the development of revolutionary armed struggle strengthening national liberation struggles, that the existence of political prisoners of war must be viewed, and the basis from which an amnesty campaign must be organized.

These national liberation struggles' primary objectives are winning self-determination and independence from colonial domination. It is necessary to unite these struggles with the national liberation struggles being fought in various parts of the world (e.g., Palestine, Zimbabwe, Azania, Nicaragua). To develop an international anti-imperialist perspective within nationalist struggles in the u.s., and further forge the means from which amnesty of political prisoners of war will be supported by progressives throughout the world. This is essential in order to bring pressure to bear on the u.s. government to release political prisoners of war and/or have them exchanged and released to a non-imperialist country that will accept them.

In broadening the theoretical and ideological foundation of this document, it is necessary to elucidate on the international concepts of national wars against colonialism and for self-determination, and United Nations sanctions afforded political prisoners of war....[See following excerpts in CR #s 2 & 3]

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Building The National Prisoner of War Amnesty Campaign

Based upon the above, both international and u.s. federal law determines that persons confined for engaging in wars of national liberation against u.s. racist colonialism, must be afforded status as POWs according to the Geneva Conventions. It is therefore necessary for political activists and organizations to recognize the validity of these political prisoners of war's call for amnesty and to fight for their release from prison or exchange to a non-imperialist country that will accept them.

Not long ago the Amerikkkan public witnessed the u.s. government exchange of dissidents from Russia for Russian secret agents; we have seen the same in respect to Cuba; also, the exchange of prisoners between the u.s. and Mexico. On December 24, 1977 the Premier of Cuba, Fidel Castro, offered to exchange certain persons in Cuban prisons for poor Black and Third World people in u.s. prisons. This offer by Fidel Castro must be commended, but also sought out to insure the actual exchange. This type of exchange should also be considered through the governments of Angola, Tanzania, Zambia, and Mozambique (Frontline nations supporting the Patriotic Front) who may have captured amerikkkan mercenaries and CIA operatives. The prospects for establishing the basis for exchange is based upon the amnesty campaign building an international perspective and political determination. This determination would project u.s. political prisoners of war as legitimate freedom fighters against u.s. racist colonialism thereby forging the national liberation struggle of their oppressed nations into the international political arena. It would be necessary to propagate the amnesty campaign to the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity, the Organization of American States, the Non-Aligned Nations, the OPEC nations, and various progressive international bodies and groups.

Nationally, the amnesty campaign must establish a national conference to forge strategies that will afford the campaign the unified strength of many groups and progressives, building tactical and strategic objectives to provide the means to win amnesty for u.s. political prisoners of war. The many groups

and organizations need to build towards concerted actions as a part of the national prison movement, but one that will address itself specifically to the demands of amnesty for political prisoners of war.

The United Nations prisoners' petition campaign of 1976 through 1977 (see U.N. document E/CN.4/Sub.2/NGO/75) submitted to the Subcommittee on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities by members of the Black Liberation Army, in behalf of u.s. political prisoners, requested the U.N. Human Rights Commission to adopt the following recommendations:

1. The U.N. appoint an International Commission to investigate the genocidal implications of the overwhelming Third World population in prison across the country, and the existence of racist groups within prison administrations;
2. Investigate drug/behavior modification units, their uses, methods, prisoner selection, racial make-up, drugs used, medication in food, resulting deaths and forced sterilizations;
3. Investigate inhuman treatment of prisoners which we recognize to include assassination, torture, and brutality;
4. Investigate the u.s. government COINTELPRO and FBI coercion to frame and set-up people in order to imprison or murder them;
5. Investigate forced labor, slave wages and involuntary servitude; guarantee minimum wages;
6. Set up a U.N. Court where political prisoners have the right to be tried. Already convicted political prisoners should be re-tried or be able to appeal to a U.N. Court with automatic appeals;
7. Provide political prisoners of war the opportunity to be given their freedom to any other non-imperialist country that will accept them;
8. Investigate forced inter-state transfers, and the establishment of concentration camps for the special oppression of political prisoners;
9. The u.s. recognize the existence of prisoners of war in the united states.

These recommendations must be binding on all those working in support of the amnesty campaign to project as the goals and objectives to attain in the course of building the campaign and substantiating the prison movement on national and international levels.

End....First Excerpt

P.O.W. KOJO BOMANI SABABU

Comrades Kojo Bomani Sababu (s/n Grailing Brown) and Oscar Lopez-Rivera appeared again in u.s. federal court in Chicago on April 9, 1987. A new trial date was set for September 9, and a status hearing is to be held May 14th.

Kojo and Oscar, along with Jaime Delgado and Dora Garcia have been charged in a multi-count indictment based on the alleged conspiracy to effect an escape from the Leavenworth federal prison, where Kojo and Oscar were being held.

In the excerpt below, Comrad-Brother Kojo tells us about his early experiences in the New Afrikan Independence Movement, and some of the factors which lead to his commitment to armed struggle as the only way to end the colonial domination of New Afrika--a solution, we might add, that is also regarded by the United Nations as the only means to end colonial domination.

First Lesson in Nation Building

i began to acquire New Afrikan consciousness after the tragic death of my mother. That was 1964, in Atlantic City, New Jersey. The Nation of Islam was strong in my community, and as it did for many Brothers and Sisters, it attracted my interest. It was the Nation of Islam that provided me with my first lesson in nation-building. The NOI placed much emphasis on studying history, which ironically later in my life influenced my departure from that organization. The NOI lacked the ability to evolve into a nation--an incredulous history lesson.

The Black Panther Party had a chapter in Atlantic City in 1968, and i attended a few of their Political Education sessions. But cultural and religious nationalism continued to dominate my perspective.

First Prison Experience

In 1972 i was convicted and sent to the New Jersey state prison. While there i met two people who helped me to develop a revolutionary nationalist perspective. These two people were Kuwasi Balagoon and Andaliwa Clark. Both these comrades forced me to re-read history and to reinterpret it. They showed me how history was made through the actions of the masses, and not through passive rhetoric. Even the civil rights movement, which is presented to us as "non-violent," was actually characterized by violent confrontations.

Kuwasi, Andaliwa, and myself formed a collective in prison, and decided to provide ourselves and others with a spark that would light a fight for freedom, and not be content with merely speaking about it. My only regret in that period was that we had no cohesive ideological upbringing; our politics were eclectic....

Armed Action on the Front Lines

In 1975, i was released from prison, and returned to the community with certain objectives in mind.

In December, 1975, our unit was destroyed. During an expropriation, a shoot-out occurred as we excited from a bank. There was a car-chase, and we were captured in Trenton, New Jersey. Charges of bank expropriation and attempt murder of two colonial pigs were lodged against comrades Ojore Lutalo, Azikiwa, and myself. Later, I received additional charges of liquidating drug dealers in New Afrikan communities. The colonial media tagged me with the title "leader of a Third World Death Squad"....

Transfer to Federal Prison and Meeting Oscar

In August, 1981, the state of New Jersey transferred me to the federal prison system, as they had previously done with Comrad-Brother Sundiata Acoli. New Jersey claimed that I was a security risk due to: 1) "Black Liberation Army affiliations," and 2) "leader of Third World Death Squad."

Upon arrival at Leavenworth I met Comrad Oscar Lopez-Rivera, the Puerto Rican patriot. Ever since that time we've been together. Comrad Oscar is a consummate revolutionary nationalist, whom I personally revere. He's taught me much about the history, culture and contemporary struggle of Puerto Rico, and much about colonialism, especially through the Puerto Rican experience.

Our Case

Our case is not a conspiracy to escape from prison. Because it could not have been practically possible, due to governmental control. What you have here is governmental machination to subvert the public right of Puerto Ricans to oppose colonial occupation of Puerto Rico. The U.S. government investigation was centered primarily on above-ground political organizations, political attorneys, and New Afrikan and North American anti-imperialist groupings. The government's intentions were to corral people from every opposition organization to present a grand seditious conspiracy against U.S. settler rule.

It is important to realize the concentration they are placing on incarcerated political prisoners: 1) observing the political prisoners, the government has been able to connect their visitors, i.e., family, comrades, organizations, attorneys, to all types of outrageous conspiracies. This is done through monitoring mail and telephone conversations; 2) surveillance is performed by planting opportunistic prisoners around them, who seemingly support their liberation struggles or ingratiate themselves through alleged disciplined social practice. Prison informants are valuable to government investigations because they provide leads to other sources; 3) targeting attorneys--the government is trying to destroy access to legal assistance by labelling attorneys as subversives or indicating them in every attempt a combatant makes to extricate themselves. They are attempting to use this case to establish a new criteria on legal contact. A single ramification is, no paralegals can see us, all attorneys should and must have bar association I.D. cards for visitation rights. The government alleges in this case that the conduct of attorneys were political couriers; 4) the criminalization of the Puerto Rican independence movement--Jaime Delgado and Dora Garcia-Lopez have both been active in the Puerto Rican independence movement for a great many years. Jaime is coordinator of the

National Committee to Free Puerto Rican POWs, and Dora is married to the chairperson of the Puerto Rican National Liberation Movement (MLN). Definitely these are ideal individuals for placement in prison, if you would like to set a tone. Governmental patrons have been attempting to link them to their conspiracy through telephone calls--but, of course you'll speak to your sister-in-law, and to the coordinator of an organization serving your interests. The criminalization process is done primarily to influence the way people perceive the movement, to break support and enable the government to crush the organization, the movement, or individuals connected thereto, without a public outcry or backlash. A national independence movement organization is not a criminal institution....

Stand as a POW

During trial i will utilize a legal defense. My defense has evolved since first being indicted, and that has something to do with the introduction of evidence [audio tapes which reveal government informants getting instructions from their FBI control officers--Editor]....It is important that this material be challenged to provide the Puerto Rican comrades a chance at defending their charges.

At both court appearances...i refused to acknowledge jurisdiction of the u.s. over my person. i stated simply that being a New Afrikan and a freedom fighter, i didn't recognize colonial authority over New Afrikans....Non-participation or non-recognition of colonial jurisdiction is a dynamic we must seize in our struggle. Comrade Oscar shall assert retramiento for his nation.

New Afrikan and Puerto Rican Unity of Interest

Our unity of interest with Puerto Rico goes back to slavery. In the Caribbean experiences, Afrikans were settled there for farming and labor purposes. The Puerto rican people are composed of three different bloods, cultures, and histories: Indian, spanish, and African. In certain enclaves you find traditions from the African culture, and that's true throughout most Latin countries, but Cuba and Puerto rico have retained many, as well as Brazil.

Solidarity with anti-colonial struggles is a must, if New Afrika expects the same treatment. As an emerging nation, its international relationships must be established, its anti-colonial position asserted, to be echoed universally.

The Puerto Rican community has exhibited much gratitude and respect to this New Afrikan, nestled me in like a child needing security, protected New Afrika's independence at every rally regarding this case. Indeed, i am forever thankful and indebted. Through our struggle against the settler empire, we act as a rearguard to preserve their right to self-determination, smashing finally a dying colonial experience. The act is reciprocal, since their struggle advances our efforts, too. In this case i will make a sacrifice for New Afrikan solidarity with Puerto rico.

New Afrika is a nation evolving, withstanding attacks from the racist imperialist amerikkka. Solidarity with other socialist nations happens to be important to our upbringing in the international community. On April 18, 1987,

Mikal Gorbache, General-Secretary of the Communist Party of Russia, recognized the existence of New Afrika--he called on the u.s. government to provide New Afrikan people with states to form a homeland of our own. Our struggle is being heard from every printed line, speech, confrontation with occupying colonial forces. We must accord solidarity with all anti-imperialist struggles.

Inhumane Treatment

Since September 30, 1986, Oscar and i have been in preventive lock-up here at the MCC-Chicago. There is no procedure for our treatment except the government's assumption that we are political activists. Even that posture shouldn't substantiate the repression used against us.

Daily we are confined to a small hermetically sealed room that has no flow of air. In addition to that, we are forced to stay in these cells twenty-four hours a day, the only exception being five one-hour recreation periods per week in front of our cells. We receive no outside recreation, nor are we allowed to use the gym. The cells back up with excrement from neighboring cells when the occupants relieve themselves and flush their toilets.

To prepare a defense, which is one of the reasons we are here, we find problems using the room allotted to us to view and listen to the video and audio tapes of the government. We are permitted to jointly use this room for one hour for five days a week, to go over 300-400 tapes.

On March 11, 1987, upon exiting one of our joint meetings, a guard named Wilson started harassing us about body searches, and his actions were in violation of their own rules. After handcuffing me from behind, Wilson and Captain Carter and several other guards jumped me. I was beaten unconscious and suffered permanent injury to my left wrist. Later, i was diagnosed with hypertension, and i've suffered continuous headaches. The doctor has stated that the hypertension is stress-induced, which is not surprising considering the inhumane conditions and constant harassment that Oscar and i have been subject to since our arrival here.

#####

Letters to protest the conditions under which Kojo and Oscar are suffering should be sent to:

Warden O.C. Jenkins
MCC-Chicago
71 W. Van Buren
Chicago, Il. 60605

Letters to Kojo and Oscar should be sent to:

Kojo Bomani Sababu
s/n Grailing Brown
#39384-066
MCC
71 W. Van Buren
Chicago, Il. 60605

Oscar Lopez-Rivera
#87651-024
MCC
71 W. Van Buren
Chicago, Il. 60605

JOINT STATEMENT FROM
MUSLIM POLITICAL PRISONERS IN THE UNITED STATES

The Political Repression of Grass Roots
Organizations in the United States

Black or Afro-American political activists imprisoned in the u.s.a. today reflect, in part, the often violent repression of their community's struggle for human rights and self-determination. The history and reality of u.s. government repression of this struggle has never been fully presented in its sordid entirety to the general North American populace. Repression of black people's rights (and all classes of the poor and deprived), and their attempts of self-organization, have been constantly and falsely rationalized, justified, or obscured behind the thin patina of "Law and Order" by the u.s. government and its information organizations. In fact, under the united states' sovereignty, the system of "Criminal Law Enforcement" is the primary mechanism used for domestic repression of unpopular dissent and control of all peoples of color and of low economic station.

Unlike other nations which are less hypocritical and employ political police and overt political institutions for repressive purposes, the u.s. government conceals its political and racist-supremacist repression behind the "constitutional" fig leaf of "blind justice" and "impartial" rule of law. Now, a new dimension to this racist and political repression has been added--the racist instigation of anti-Islamic public sentiment and the subversion of so-called "political" Islamic thought. Behind this crusade of "anti-terrorism," the u.s. has embarked upon a foreign policy of repression of so-called "fundamentalist" Islam, and a policy of intimidation of Muslims at home. It is important for all people committed to the cause of justice and freedom to understand the nature of u.s. repression and how it conceals itself behind legal mechanisms of the state.

The institutions of u.s. criminal and civil law enforcement are not non-political instruments for the social order and the protection of the u.s. citizenry from rapacious crime born out of an amoral culture. Behind the public face of u.s. law enforcement lurk the political apparatus of state and federal intelligence agencies. These agencies have their own agenda. It is not the agenda of Pro Bono Publico (for the public good), but an agenda which perceives the "public good" as synonymous with the security interests of the u.s. and its privileged elite. Consequently, the counter-intelligence operations enacted over the years to disrupt, misdirect, and destroy grass root organizations of black people, Puerto Rican people, and the poor people struggling for higher standard of living, have laid a foundation and system for repression of all "minority" rights in the united states.

The Relationship Between Repression and Moral Decay in Poor Communities

Consistent with the repression of "minority" rights are the social and moral devastation of America's lower class ghettos. This devastation has been labeled "inner city" decay by urban planners and social scientists, when in fact it is first a decay in the human spirit, of faith, and moral values comprehensive enough to stem the tide of a corrupt system of values imitative of a racist prevailing culture.

The pervasive use of drugs in black and poor communities were never a coincidence. Drugs were first introduced on a wide scale into the black communities in the 1950s and later in the 1960s as a means of economic exploitation (by white organized crime) and as a mechanism of social control of volatile and potentially militant youth. The widespread acceptability of drug use and the sexual promiscuity of the sixties broke down the barriers which separated the political use of hard drugs, i.e., heroin, in the black and poor communities, from the "counter-culture" use of drugs by white youth. As a result, drugs in general became a problem of ever increasing social significance to the racist culture that initially pumped heroin into the black and poor communities (creating an economic value system which at this very moment determines the quality of life in the black community).

The erosion and weakening of lower class family life followed hard on the heels of sub-culture illicit drug economics and brutal police repression. The racist economic control masked by "window dressing" civil and political gains (won as a result of civil protest), have created the absurd theatre of equal opportunity oppressors. Indeed, recently in Philadelphia, a black mayor authorized the police bombing of black people in an effort to evict a so-called "militant" group from their residence! Black mayors across the U.S. preside over black "inner cities" controlled by outside economic interests which exploit the populace and sap them of their moral vitality. All this has reduced the children of the inner city poor to permanent members of a discarded and neglected subgroup incapable of functioning in technological service-oriented U.S. society. "Criminal law enforcement" has become in racist American urban areas, synonymous with imprisonment of black and minority youth. The jails are bursting at the seams. "Minority," that is, blacks and Puerto Ricans, have been made into surplus social products of an amoral western culture and are fed into a voracious multi-billion dollar a year "criminal" court, prison, and welfare agency complex. Rural white communities themselves impoverished, actively seek prison construction in their areas as a source of jobs and state subsidies.

It is not unreasonable to state that the institutions of U.S. society which carry out repression of "minorities," and those economic and social conditions upon which their political subjugation are erected, perpetuate a serious and vicious cycle of continued moral decay, crime, social irresponsibility, and subversion of human rights as serious as any human rights violations anywhere in the world.

People who observe u.s. society from afar and confuse the general standard of living with the quality of life have shallow understanding, just as those who live in the u.s. mistake material consumption with self-worth believe everything is subject to barter, easily misconceive rules and man-made laws as indicative of equality and justice. Surely the deceptive appeal of selfish material gratification have lured many to the shores of North America, and the pursuit of this gratification has often passed for social consciousness. Nonetheless, such pursuit does not alter reality. We have allowed ourselves and our children to become trapped in a gigantic shell game. Withdrawal from this pernicious shell game is crucial to not only our salvation, but the salvation of all people, and oppressed people everywhere.

Islam and Black Political Prisoners

A significant portion of the world's population have opted out of the shell game of racial oriented nationalism and concepts of western state organization of society as the solution to humanity's problems. For these billions of the earth's inhabitants, there are neither allegiances to false ideologies of eastern or western hegemony, or the reactive philosophies of narrow adherence to one class. Instead, these people, who constitute over a fifth of humankind, adhere to the racialism, narrow adherence to class interest or national interest. The simple premise that humankind is one is "revolutionary" because this premise sets into motion a struggle for worldwide acquisition of this unifying ideal. Truth cannot be confined within geographical borders, applied to one racial group, or contained within one economic class. The struggle against tyranny, oppression, exploitation, and the worship of other men's power, is a universal struggle. This struggle is not reducible to questions of contrived ideology, dry scientific thought, or presumptuous philosophy. This struggle is defined by the quality of faith and an all-encompassing system of life which embraces the natural qualities of the human being, forcing human beings to emerge from the self-centered world of sectarian thought and broaden their involvement in the sublime goal of life--the beneficial unity of humankind under one worldwide order based on justice and equality. To accomplish such a lofty and difficult task people must undergo a complete internal transformation of consciousness and moral character. history has abundant evidence which indicates that the failure of so-called "revolutionary" ideologies of class and caste devised by the limited mind of humans were that these ideologies sought to change human character from the outside--not from the inside. The over-emphasis on conditional change limited the true revolutionary process necessary for the development of human society.

Over the long years of isolation, lonely incarceration, and harassment, many political prisoners have advanced into a higher level of moral, social, and ideological consciousness and embraced a way of life of AL-ISLAM. While it is not claimed that in so doing these political prisoners are "perfect" or "better" than any other human beings. It is being claimed that the universal context of Al-Islam has broadened their consciousness beyond the exigencies of secular politics and has made them one with the struggle of the WHOLE of human kind against all unnatural systems of oppression wherever they are to be found.

Because Islam is a total way of life, it has placed the Muslim political prisoner in a unique category. Islam directs the Muslim above the futility of useless struggles which only appeal to narrow prejudice or the arrogance of small group interest. Islam directs him or her to embrace the fundamental cause of the whole of humanity. As a result, the fears of the racist and repressive state have been magnified when it comes to the practicing Muslim political prisoner.

The state and federal prisons have targeted Muslims in general for special intelligence monitoring and harassment. Political prisoners who are Muslim are viewed with extreme alarm by prison officials. The counter-intelligence and security activities aimed at Muslim political prisoners is an integral part of the over-all U.S. policy to stem the tide of world wide Islamic resurgence abroad, and isolate Muslims within the U.S. It should be added, that the crucial reason for the isolation of Al-Islam in the United States is the insulation of black and poor people from its moral, ethical, and political principles. Principles which, if grasped by the oppressed, would uplift their character and transform a people besieged by immorality and oppression into a people endowed with a revolutionary concept of life, based upon faith rather than material worship.

Because Islam fosters peace in society by directing the individual and his society to advance from their self-centered world and broaden their active involvement in the affairs of humanity, anti-Islamic prejudice is a major ploy in the imperialist agenda for continued world domination. From such a viewpoint, Muslim political prisoners realize they do not exist just for themselves and supporters, but for humanity and its future. As Muslims they are aware of their function as human beings, as custodians of the earth. Because the Muslim is commanded by the creator of the universe to fight oppression, tyranny, and stand out clearly for justice, to rescue the weak and rectify wrongs regardless of who commits them. Those Muslims who strive to practice their faith will be considered "revolutionary" and "radical" by ALL tyrants, exploiters, and would-be oppressors--regardless of affiliations of race, caste, or class.

In Struggle--

Dhoruba Al-Mujahid (R. Dhoruba Moore)
Nuh Abdul Qayyum (A. Washington)
Bashir Hamid (James York)
Abdul Majid (A. LaBorde)
Jalil Abdul Muntaqim (A. Bottom)
Dawud Abdul Rahman
Yusuf Abdul Al-Musaddiq
Sekou Odinga

GULAG MARION

Editor's Note: CROSSROAD will consistently focus on the u.s. federal prisons in Marion, Illinois and Lexington, Kentucky, where male and female Prisoners of War and Political Prisoners are being subjected to amerikkka's most sophisticated forms of psychological torture, physical brutality, and general repression of captured political activists. Below is a letter from Comrade James Blood Miller, now being held in Marion. This letter is followed by material we received from the Committee to End the marion Lockdown, which describes the general situation in Lexington as well as Marion.

"The purpose of the Marion Control Unit is to control revolutionary attitudes in the prison system and in society at large."

Former Marion Warden Ralph Aron

Comrades,

Myself and numerous other New Afrikan captives of the u.s. are being held under the repressive, unconstitutional behavioral constraints of Marion's involuntary behavior modification program for all aggressive federal prisoners. Thus, the October 27, 1983 lockdown and its repressive controls are perceived as an assault on us because of our political beliefs, how we express them in prison, and for what the u.s. fears we may do in response to our beliefs subsequent to our respective discharges to the streets.

In a much larger but related context, we also see the lockdown in particular, and the imperialistic u.s. system of penology in general, as an assault on the New Afrikan community because: 1) there aren't any academic or vocational training programs for the illiterate and unskilled at Marion; 2) its effects are spreading across the u.s. to the respective state Gulag systems; 3) internment in the u.s. Gulag system isn't rationally related to the needs of the person or the community from which he [or she] was taken. Further, there is no legal guarantee that any of us will ever be transferred to a less secure Gulag prior to our respective release dates, even though the capitalist labor market is increasingly becoming computerized and electronically dominated, and displaces the unskilled laborer accordingly.

In Miller v. Henman, 804 F2d 421 (1986), the u.s. 7th circuit court of appeals in effect said that Ed Meese can "transfer any prisoner to Marion and keep him there for any duration," without a pre-transfer hearing, or related due process proceedings to determine the necessity for, or the appropriateness of, placing a prisoner in Marion.

In an earlier case, Brown-Bey v. United States, 720 F2d 467, 470 (1983),

the 7th circuit court, citing 18 USC 4082(b) (1970), held that the U.S. Attorney General has the discretion to transfer federal prisoners from one place of confinement to another at any time, for any reason whatsoever, or for no reason at all. Only the restricted minimal due process provisions that have been established in Wolff v. McDonnell, 418 U.S. 539 (1974) are even remotely respected by the courts if there's a complaint filed about abuses at Marion.

Thus, without structured educational or vocational training programs, and with but limited non-organized recreational activities, and no work at all for the majority of us sitting idle in our cells, a sense of powerlessness emerges followed closely by feelings of hatred and resentment for the people and the system of authority that caused the abuses, since there's no legal point at which a prisoner must be removed to a less secure and thus more productive prison environment. Only the "bug-out" cases, of which there's been an alarming increase since the 1983 lockdown, receive immediate attention--in the more extreme situations, i.e., attempted suicide, self-mutilations, and protracted hunger strikes. Removal to the prison at Springfield, Missouri usually results (from one or any combination of these instances) for the application of psychotropic drug constraints, until such time as the prisoner is deemed stable enough for return to Marion and its repressive, unconstitutional behavioral constraints.

In a related sense and which increases our feelings of rage and personal impotence, every petty rule is enforced and any infraction--even the slightest--is punished to the max, even though no objectively defined "correctional" goal is ever sought to be achieved. In my own situation, i've been kept in the "hole" (the "I-Unit") for the past three years for refusing to provide a urine sample for Marion's "drug abuse" surveillance program. The sad part or even the patent ludicrousness of the whole charade is that i don't use drugs or drink booze, and have no so-called history of drug or alcohol abuse. So what is the "correctional" goal being served by keeping me in the "hole" all these years? Add to this the fact of the TOTAL lockdown, and the plain absurdity of the situation becomes obvious even for the most obtuse being in the world!

From my own position what this translates to is this: that whenever people are released from this wretched dungeon in particular (as ninety per cent of all the federal prisoners convicted and sentenced prior to November 1, 1987 will be released on parole under the terms of each man's own sentence) these people will return unerringly to a life of crime and violence as a means to an end in New Afrikan communities across the imperialistic u.s. For many of the abuses enumerated in the preceding paragraphs lead to few other ends. Moreover, with self-hatred and related negative self-directed emotions being extremely pervasive and intense among New Afrikans, especially under the hatred producing social programming policies of the imperialistic u.s. that always demeans and produces negative emotions in substantial numbers of emotionally depressed New Afrikans, the detriment is doubly increased because of the disparate treatment we receive because we are New Afrikans, our inability to obtain gainful employment on the streets, and the distorted posture in which New Afrikan law authority figures are perceived in prisons and on the streets.

In this context and by way of summation, whether in prison or on the streets of the imperialistic u.s., nearly all New Afrikan law enforcement people, regardless of his or her position in the "business," are hated and

dispised and are treated accordingly because of their roles in relation to the larger imperialistic system of domination and control in the u.s. and the larger world of suffering, hunger and death. Therefore, since we, as New Afrikans, are demanding our independence, self-determination, and LAND in the imperialistic u.s., the Marion lockdown poses a REAL threat to our future stability as a people as our liberation struggle slowly advances roward our ultimate goal of complete overthrow and displacement of world capitalism.

We therefore ask all people, but especially New Afrikans, to demand that Congressman Robert Kastenmeier re-open the hearings on the Marion lockdown. Its effects are rapidly spreading, and with implementation of its unnecessary lockdown controls on the state level feelings of hatred and resentment will emerge among the affected state prisoner populations. The net result will be intensified levels of crime and violence in our own communities, with irrepressible hatred, disrespect and contempt for all legitimate New Afrikan law authority people and everything they could represent under a tolerant social system. Calls or letters should stress these and related issues.

James Blood Miller
#00124-054 I-A-11
P.O. Box 1000
Marion, Il. 62959

TWO FREE BOOKS ON MARION

Two free books documenting the U.S. Congressional hearings on Marion are available from:

Hon. Robert W. Kastenmeier
House Judiciary Committee
United States Congressman
2137 Rayburn Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20515

The books are entitled "Marion Penitentiary-1985," Serial No. 26 and "Oversight Hearing" Serial No. 106

We strongly recommend you write for these valuable resources.

UPDATE ON MARION

October 27, 1986 marks the third anniversary of the imposition of the lockdown at Marion Federal Prison in southern Illinois, the most maximum security prison in the U.S. It is the only U.S. prison to be monitored by the international human rights organization - Amnesty International. "Lockdown" means precisely what it says - the men are "locked down" in cells 23 hours a day. But lockdown also means more:

No contact visits occur. Prisoners are separated from their families by a thick plexiglass partition and must use a bugged telephone to communicate.

Beds have been removed and replaced by poured concrete slabs fitted with metal rings at the four corners, for use in chaining men down. While such chaining is not universal, it is in practice.

Control Unit prisoners undergo forced finger probes of the rectum on returning to the unit after leaving for any reason, including going to court - even if they are not suspected of carrying contraband.

No one is permitted to use the main law library. Use of small libraries in the units is restricted and the collections of legal materials are completely inadequate.

Intermittent religious services occur, though with total disregard for the tenets of non-Christian faiths.

Outdoor recreation is permitted two times per week - people still spend 157 of 168 hours per week, or 93.5% of their time in a 6X8X8 cage.

Televisions, as pacifiers, are installed in every cell.

Prisoners are permitted two 10 minute phone calls per month. All calls are monitored and/or tape-recorded.

Mail - incoming and outgoing, legal and social - is often opened and copied and frequently delayed or undelivered.

Legal visits, restricted to four days per week, are monitored by video. Confidentiality is passe at Marion, since the guard station is immediately adjacent to the attorney visiting booth, separated only by glass, through which guards can and do effortlessly eavesdrop.

The prison rules change from day to day, and enforcement is most arbitrary.

The lockdown began as an irrational and violent administrative response to punish an entire prison population for the deaths of two guards in October, 1983,* when over 100 prisoners were beaten while handcuffed and defenseless. It continues to date, its brutality and isolation now institutionalized - the repressive anchor pulling the rest of the U.S. prison system toward it.

* Two guards were killed October 22, 1983 in separate incidents in the isolated Control Unit. Officials immediately identified those responsible, and three people were tried and convicted.

Update on Marion/page 2

The Control Unit was once a small behavior modification sensory deprivation experiment in Marion, allegedly to tame those classified as the most violent prisoners in the country. The bloody history of the Control Unit has shown that its isolation and repression provoke the very behavior it is purportedly designed to stem. The two guards killed here in October of 1983 died at the hands of prisoners who had spent years in this unit. Its history also reveals placement in this unit of those in prison for political activity as well as those prisoners who speak out against unconstitutional prison conditions.

This failed and destructive policy has now been generalized to the whole of Marion, such that the entire prison is now one large Control Unit. As if this expansion were not enough, the Bureau of Prisons has proliferated the Control Unit policy, having constructed a "Marion for women" in Lexington, Kentucky. This modern-day dungeon is a 16-bed Control Unit in the basement of a building, and officials promise that the women placed there will be subject to the same - if not worse - lockdown conditions as Marion, adding constant electronic surveillance. The Bureau of Prisons has already announced its plans for even further expansion of its Control Unit policy, all the while touting Marion as the model prison in the U.S., hosting tours of corrections officials and encouraging the proliferation of Control Units in state prisons as well.

While Marion has also historically housed political prisoners, such as Puerto Rican Nationalist Rafael Cancel Miranda and Native American activist Leonard Peltier, its use in this capacity has increased to an unprecedented dimension. Currently at Marion are prisoners of war and political prisoners from the Black struggle - Sekou Odinga, Sundiata Acoli (s/n Clark Squire), and Kojo (s/n Grailing Brown); from the Puerto Rican independence movement - Oscar Lopez Rivera; as well as North American anti-imperialists, including Timothy Blunk.

Many people opposed to the Marion lockdown and the Control Unit policy have succeeded in exposing and opposing the increased government repression, and showing support for the prisoners. In spite of activities in court, in Congress, and in public forums, the lockdown and its brutal isolation continue, virtually unabated.

NO MORE MARIONS

Marion Federal Prison in Illinois is the most maximum security prison in the United States. The entire prison is a Control Unit where the Bureau of Prisons experiments with behavior modification through isolation and sensory deprivation. Marion, which will be on lockdown for 3 years as of October 27, 1986, with the men caged in small cells for 23 hours a day, is the brutal trendsetter in the U.S. Following the Control Unit model, the Bureau of Prisons has just opened its Marion for women in Lexington, Kentucky.

U.S. prisons hold a vast number of people of color. Black people are incarcerated at six times the rate for white people in this country and almost twice the rate for black people in South Africa! This is the highest in the world.

Such a large number of incarcerated people constitutes a well-defined system of population control. In fact, it is predicted that u.s. prisons will hold over 1,000,000 people by the year 2000, and that more than half will be people of color. In addition, u.s. prisons hold many political leaders; there are now over 100 black and Puerto rican political prisoners and priaoners of war, as well as a growing number of North American political prisoners. In the past couple of months, Oscar Lopez-Rivera, Kojo Bomani Sababu, Tim Blink, and Ray Levasseur have all been transferred to Marion, joining Sundiata Acoli and others. Marion is thus becoming the major political internment center in the united states.

Last year, the Committee to End the Marion Lockdown organized a one-day conference that was attended by over 300 people, co-sponsored demonstrations at Marion and Lexington prisons, and held a forum in tribute to Malcolm X. Unfortunately, the lockdown has not yet ended and the Bureau of Prisons has not yet abandoned its devotion to Control Units. A great deal more work needs to be done in this area. And we intend to be part of the movement that's doing it. We urge you to join us.

Committee to End the Marion Lockdown
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STOP THE SEXUAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL TORTURE OF WOMEN
POLITICAL PRISONERS AND POW'S

(On March 8, 1987--International Women's Day--the Committee to End the Marion Lockdown and the National Committee to Free Puerto Rican POW's co-sponsored a march and demonstration at the Lexington, Kentucky federal prison, calling for its closing and in support of the imprisoned comrades there. Below is an excerpt from the Call for that march, followed by a statement sent to the demonstration which was signed by eight political prisoners and prisoners of war.)

Here in the u.s., there are currently over 100 political prisoners and prisoners of war. Hidden from public view, isolated in secluded prisons, these prisoners are subjected to a systematic policy of torture. The u.s., the so-called bastion of democracy, cannot yet afford to practice the brutal torture it has perfected in other countries. Here torture is at once more selective and subtle, but nonetheless calculated and vicious. While many political prisoners or POWs have experienced some form of torture, we want to focus on the specific example of Lexington Control Unit--the highest security prison for women in the u.s. Opened in October, 1986. Three women are currently imprisoned there. One is Alejandrina Torres, Puerto Rican independence fighter, POW, a 47 year old mother of two and wife of a United Church of Christ minister. Susan Rosenberg, 31, and Silvia Baraldini, 39, anti-imperialist political prisoners, are two North American women who spent years working in solidarity with the Puerto Rican and black liberation struggles. They were arrested for resisting u.s. aggression at home and around the world.

I was handcuffed again and brutally pushed to the floor by Lt. Lewis. I realized I was helpless and that he was intent on doing what he pleased. He was putting pressure on my neck with his legs. I was on my knees. I felt a blow to my rib cage as Lt. Lewis forcefully pushed my face on the floor, causing tremendous pain. I felt my legs being spread apart forcefully, my panties lowered and then the spread search was consummated.

Alejandrina Torres, July 10, 1984

Since her incarceration in June, 1983, male guards have sexually attacked Alejandrina Torres three times. The most recent attack occurred in October, 1986, in the federal prison at Tucson, Arizona. Male guards stripped Alejandrina

Torres and Susan Rosenberg, and forcefully submitted them to a rectal and vaginal search by a male employee. When the women requested to be searched by X-ray, Associate Warden Gibson stated, "We couldn't get what we want from you that way."

Such a cynical attitude is not solely the response of an evil mind. It reflects a conscious desire and strategy on the part of the FBI, Bureau of Prisons and highest levels of the u.s. government to break these women. Based on their practice of torture and repression around the world, the u.s. government is implementing a cruel and dehumanizing policy against these women. The Control Unit at Lexington, Kentucky is a model for these tactics.

Shut Down Lexington and Marion Control Units

The Control Unit is appropriately named because its goal is to control every detail of the women's lives. Confined to a small area 23 hours a day, isolated from friends, family and other prisoners, prison authorities hope to break the women's resistance. Enforcing dependency and passivity, each woman is required to ask guards for permission to move from one room to another. Warden Matthews has forced them to wear culottes because they are "more feminine". They are strip-searched after using the yard, despite the fact that a guard and video camera watch them constantly. Prison officials such as the Warden at Marion, acknowledge that the psychological well-being of prisoners is best maintained by painting the prison in warm earth colors. Using such knowledge, the Lexington prison administration has painted every inch of the Control Unit eye-blinding white to disorient the women.

Lexington Control Unit is designed specifically for women political prisoners. However, across the u.s., we see more prisons with worsening conditions. In Southern Illinois, Marion Prison for men has been locked down and converted into one big control unit. It is no coincidence that Marion--like all u.s. prisons--has a very high percentage of black and Latin prisoners. u.s. prisons exist not only to oppress and torture political people, but to serve as a warning to third world people that rebellion against no jobs, racism, bad housing and police brutality will no longer be tolerated.

CLOSE DOWN THE CONTROL UNITS!!

FREE ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS and

PRISONERS OF WAR!!

INTERNATIONAL WOMENS DAY STATEMENT 1987

Long Live International Working Women.

We send our collective love, strength, and resistance to all those present. We too have an appointment with the struggle today, and although there are walls and fences between us, our spirits soar above them, and we are with you, and you with us.

I.W.D. is our day. It is our celebration of all our struggles: of solidarity, our womanness, our commitments, our children. It is our worldwide day to salute our daily struggles against oppression, and to demand true liberation. It is a day for us to pause to recognize the contributions that women make every single day. Our resistance is a great threat to the enemy--it is a threat because we give voice to a legitimate set of demands, and a desire for a life of justice, peace, self-determination, dignity, and daily bread.

We are northamerican anti-imperialist political prisoners. We are in prison because all of us are compelled to resist this criminal system in its very heart. We have seen the necessity to follow the leadership and examples set by women who have opened their path to liberation through fighting for their nations' self-determination and independence. We fight to build solidarity with these women and their struggles because they are just struggles, and because they are defeating the common enemy of us all--the system of imperialism. From the victories of their nations, the roots for women's liberation are taking hold in every phase of the new developing societies.

The justice department and the bureau of prisons have learned from the aggressive wars against Vietnam, Africa, Central America, and national liberation struggles here that in attacking women they unleash an unparalleled power and fury. We embody both, when the life and death struggle for the future of a nation, for the nation's children, for our children, for the continuation of life itself is threatened. Women have always resisted. They know that when you strike women you have struck a rock. So, they have opened up the High Security Unit at Lexington to try to destroy us. They want to destroy the movements that we are a part of. They can't, so they believe that by attacking the combatants, the fighters, those who resist, the militants, they will be able to undermine the struggle.

We have seen Lexington from the inside, as our brothers have lived Marion for more than 15 years. Like Marion, Lexington is a human rights nightmare. The HSU does not meet the United Nations standards for minimum treatment in prison. It is designed to incapacitate us, to kill us slowly. The bureau of prisons attacks our health--they make healthcare a tortuous process--they are trying to blind us with glaring white walls and lights

The bureau of prisons wants our bodies to degenerate--they refuse to allow us any real exercise, or equipment. They say an hour a day outside in a 50 ft. by 50 ft. yard is enough--an hour a day for 35, 40 or 58 years.

The bureau of prisons want to isolate us from everyone. From our communities, our friends, other prisoners. To deny our connections to the movements we are a part of. We are allowed visiting with only our most immediate family members. We are not allowed contact with anyone other than guards. The mail and the phone is monitored and controlled.

The bureau of prisons wants to exploit our labor for profits for the defense department--they say we must work for Unicor prison industries. At Lexington this means folding u.s. army issue men's underwear for 6 hours a day. For 35, 40 or 58 years.

The bureau of prisons wants to intimidate us and attacks us sexually through a policy of forced strip searches anytime we "choose" to leave the cells. If we go outside then we are stripped, if we work we are stripped, if we go to the shower we are stripped, if we go to the library, we are stripped. This is designed to degrade, humiliate and dehumanize us. It is designed to force us to stay locked up by our own "choice," for 35, 40 or 58 years.

We make a commitment to you, and we ask for one from you. Ours is that we will resist, we will continue to resist, and they will not succeed in destroying our personalities, our hearts, our bodies, our minds, or our commitment. NEVER!

We ask in return for your commitment to fight to close the control units, to support us in our resistance, and in so doing, build our movements. If we can develop a movement in which political prisoners can participate together with you, in resisting political repression, we will have won a small battle--the battle against the very isolation the prisons are intended to enforce.

When the grandmothers and mothers of the disappeared of Argentina took on the fascist military junta in search of their children, they said "Basta!" "Enough!" In so doing, they transformed human suffering into a struggle for dignity, and people's justice. And it became a weapon in the resistance for the restoration of human rights, and social liberation. Every day, from the women we are in prison with, we learn the power to endure. It is part of the very survival of women. We have also learned that to win it is necessary to take a step beyond endurance, past fear, and into resistance.

**CLOSE DOWN THE CONTROL UNITS!
FREE ALL POW'S AND POLITICAL PRISONERS!
VICTORY TO THE LIBERATION OF WOMEN!
BUILD REVOLUTIONARY RESISTANCE!**

Marilyn Buck
Barbara Cruze-Laaman
Pat Gros
Carol Manning
Linda Evans
Susan Rosenberg
Laura Whitehorn
Silvia Baraldini

THE NEW AFRIKAN HISTORY WORKSHOP

Michael McCoy

The New Afrikan History Workshop (N.A.H.W.) is a small grouping of disciplined and committed New Afrikans interested in countering the apathy and political/historical ignorance among New Afrikans and other oppressed nations here at Lewisburg (federal prison). We feel that the one quality that stands out in the way we approach our work is the deep conviction that there is a factual basis to reality and that through study and a grasp of science (social, political, and economic) we can understand and transform our environment. It is through a critical study of political science that we come to terms with the objective foundation which all societies rest on.

We also believe that a critical study and re-examination of our history is needed. We believe that the beginning of all wisdom starts with understanding self. In developing this idea there are no issues more important, more overriding, than understanding one's history. We believe that one can watch and read news everyday, but without a particular historical frame of reference to absorb and analyze data, such information becomes a compilation of distorted facts empty of all meaning.

Our workshop is called "New Afrikan" because we view "blacks" who were made diaspora through the slave trade as displaced Afrikans. We feel that what is unique about Afrikans here is the process in which we became a nation. Hundreds and thousands of Afrikan tribes who were varied in dialect as well as culture were uprooted from the coast of West Africa and deposited to the plantations of North America. The struggle to survive the genocidal nature of chattle slavery was the basis which led to the formation of the New Afrikan nation. This is why we don't simply refer to ourselves as "Afrikans," but we use the term "New Afrikans" to denote the unique experience in which the nation was formed. This explains partially why we use the term "New Afrikan."

The other reason we refer to ourselves as New Afrikans is out of a rejection of being identified as Americans. We feel that the strict legal definition of an American when applied to us negates our historical experience here. We believe that the socio-historical experience of the millions of Afrikan people who were forced here in chains and maintained as an oppressed and exploited nation can not be equated with the social-historical experience of those who were responsible for this crime. We believe that the socio-historical experience of the Native peoples of the New World who were vanquished can not be equated with the socio-historical experience of those who carried out this genocide. We believe that the socio-historical experience of Puerto ricans and Mexicans whose land was seized in illegal imperialist wars cannot be equated with the socio-historical experience of the criminals who continue to illegally occupy this territory. We feel that in order to judge whether one is an American the socio-historical experience of a people are a key determinant in making such a decision.

Therefore, we accapt "New Afrikan" as a term which not only describes who we are, but the term also makes a political statement of how we define ourselves as one of many oppressed nations imprisoned within the u.s. empire.

The North American Government and society was founded on the genocide of the native people, the thief of their land, and the forceable dispersal, enslavement, and the colonialization of millions of Afrikan people. We believe that the present condition of existence for New Afrikan people within current u.s. borders is colonialism, a condition of existence where a whole people is oppressively dominated by a foreign and alien state power for the purpose of economic exploitation and political domination. Colonialism being a blood sucking system, causes all economic development to benefit the colonialist ruling class state and society at the expense of the colonized people--in this case, the New Afrikan masses.

We feel that an integral part of the process of developing awareness around such issues is through the creation of workshops and seminars. We feel that such a forum provides the framework where the study of political, social, cultural and economic issues can be developed. We would like (at least once a month) to bring New Afrikans into the institution from the community who share our general interest and would like to engage in serious discussions around the socio-political issues which effect our community.

If you would be interested in coming into the institution to participate in such workshops, or if you would like further information on some of the ideas that have been presented here, please write me at the following address.

Michael McCoy
#05000-016 B3
P.O. Box 1000
Lewisburg, Pa. 17837

THE CASE OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS FIVE

In September of 1972, on the Caribbean island of St. Croix, the Rockefeller-owned golf course "Fountain Valley" was attacked by men in army fatigues bearing automatic weapons. This assault resulted in the death of eight American tourists who were close friends of the Rockefellers, six other people were said to have been wounded. As a result of this attack on the imperialistic structure, the island was immediately placed under seige by more than 300 FBI and u.s. Marshals.

The attack took place on September 6th, and for the next few days road-blocks were set up throughout the island. Black occupants were dragged from their cars and searched, then taken to the scene of the attack for interrogation. More than 200 blacks were apprehended for such questioning. The government saw this as an opportunity to rid the island of some of its dissident opposition. Ismail Ali, Warren Aziz Ballantine, and Raphael Kwesi Joseph--three political activists who were already on the local police "most wanted" list--immediately became prime "suspects."

Beaumont Hanif Gereau, who had recently returned from Vietnam with an undesirable discharge after having expressed militant and separatist views to military officials, and who at the time was very active in community organizing in the Virgin Islands, along with Meral Smith, were also added to the list.

All five men were eventually arrested and tortured and forced, through physical beatings, hangings from trees, plastic bags placed over their heads and then water poured into the bags until they signed confessions which implicated them in the attack. Eventually, the government was able to buy off several people and use them as government witnesses, including a survivor of the attack who identified one of the brothers as the person who carried a submachine gun during the attack, even though reports said that all the combatants wore masks.

After a very lengthy and unjust trial, in which several requests to have the biased judge removed were denied, they were each sentenced to a period of eight (8) consecutive life terms.

In the fourteen years in which they have been incarcerated, the American corporate businessmen in the "u.s. Virgin Islands" have lead the cry of "crucify them," and painted the scenario that this supposed act of five men was the sole factor causing the plunge in the island economy into near collapse in the early 1970s. A large number of the Virgin Islands community bought this lie, due to the fact that tourism is the main industry of the islands and the islands and the tourist attraction did dwindle after the killing of well over 60 people between the years 1971 and 1973. It is quite obvious that it serves u.s. businessmen's interests to keep outspoken radicals locked away in mainland prisons as thei presence in the islands poses a threat to foreign dominance. A conscious slave has always posed a threat to the slavemaster's household.

Although the only "crime" they were guilty of in the early 1970s was being conscious of their oppressor, today they are still being used as scapegoats to cover-up the ill-effects in Virgin Islands society which are really the result of decadent Western influence. They are also being used as a deterrent to other oppressed people who may eventually sense the need to resist u.s. colonialization of the homeland.

These brothers are in need of legal assistance and any form of support in coordinating efforts to form a defense committee. for further information, contact:

Hanif Shabazz Bey
s/n B. Gereau
#96544-131
P.O. Box 1000
Marion, Il. 62959

-or-

Brother Al Saladin
Blisschords Communications
Network
P.O. Box 53435
Chicago, Il. 60653

AMERIKKAN "RACISM" IS NOT A "DOMESTIC" ISSUE

As he addressed the Organization of African Unity on July 17, 1964, El Hajj Malik El Shabazz (Malcolm X), told the world that:

If South Africa is guilty of violating the human rights of Africans here on the Mother Continent, then Amerikkka is guilty of worse violations [of the human rights] of the 22 million Afrikans on the Amerikkkan continent. And if South African racism is not a domestic issue, then Amerikkkan racism also is not a domestic issue.

On March 20, 1987, over 1,000 people marched to the United Nations building in New York City to signal the rising momentum of the efforts of New Afrikans and other oppressed peoples to force recognition of our struggles as "international conflicts" -- struggles for human rights, self-determination, and independence from the colonial, racist oppression of the United States of Amerikkka.

Only eight days before the march, an unidentified New Afrikan was found hanging from a tree in New York's Central Park -- a recent victim of the violence that has long characterized colonialism in Amerikkka.

Few people doubt that the individual perpetrators of this hanging will not be brought to justice by the New York or the U.S. authorities. The recent acquittal of Stephen Sullivan, the murderer of Sister Eleanor Bumpurs, the cover-up of the murder of Michael Griffith, the exoneration of Claude Ramsey, murderer of Brother Dennis Groce -- they all join the long list of frustrating attempts to obtain "justice" in Amerikkkan courtrooms. The masses have more evidence that Amerikkkan "remedies" have, in fact, long been exhausted, and the struggle for human rights must be taken to higher levels.

To begin with, the masses recognize with each such incident that the struggle is not merely one against "racism," but for national self-determination. Secondly, even the United Nations has stated that colonized peoples have only one realistic recourse in their attempt to resolve the problems that accompany colonialism, e.g., poor education and health care, unemployment, inadequate housing, etc., and that recourse is armed struggle.

It is within this context that numerous international laws and U.N. resolutions have been issued recognizing that colonized peoples and peoples struggling against colonialist-inspired racist violence have the right to use whatever means necessary -- including armed force -- to defend themselves and to guarantee the exercise of their right to self-determination.

Furthermore, citizens of colonized nations that are captured in the course of the struggle for self-determination, must be recognized and treated as Prisoners of War.

As we stated in the Spear and Shield February NEWS NOTES, the pages of CROSSROAD will not only carry information by and about POWs and Political Prisoners, but also information about colonial violence and repression as it relates to the masses in their daily struggle to survive the ravages of colonial exploitation and domination, and to develop the independence movement.

Our efforts, just as the efforts of those who marched to the U.N. on March 20th, are aimed at re-defining acts of violence against oppressed peoples inside the political borders of the U.S. empire. We aim to help intensify the numbers of marches, letters, petitions and speeches--actions of ALL forms--many of which will be directed toward the international community, and to secure their all-round support for our struggle for self-determination and independence, via people's war.

*Remember
The Sharpeville Massacre*

**No Justice,
No Peace!**

**The Outrage Grows...
To
The
UN**

Ours is not a struggle for civil rights . . . the Black Nation demands its human rights and self-determination.

Malcolm X

Ruchell Magee
#A-92051
Folsom Prison
Repressa, Cal. 95671

Ruchell Magee came to national attention when Jonathon Jackson attempted to liberate him and others from the Marin County Courthouse on August 7, 1970.

However, Ruchell has been imprisoned since his one year to life conviction for an alleged robbery and kidnapping charge in 1963, which arose out of a dispute with his cousin.

For the past several years, Ruchell has been left in solitary confinement in Folsom, the result of a racist frame-up, designed to isolate the comrade from the general prison population, and to restrict his access to legal materials. The most recent attempt Ruchell has made to secure his freedom through the U.S. Court was the filing of a writ of habeas corpus.

Letters to Ruchell and to the Warden of Folsom demanding his release from Solitary should be sent.

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Johny Spain

In the 1971 aftermath of George Jackson's assassinations, six comrades (the "San Quentin Six") were indicted on charges of conspiracy to murder (prison guards). Johny Spain was convicted on the charge, but had it overturned..for the second time.. by a California District Court in September, 1986. The case is now before the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, taken there by the State of California.

Spain was already serving a life sentence for a 1967 murder conviction. He appeared before the California parole Board in December on that conviction, and was denied. His next parole hearing is scheduled for December, 1987.

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