

CROSSROAD

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Interview with Safiya Bukhari, National Coordinator - Jericho '98 Campaign

CROSSROAD: When discussing Jericho, We've heard you say that it's not just a march; can you tell us what you mean by that?

Safiya Bukhari: Basically, what i mean is that the march on the white house on March 27 is just to have a massive number of people raising a demand, and putting the government on notice that We're not gonna continue the status quo in relationship to our political prisoners & prisoners of war. So it's just the beginning of a long struggle to win amnesty & freedom for our political prisoners and at the same time build an apparatus that will enable us to make sure that our pp's and the question of pp's is not lost in the overall struggle of the movement. It's designed to get them legal help; to let people know that they're there; to make sure that they're accorded the treatment of pp's & pow status. It will also free up people from various organizations to go back in the community to do the work of organizing our communities for liberation. We feel that We should have done this thirty years ago, so that our political prisoners have an apparatus and those of them who were involved in the struggle don't get lost in the shuffle. And, so that people would know that if they become involved in the political work and activities that they would not be left alone to rot in prison without support networks, without their families being taken care of, without medical care and all those other things that should be accorded to them as people who got involved in struggle and ended up in prison. So, this is an attempt to correct a lack of movement within the movement itself, and to build structures and apparatuses for people who from this point on (and even from the past), go to prison so that organizations won't be tied down in it, and organizations won't use all their resources & channel them into court proceedings or anything like that, but an organizational structure is in place, across the movement to handle the issue of pp's.

JERICHO
98

March on Washington DC
March 27, 1998

Jericho 98 is an amnesty campaign for the release of political prisoners of war from U.S. prisons.

Linocut: Laura Whitcomb, political prisoner. Flyer design: FireWox



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CR: We also heard you speak of the need right now to have a strategic or a scientific approach to this whole question of political imprisonment. And We've got a situation where people around the country are saying, "well, the Jericho list is too small; there's a lot more pp's than are on the list", and We've even got folks saying that "everybody's a political prisoner." Could you tell us a little about your strategic vision and how you explain that?

SB: Well, first of all — We need to break the barrier, internationally, on the fact that political prisoners exist in this country. The united states government is consistently denying that pp's exist. As long as that barrier is not broken, We'll still have our people languishing in prison and not being accorded political prisoner status & treatment under international law that is governed by the universal declaration of human rights.

Secondly, We have to put our strongest foot forward in order to do this. So, like any other questions, We have to have strategies & tactics. We know that there is a difference between those people who went to jail as a result of their work on the street and their involvement in liberation struggles on the street and their cases from the very beginning started from that point of view — and they're still there. The campaign to neutralize our struggles through the use of the criminal justice system was a documented campaign started by the federal government. We can document it and take it back to 1968 in their letterhead memorandum, when they talked about neutralizing and imprisoning people even though the evidence is not there to support the crime that they're being charged with. So, they made a determination to use their criminal justice system to criminalize the struggles of oppressed peoples, and incarcerate them, and break the backs of organizations financially, as well as take away those people who made up the cadre of those organizations - leadership as well as soldiers - or cadre members within these organizations. And they did it well, because some of these people fell in the '60s and are still in prison today. And they also said that they wanted to make sure that the youth understood that it was more important, it was better for them to be a drug dealer, an entertainer, an athlete — anything — than to be a revolutionary. The crux of that is that our youth, over the last twenty years, are involved in anything else except revolutionary activities. They look at the fact that We didn't

do anything about our warriors, our fighters, our members of organizations who went to jail because of their political activities, and We left them there. So they internalize the idea, whether anybody told them or not, that if you get involved in this and you go to prison, you're stupid, because ain't nobody doing nothin about gettin' you out of prison, and nobody supportin' you while you in there and you languishin' in there — now the people don't even know you're there, and what you're there for.

So, Jericho is designed to raise the issues of



these people. Their cases from the very beginning were political. Once We push those through, and get the u.s. government to acknowledge the fact and the world to acknowledge the fact that these people are pp's, then We can open the door and bring other people through - but We have to have a scientific approach to this. We can't be waylaid by personalities, We can't be waylaid by emotions, or anything else, because as long as We continue to do

that & not put the struggle of our people in the front as more important than the individual cases, then We continue to lay ourselves open to not moving our struggle forward.

This is very important, 'cause the first thing the u.s. government will say if We put out a list with all of these people on it that claim to be political prisoners — they will look at those cases, and in the international arena they will make us look like laughing stocks because they'll pull out the case histories: "this person went to jail for rapin' the daughter of a neighbor", "this person went to jail for robbing a mom & pop store," "this person went to jail for shoplifting", or whatever. And the cases are there and there was nothing political about their history in the community and they can bring forth the people to show that there was nothing political about their history in the community. So even though if they became political in prison, the initial cases did not come from political activities on the street. And We know that there are people that became political in

prison, but We also know that in order to break that wall of silence in this case is to begin by talking about those people — and the list could be two people if that's the only people that We could bring to the list! But We are able to bring over 60 people to this list that We can document are political prisoners.

So, the first strategy is to break down those walls around those people who went to prison as a result of their political beliefs & affiliations. Then, We have the second phase; once We do that, We open the door for all those people who became political behind the walls whose sentences have been lengthened, and whose sentences have been made hard, and who have been tortured and abused because of their political stands within the prison — that's another element that We have to deal with. But We have to deal with it systematically & strategically, and We can no longer deal emotionally when it comes to moving our struggle forward.

And the final phase is that prison industrial complex that they use as a revolving door, as slave labor — where they can't deal with chattel slavery anymore on the streets, so they deal with the only form of slavery they can deal with: "legitimate" involuntary servitude inside the prison camps as a result of convictions and for prison labor.

So, We understand the politics here but We also have the politics in the line where We can use it strategically. We can't be moved by people having problems with the fact that their name is not on the list. If they have a problem with it, they don't understand political science. They need to go back to class again to learn that you don't do a movement, you don't create a revolution just by emotions. You have to have a scientific analysis, and you have to have strategies & tactics.

CR: You're a first vice president of the Provisional Government - Republic of New Afrika (PG); Could you tell us a little bit more about the history of the PG in this arena, and why the PG felt that it was important at this time to work to build the Jericho campaign?

SB: Well, in the first place, We've been having Jerichos for the past ten years as part of New Afrikan Nation Day. Wherever it is, We've been dealing with Jericho marches. But it's been on a low level, and it hasn't been on the extent that We've organized this one. We feel that, as the PG-RNA, all of our relation-

ships with the u.s. government is on a foreign affairs basis. So, when We talk about the freedom of our pp's & POW's, We take it from the point of view of one government approaching the other, with the amnesty question, and our pp's & POW's and We have to deal with negotiating their release under international law.

This year, one of the things that Clinton has been talking about is the "race" question, and We have to deal with bringing everybody to the table to talk about the "race" issue. Our Minister of Foreign Affairs, Imari Obadele, is writing a letter for Jericho pointing out that before you can deal with any of that, We have to negotiate the release of our pp's & POW's. Because if you're saying that you want to resolve this issue, then let's start it from the basis that over these last years, you have been keeping our people incarcerated; not just citizens of the Republic of New Afrika, but our allies among the Indigenous people, the Puerto Rican people on the colonialism issue, and our white allies - north american anti-imperialists, so We have to talk about the issue of freedom for these political prisoners.

With the release of Geronimo Ji Jaga, and the release of Dhoruba Bin-Wahad, We can't continue to let all these years pass without this issue being brought to the forefront. This is also the thirtieth anniversary of the founding of the Provisional Government, so in our 30th year a part of that whole work is of bringing that issue to the forefront. The PG has had a position on the freedom of our pp's & POW's for the longest; We just felt that it was time to raise the issue, and not just with the u.s. government, but for the Organization of African Unity & the other organizations; and in Geneva before the UN Commission on Human Rights. We can no longer allow the status quo to continue, as it has for the last umpteen years.

CR: Over the years there's been a lot of freedom campaigns developed around individuals and their cases. We heard you talk about the Jericho being an impetus to consolidate these movements and then create a national legal defense fund. Can you tell us a little about that?

SB: I think that's where you go back to the issues where We have all of these political prisoners. Some of them don't have attorneys; some of them have defense committees with one or two people in it - usually the wife & the wife's best friend or something

like that - and those are defense committees. And then, you have some individuals like Geronimo J. Jaga and Mumia Abu-Jamal, who have national committees and all the energies are there. Then, you have people with no defense committees, whose names are not even known, just sitting there rotting in prison. And so, these little committees, every now and then you have them doing a lot of work or doing what they can, but We're still not making any movement. So, with Jericho, We felt that We can no longer do one or two political prisoners at a time, and get them out of prison in ten or seven year intervals — that We had to find a way to deal with the whole issue of pp's so that all the pp's can be dealt with; they can know that there is a unity of purpose here; and that We move forward as a whole to get them out as a whole. And at the same time, if new people go to prison, there's something to deal with them from jump street.

Notice We're not saying that those small defense committees should not be there; because you're always gonna have the need for people in local areas to deal with local cases, but at the same time, We need to maximize our resources around all of them, and not drain resources around one individual. If We could move forward as a movement, that is better for us, than continuing to be fragmented and disunified and not making the maximum use of the people that We have at our disposal. That's what Jericho is all about. So with a national legal defense fund coming out of Jericho, We can make sure that those are available for all pp's, that there's adequate medical care for all pp's, that when something happens to a PP, We can make sure a lawyer or someone is dispatched to visit them so that the government will know they can't brutalize, they can't torture, they can't murder a PP without someone knowing what's going on. So, if We have an organization structured to handle all of that, then all of us are better off for it. Then, if that's being taken care of, then We can deal with moving forward without fear and deal with organizing in all the other arenas because if something happens, and We get a political prisoner out of any of those arenas, then there's a mechanism, a structure to handle the situation with those pp's.

CR: Could you speak a little about the future of Jericho after the march, and then relate that to getting back to, or freeing up people to do the work in the

communities like what We're 'sposed to be doing in the first place?

SB: Well, very clearly the attack on the movement - the concerted attack by the government on the various movements and their decision to imprison leadership in the movement and drain our resources through all of these trials all over the country - made a lot of us, in defense against these criminal attacks on the organizations, defendants. A lot of our actions went into keepin' courtrooms packed, and keepin' funds goin' to make sure that the money's there to pay lawyers. That made it almost impossible for us to do that and at the same time continue the organizin' around decent housing and quality education and the homelessness issues — all those issues that were part of our struggles in our community that helped us educate our people to what the situation is. Invariably, the leadership was taken off into the prisons and building the support mechanisms around these prison struggles kept us away from working around the everyday issues that We were utilizing to organize our people.

What Jericho will do, what We envision it doing is putting together one apparatus with people whose work is around the issue of pp's, and freeing up the organizations to go back into the communities to do the work of educating & organizing our people. So whereas before, the whole organization either made the decision to organize in the community and therefore neglect the issue of pp's or they made the decision to do the support work around pp's & neglected the work in the community. There was never a way that you could fuse both of them and deal with it. Jericho allows you to have two or three people out of your organization whose work is around pp's because they're working on a national basis with an organization or apparatus designed to do that particular work so you're maximizing the work that's being done, and allows the rest of the organization to deal with the issues that will further the movements in the communities. That's what We envision happening. Not only do We envision it happening like that, We intend to have a conference following the Jericho march to bring all these Jericho organizing committees together to determine & strategize how to take this from a concept to actuality.

CR: You also spoke about the stuff you've learned during your travels around the empire talking about

Jericho, and that a lot of people are “coming out of the woodwork”. Can you tell us about the experience with the church? You spoke of a church organizing pamphlet?

SB: Well, not just a pamphlet, it was a Jericho sermon preached in Louisiana on Jericho. It was dynamite! He preached the Christian Jericho sermon, then he talked about how Christians have abdicated their responsibility to free the prisoners. He talked about Mumia, Geronimo and he talked about the Jericho that the people have to wage now to go into the prisons to free the political prisoners - to free the captured!



To have a minister recognize this and enunciate it so well — the concept of Jericho & Joshua in the bible days and the Jericho that has to take place these days — he did a lot in order to make the connection and the understanding. We’ve been sending that pamphlet to others and they’ve been relating to it. And part of the Jericho is organizing the churches, and We have a person whose whole job is to organize the churches around Jericho. We’re not just looking to organize people who are already into pp’s, but to educate & organize everybody. It’s become clear to us that We’ve made a mistake in the past of just talking to those people who were already organized; now, We can’t make that mistake, as organizers We have to talk to everybody. At every level, the info has to be brought to everybody - what they do with it after that, it’s on them - but We have to bring it to everybody.

CR: You all just finished having a women’s brunch; could you tell us a little about the significance & importance of that; not just for the Jericho work, but for revolutionary struggle in general?

SB: I think that the significance of the women’s brunch was that there’s a lot of things that went down in the past, in terms of the role of women in our struggle. One of the things that’s very clear is that the

work around pp’s, the work around a lot of aspects of our movement has been done by women. Women are the people who are doing most of the work, but they have been vilified, they’ve been told that “their place is this”, and they have been lacking in the self-esteem to take their place, and to take responsibility, and to be able to make those decisions necessary to move our struggle forward, even though they’ve been doing the work all the time.

So what in fact came out at the women’s brunch was that We’re doing the work. We can’t allow anybody to say to us that We can’t make those decisions, and that We’re 2nd place in this struggle because We can do this - *We’ve been doing this!* We have to be very clear on the fact that We’re doing it and We’ll continue to do it, and We’re capable of handling it.

I’d also like to say that every one of us - every one of us, no matter what’s happenin’ out there in the streets - women are involved in it. Because they’re our sons & our daughters who are being victimized in this. Even the pp’s, regardless of whether they are man or woman, they’re the daughters & sons of women.

So, We have more at stake than anybody. We can’t allow ourselves to be intimidated by the people, especially men, saying that this is not our place, and that We can’t do this and We have to listen to the decisions they make, when sometimes — and the very reality of it is — the bad decisions that have brought us to the place We are at have been made by men, you know - because of egos and everything else. We are in a situation where We have to take responsibility. If We’re scared to take responsibility because of some kind of relationship We have or may not have, then there’s a problem there. There’s a problem there because We have taken on - in our movements - the biggest enemy of human beings in the world which is the u.s. system of capitalism. Once We take on the system, and We’re scared to take on our relationships, problems in relationships, and problems in how people deal with each other in an organizational framework, then there really is a problem because it builds up animosity, it builds up lack of trust, it builds up all of that stuff — and We have to take it on. The little problem now is in danger of becoming a major problem later on. So, to just begin to address that issue as women frees us up to deal with the bigger issue.

CR: Regarding armed actions, are there certain jobs that women should just leave to men, or should women just “get in where they fit in”?

SB: We need to get in where We fit in; some brothers can't do that job either. Whoever's qualified to do it - male or female - do the job. You do what you are qualified to do & and what you're capable of doing. If the brother is not qualified for anything but babysitting, he babysits. If the sister is qualified to do the armed action, then she does the action. That's been a task. We can go back to Harriet Tubman. Remember in the underground railroad, and the brother didn't wanna go and she told him, “you gon' go, you goin' away from here!” And she kept a gun to their head 'til she got 'em to freedom. Now, the brother didn't wanna go, he was scared. We have examples of sisters doing the same job as men in all areas. So, there's no gender-specific qualifications. People want you to believe that there are gender-specific qualifications, but there are not!

Which Way for New Afrikan Youth? Empowerment or Genocide!

New Afrikans need to understand that capitalism as an economic system is in its dying stages or descending line of development. As capitalism enters its final stages of crisis and decline, New Afrikans can only expect their economic condition to become worse, living in a permanent state of depression or economic genocide. The economic genocide is combined with a political genocide or strategy of the U.S. capitalist class (state/government) to destroy the New Afrikan community.

A. The political strategy of the state to destroy the New Afrikan community

It has come to public light that the U.S. federal government had a political and military strategy to destroy the New Afrikan community. This was revealed in the Church senate committee hearings on intelligence agency's abuse against citizens. These hearings came into existence as a result of revelations of the "Watergate" conspiracy. COINTELPRO was a code name for the FBI's counter-intelligence program which concentrated mainly on the black liberation movement in the 1960's and 70's. If one studies the history of America, New Afrikan mass upsurge usually serves as a catalyst for every mass movement for social change.

The desegregation movement of the 1950's set the stage for the Civil Rights, Black Power and Anti-war movements of the 1960's and 1970's. These movements mobilized approximately 5 million in one way or another against the policies of the U.S. government. By the mid-60's masses of New Afrikans no longer believed that self determination could be achieved under capitalism and believed the 'U.S. government was the cause of their oppression. As one million New Afrikans burst forth in a collective flame torching American cities 1964-1968, the United States government began to view New Afrikans as a political and military threat. In the halls of congress, representatives were talking about the guerrilla war at home while the same government waged a counter-guerrilla war against the people in Vietnam.

It was at this time that the U.S. federal government instituted a program to destroy the very fiber of the New Afrikan community. First, the Johnson administration started the war on poverty program which was nothing but an, internal "pacification" program. Under the pacification program a layer of mis-leaders was created in the New Afrikan community. Rebellious youth were given do-nothing jobs, grants or scholarships to attend white universities away from the inner city.

During this period the U.S. state attacked revolutionary black organizations using local and state authorities to jail and murder their members. Co-optation and all means of deception were used to destroy the black liberation movement. Drugs were flooded into urban New Afrikan communities to destroy the "moral fiber" and "resistance mood" of the New Afrikan community.

During the Reagan years (1980-1988), the New Afrikan community was flooded with crack, cocaine and black

youth were being used to sell drugs in order to keep them from participating in social action against the system. At the same time, Oliver North and the National Security Council devised a plan to put 21 million New Afrikans in concentration camps should the New Afrikan community revolt during the time U.S. imperialism was oppressing in Central America (Iran-Contragate). The U.S. monopoly capitalist class concentrated the drug culture on the youth, the potential "freedom fighters" of the black liberation movement. Black youth help sustain the capitalist system as billions of dollars are laundered back into the hands of legal capitalists. It is estimated that 100 billion dollars in profits is made from the illegal trade in cocaine.

New Afrikan youth will constitute 1/3 of the U.S. labor force in the year 2000. What to do with this excess labor force has a lot to do with the U.S. governments policy of genocide against New Afrikan youth.

It is clear that this Administration's anti-communist goals supersede our real national interest, including stopping drugs. Also, the Iran-contra scandal has increasingly revealed the direct link between the U.S. government and the biggest drug cartels in Central America. The list of those involved in this conspiracy is quite long and shows some direct and indirect involvement with so-called heroes like Oliver North and George Bush, who was then vice president. [Jarvis Tyner, "The Drug Epidemic, Cause, Effect and Cure", *Political Affairs*, June 1989, p.7]

From 1968 to 1978 through its counter-insurgency plan the U.S. government instituted a plan that New Afrikan youth would never rebel again and from 1978 to the present has been waging a war of genocide against them. The most conspicuous symptoms of decadence in modern capitalist society is the uncontrolled and escalating use of narcotics by more and more people and in more dangerous forms. [Victor Perlo, "Super Profits and Crises," Modern U.S. Capitalism (New York: International Publishers, 1988), p. 18]

Though the reactionary sector of the capitalist class engages in "low intensity" wars (supporting CONTRAS), it has been decided that outright wars of imperialist aggression are too costly in finance, lost prestige and the possibility of causing an internal anti-war movement.

U.S. imperialism is in a period of economic stagnation and has no other choice but to wring more profit from its domestic multi-national working-class by driving down wages, union busting, ruining the working-class regardless of race and exterminating young sectors of the present and future New Afrikan working class through a very sophisticated war of genocide. Subtle "hidden" genocide is the policy the capitalist ruling class is taking to solve the industrial reserve army "unemployed" minority problem. This is why drugs are flooded to inner city youth: to eliminate them from the labor market and to eliminate "future" New Afrikan leadership. Drug users of dirty needles help transmit AIDS in the inner-city and, at the same time due to imprisonment, mis-education and the rising

cost of education, young New Afrikan males are an endangered species in higher education and in the community.

If the present trends are not reversed or struggled against, New Afrikans may face near - extinction during the 21st century. New Afrikans, particularly youth, must build a new mass civil disobedience (resistance) movement against the rightward drift to fascism now or suffer the consequences in the future.



B. Alienation of New Afrikan youth

In the present period two generations of New Afrikan youth have grown up under the aura of defeat, internal strife, confusion and division in the black liberation movement. This has led to an

alienation of New Afrikan people. Growing up under the purposeful lie that "things are getting better" and "the struggle is over, blacks are achieving integration", New Afrikan youth are lost as to their "social purpose".

New Afrikan youth in particular and New Afrikan people in general are facing a serious crisis in this period. New Afrikan youth have lost a sense of mission and the historical vision of living to improve the condition of racial advancement until we can achieve liberation. The old saying you are either part of the problem or part of the solution rings more true today; as much as 46% of the adult New Afrikan male population is not in the labor force.

In 1960, 75% of all New Afrikan males were employed. In 1984 only 54% of all New Afrikan males were employed. Though New Afrikan men represent 5.8% of the total U.S. population, New Afrikan men make up about 43% of the prison population of 750,000. There are more New Afrikan males 16-24 years of age in prison than in college. The New Afrikan male high school drop out rate is 60 to 70%. The majority of all New Afrikan prisoners have less than an 11th grade education. In 1980, one of five New Afrikan male teenagers was unable to read at the fourth grade level; this disqualifies them from entry level jobs, apprenticeship programs or military service. But few are talking about quality education or New Afrikan studies in the Jr. high and high schools to motivate these "hard core" inner city New Afrikan males to learn to read.

Data from the Washington-based Children's Defense Fund show that black males 20 to 24 years of age who had not graduated from high school had mere earnings of only \$2,825 in 1984, compared to \$7,674 for young white males who had not completed high school. (Simms, 1988, p.7)

New Afrikan youth, particularly young New Afrikan males are "cracking out" and dropping out of high school when in another five years an undergraduate college degree will be the basic requirement for an entry level job.

Black college graduates' real incomes, adjusted for inflation jumped 6.5 percent between 1973 and 1986. During the same thirteen year period, black high school graduates lost 44% of their real earning power, young black males with college degrees have unemployment rates of 6 to 8 percent; young black males who drop out of high school have jobless rates of 33 percent and above. (Marable, 1988, p.9)

Through their dis-orientation, New Afrikan youth are helping the capitalist system in their own genocide. New Afrikan youth represent one fifth of the youth population but they account for close to one third of the juvenile arrests for felony offenses. Young New Afrikans are dying from AIDS. Heterosexual intravenous drug users make up 1/3 of the AIDS cases. Black on Black crime usually stems from the drug traffic. Homicide is the leading cause of death among young New Afrikan males. A young New Afrikan male has a 1 in 21 chance of being murdered before he reaches the age of 21, primarily by a gun fired by another New Afrikan male. (Gibbs, 1988, Plain Dealer)

This shows us We still hate ourselves and are helping our oppressors in the genocide (extermination) of our own people just when liberation is in sight. New Afrikan youth need to start a resistance movement in our community against drugs that are flooded into our community by the white racist U.S. ruling class.

In order to fight against the trend of genocide as a governmental policy and self destruction due to mis-education and media psychological genocide, New Afrikan youth need to adopt a "liberation philosophy" and begin to demand reparations, repayment for the crimes committed against us. The revolution was not over at the end of the sixties; the real revolution, the socialist revolution to change the entire economic system where everybody has a fair share is just beginning. New Afrikan youth, whose unemployment rates range from 40% to 60% (three times higher than in 1960), need to be in the vanguard for socialist revolution, national liberation and self determination in America. The unemployment rate for New Afrikan teenagers was 34.7% in 1987, and the rate for New Afrikans between the ages of 20 and 24 was 21.8%. These compared with rates of 14.4% for white teens and 8.0% for whites in their early 20's.

Only one-quarter of all black teenagers 16 to 19 of age had jobs for some period during 1987, compared with nearly one half of all white teenagers. About 1.4 million or just over one-half of black youth aged 20 to 24 were employed at some time in the year, while three quarters of the whites in that age group held jobs.

BLS data also reveal that nearly two thirds of black teenage males did not

work at all during 1986, compared to only one-third of white teenage males and one half of Hispanic teenage males. And close to one-quarter of black males between the ages of 20 and 24 were jobless the entire year; while less than one-tenth of white males in that age group reported not working... (Simms, op. cit., p.6)

But everything is not just centered around young New Afrikan males. A greater percentage of New Afrikan teenage females drop out of high school due to pregnancy, on a nationwide basis, than New Afrikan females who graduate from college in the same year.

In the descending line of development of capitalism, the US. capitalists must find ways to reduce the industrial reserve army because many white's will begin to join the ranks of the under or unemployed; the homeless, "working poor" or so called "underclass". Forecasts estimate that in the year 2000 New Afrikans will constitute more than 17% of the American labor force. Also New Afrikans and Chicanos will constitute 30% of the U.S. population. So in the descending line of development of capitalism, the U.S. ruling class has initiated a policy of genocide which is concentrated on New Afrikan youth, the future generations and leadership of Black America.

In the next 12 years it is estimated there will be a 38% growth in opportunities for technicians and related support workers while executive, administrative, and managerial categories are expected to grow by 29% and jobs in professional categories are expected to expand by only 19%. This shows that the real projected job growth rate will be in jobs requiring 1 to 6 years of college education. New Afrikan youth stay in school.

At the same time, more New Afrikan high school graduates, due to the high cost of a college education are not entering college. In 1986 New Afrikans were 13.8% of the high school graduates while they were only 9.4% of college freshmen. As of 1988 only one-quarter of New Afrikan high school graduates 18 to 24 years of age are in college compared to over a third of white high school graduates and the gap between New Afrikan and white college entrants is now larger than it has been in 20 years. The situation is still more critical for New Afrikan males. In 1976, 34% of all New Afrikan high school graduates entered college immediately; by 1985 the figure had declined to 26%.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, there are 769,000 New Afrikan women age 25-54 with four or more years of college but only 633,000 New Afrikan men in this age group with comparable education. From 1989 to 1984 the total number of New Afrikan women in college declined only slightly from 539,059 to 529,089 but the figure for New Afrikan males declined by 25,300 down to 368,089. The current ratio of New Afrikan males to females in the nation's colleges is 30 males to every 70 females.

New Afrikan youth reaching adolescence (13-18) face a cultural crisis. Living in the inner city, they experience a dual reality or develop a dual consciousness; one of a black sub (street) culture and the other an Anglo-American capitalist

(establishment) culture. New Afrikan youth often develop a rebelliousness to what they consider authority. Alienated to the educational process they engage in anti-social acts. Unlike the youth of the 1960's and 1970's who participated in the political civil rights and black power movements to bring structural change to their communities for the betterment of all New Afrikan people, New Afrikan youth of today do not channel their frustration and anger in a positive way and display it in individual acts of social anarchy. Inner city adolescents are under strong peer pressure to socialize in the sub (street) culture which is viewed as anti-establishment. The objective reality of high unemployment among New Afrikan men in the New Afrikan community is relegating many unskilled labor into a permanent underclass; this serves to induce city youth with a negative attitude toward personal achievement in the Anglo-American capitalist society to develop low self-esteem. Coupled with the alcohol/drug street culture and it's anti-establishment figures (such as lumpen drug pushers, prostitutes, stick up men, hustlers, and pimps who New Afrikan youth see everyday having money), this makes them successful images in the minds of youth. This becomes a strong deterrent, in the minds of New Afrikan youth towards striving for working class status or to become part of the proletariat in capitalist America.

Much of the alienation towards working class socialization expresses itself in the organization of New Afrikan youth gangs. Gangs provide self-esteem for its participants and are the center of anti-social and anti working class acts. Almost every New Afrikan community has gangs. Gangs develop because New Afrikan youth have little if any labor mobility in a racist capitalist system. New Afrikan youth have no room for expression. They have no image of manhood or womanhood that they can identify with. New Afrikan youth unconsciously know that they are not part of the white capitalist world. In the street culture, the gang represents organization, identity and power for New Afrikan youth. Living in a racist society they get very little opportunity to experience these things. The feeling of belonging, being part of something "together" is a big part of the gang. This sense of identity (jackets, caps, etc.) leads to the organization of a gang and from the gang's strength (size, fighting ability, protection of its members, turf) and influence (alliance's with other gangs) come its power. For New Afrikan youth, especially boys, gangs are the thing to do in the community that can give them a sense of power. This comes from the feeling of being powerless over one's destiny. This is why so many New Afrikan youth can be organized into drug gangs. Gangs need to be re-oriented. Instead of fighting and killing their brothers and sisters, they must be trained to fight the racist capitalist system. They can be developed to become part of an New Afrikan liberation organization.

In the descending line of development of capitalism, because of the lumpenization (criminalization) of a large sector, many New Afrikan youth have turned to Black on Black crime. This element must be re-educated or they will be used in the future to further implement capitalism's policy of "self destruct" genocide.

New Afrikan youth need to be taught that when they use and sell drugs they are collaborating "selling-out/cooper-

ating” with the U.S. capitalist ruling class plan of genocide against the New Afrikan nation. Therefore, a drug pusher is your local C.I.A. agent (CONTRA - counter-revolutionary) who is destroying the freedom movement. Only by becoming part of the solution - struggling for our self determination, democracy and liberation - will New Afrikan youth be their own liberators.

Because New Afrikan youth have not been taught in school or home of the struggles New Afrikans as a people had to go through to even get where they are now, they are easy victims to street culture.

C. The social psychology of New Afrikan youth

In the last 25 years the New Afrikan community has suffered from a serious breakdown in its social fiber, the increase in single-parent headed households, mental illness, hypertension, AIDS, drug abuse and teenage pregnancy. Coupled with this is a 50% drop out rate of New Afrikan teenagers from the public school system and an increase in the teenage male homicide (basically - black on black murder) rate from the ages of 14 to 35. What is the cause of this increased alienation and self destructive behavior?

The slogan of “we’re going to make it if we try”, has been replaced with “do your own thing”. The ideological front often neglected by black leadership is one of psychological and cultural imperialism which the state has intensified in the last ten years.

Along with the philosophy of “pessimism and cynicism” that is rampant in the New Afrikan community; the state has increased its propagation of the “fetish of the commodity” or acquiring capitalist goods through a mass youth “fad” culture where having brand name goods are symbols of achievement of manhood and womanhood and become the new value system.

Psychological (media) imperialism is perpetrated on inner city poverty bound citizens now described as the urban underclass. This propaganda against the so-called underclass helps develop a low level of self esteem, a superficial worship of the rich (watching soap operas all day) and a subculture which fosters the “fetish of being successful in capitalist America”, wearing brand name jeans, \$100 tennis shoes and “O-Geeing” (gold chains).

The commercialization of young children and youth (under 19) through TV programs is a form of “psychological genocide” aimed at making “commercial cannon fodder” out of the minds of inner city young people. This psychological genocide (war) must be resisted by developing a productive youth movement based on scientific reality. A counter-culture that is rooted on science will address social reality and apply to social need to survive in, succeed in and transform the capitalist system even if it takes years to do so.

Because inner city youth are faced with the social reality now, living in a deplorable underdeveloped environment (the inner city) while being surrounded by an affluent suburbia — living the contradictions of the urban poor in capitalist America — their philosophy has become one of cynicism and “commodity ‘ accumulation” (new car, gold

chains, new clothes, fast life style).

Among today’s children, one in four is poor, one in seven is at risk of dropping out of school, and one in five is at risk of becoming a teen parent.

Because the U.S. public educational system never responded to the cries for “relevancy” by inner city youth in the 60’s and 70’s and still propagates a racist imperialist Eurocentric education, inner city youth have come alienated from it and their-literacy rate has rapidly declined.

For many states the drop-out rate for non-white high school students exceeds 50 percent. Across the United States 3,800 teenagers drop out of school every day... (Manning Marable, “The Uneducated Underclass,” Across the Color Line, The Vindicator, May 10 - 24, 1989: Volume 19, Number 8, p. 6.)

Inner city young females respond to this “lack of self relevancy” by dropping out of school, having babies, ending up living off of subsistence, becoming wards of the state, decreasing the potentialities of their offspring’s’ success, trapped in poverty. Inner city males drop out of school for a full-time “job” without benefits working in the drug market for international crime (CIA narco-imperialism).

Due to the increased alienation and drug abuse many young adults become “socially dis-oriented” and are classified as mentally ill. Mental illness will increase in the descending line of development of capitalism unless the social philosophy of the New Afrikan community ceases to propagate social myth (false race and class consciousness), and begins to deal with social reality (the national liberation movement must become a struggle for socialism if it is to be successful), and deals with the social need to develop a positive New Afrikan personality and moral code based on New Afrikan pride, respect and dignity. New Afrikan people need to be taught of the many mass movements, struggles, personalities, achievements, and the many thousands who died trying to better the condition of New Afrikans. While our heritage goes back to the glorious civilizations of ancient and middle ages Africa, We must be proud of being an Afrikan people, as well.

D. New Afrikan youth need to realize their power

New Afrikan youth have power they don’t realize. New Afrikan youth between the ages of 10 and 25 for the most part are the mobile strata of the New Afrikan working class. What does this mean? The majority of New Afrikan youth have not obtained permanent full-time jobs during these ages and many are still living with their parents or still in school. Therefore they have more mobility than the average brother or sister who is bogged down with raising a family, paying rent or mortgage. New Afrikan youth can use these years allowing them mobility to nurture a “revolutionary fervor” and to be the catalyst for stimulating new forms of mass action and organization in the black liberation movement.

This can be seen from the history of the 1960’s and early 70’s when black youth were active shock troops on the

front lines of the civil rights and black power movements. Revolutionary organizations like **SNCC** (Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee), **RAM** (Revolutionary Action Movement), **BPP** (Black Panther Party) and **LRBW** (League of Revolutionary Black Workers) all had young people as the core of their leadership & membership. It is this power of being a mobile catalyst in the black liberation movement that make a New Afrikan socialist youth movement so important to our people's future. While New Afrikans are inferior in physical number, it is our mass action advancing towards a people's democracy that stimulates all other sectors of American society to move in a progressive direction. In this sense, the New Afrikan people are the weak link or Achilles heel domestically for the U.S. capitalist class, not so much militarily but more so politically, culturally and economically, by the mass trends New Afrikans can set for the American working class.

Why should New Afrikans concentrate on organizing black community youth?

Mahdi in 1962 stated in his "On Mobilization of the Black Community,"

the organizing of black working class youth should be the primary concern for the black revolutionist because the black working class has the sustained resentment, wrath and frustration toward the present social order, and if properly channeled can revolutionize New Afrika... Within the black working class the youth constitute the most militant and radical element.

Also New Afrikan youth constitute over one half of the population of New Afrika. If a New Afrikan revolutionist talks about the black masses he is talking about the youth. As civil rights demonstrations have shown, black youth are the potential vanguard for the coming socialist revolution. New Afrikan working class youth are forced to be vanguard of the New Afrikan revolution in the following ways:

1. They are the most displaced element of the black community from the capitalist system. In other words, the system cannot supply black youth with jobs, a place to stay, etc. It forces them to be mobile forces. When any society forces any element of its population to become a displaced mobile force, that force has great potential for becoming revolutionary.
2. The contradictions of the system are more crystallized in black youth than in any other element of the black community. This is due to the historical period that black youth are growing up in. The internal conflict exposing the contradictions of the system, involving them emotionally and physically in conflict with the system, has had more effect on this generation than any other.
3. New Afrikan youth have not been effectively "brain-washed" yet. Being of the age of rapid growth of the mind and not firmly embedded in the system, they are the element in the

black community more prone for social change. An example of this can be seen by the role black youth played in the revolution of 1967/68.

What can we accomplish by organizing New Afrikan community and New Afrikan college youth? We can accomplish:

1. The formation of a New Afrikan Liberation Organization that is capable of waging a successful campaign against the capitalist system.
2. Create, ferment and establish necessary conditions for a mass movement towards advanced democracy.
3. The organization of a base for mass support of socialist revolutionaries.
4. The organization of a political socialist cadre that is capable of conducting a scientific mass struggle from generation to generation.

We can create the ferment, prepare the atmosphere and conditions for revolution by creating a nationwide movement of revolutionary action. In order to be successful this movement would have to be political in nature, well coordinated and well organized. The black revolutionary socialist student movement's role would be to organize such a movement and act as its political vanguard. When referring to political vanguard we mean to interpret for the masses the nature of the system, why and the nature of such a movement. Therefore, the New Afrikan Student Movement's main purpose is to show black youth that the only way to survive in life is to create a revolution in this country.

Such a movement should be geared to causing eventual dislocation of the capitalist system. The purpose of such a movement will be a "national strike". The New Afrikan socialist student movement's role in such a movement would be to organize a nationwide student walkout. Junior high and high school youth would lead the walkout supported by black college youth, which would be in support of a black industrial workers strike.

The New Afrikan student organization should produce a weekly black student newsletter or newspaper to interpret events and affairs for the black student. It must call New Afrikan students to action and educate them about their historical destiny. The historical destiny of the New Afrikan student is to unite with New Afrikan street youth to confront and overthrow the monopoly capitalist class. The historical role of the New Afrikan student, who would constitute the petty bourgeois class, but because the racist nature of white America cannot allow them to obtain power as a class and develop itself, is to destroy the racist capitalist system. The New Afrikan student represents the final stage of New Afrika's development as an oppressed nation. Similarities can be seen between Afro-America and other oppressed peoples of Africa, Asia and Latin America. We can see in all these countries that the potential petty bourgeoisie of the oppressed developed a revolutionary consciousness. So be it in the racist USA. It took the field slave

approximately a hundred years to produce a generation that was capable of becoming petty bourgeois. Because this generation can't enter into its position of being petty bourgeois in the system, being oppressed and constantly attacked for just being black, leaves them only one alternative: revolution.

The form of the movement of a new type, one built on collective leadership whose ideology is scientific socialism, should be to resist United States racist policies both at home and abroad, and to organize a New Afrikan liberation organization inside the racist U.S.A. to wage a protracted mass political struggle for self determination and reparations.

The objectives of an anti-imperialist New Afrikan student movement:

The first objective of a anti-imperialist New Afrikan student movement should be to challenge the bourgeois values and aspirations of the New Afrikan student. The New Afrikan student movement must provide Afrikans with an alternative, which would be world socialist revolution/national liberation of New Afrika, the end of exploitation of [people by people] and the re-establishment of the humane society with universal order.

On the Negro college campuses the New Afrikan student movement should attempt to develop power and influence among students. Being underground in nature, much influence can be gained through the movement's weekly publication and constant saturation of the campuses with revolutionary material. Next would be the organization of discussion groups on campus. The campus structure should be seen and studied as a duplicate of the oppressors system. The Negro college - being an instrument of the state - plays a reactionary role in relation to revolution and its structure should be seen as such. Being revolutionaries, We must utilize all positive factors that may exist, though student government should be the key target for the movement. The student government, though usually having little power, especially on Negro campuses, is still the official center of student activity. Gaining control of student government should be the key target for the movement. By gaining control of student government and fighting for student rights, the movement's influence can develop and grow. The second primary target should be the freshman and sophomore classes. The freshman and sophomore classes usually aren't so imbedded with bourgeois values and freakism, and can be influenced easier than the juniors and seniors, who are concerned with surviving and just graduating. Senior students interests usually become more tied to the system since they are concerned with making it on the job market. The purpose of this is to build a permanent revolutionary machine on campus.

Finally, attempt to gain influence and control over the sororities and fraternities. Fraternities and sororities are very hard to crack, because their values are usually caught up in the "hip society". Discussion groups should be established, both formal and informal. Orientation towards the end of the school year should be given as to what projects and groups the New Afrikan student can work with in his/her community. The New Afrikan Student Movement would operate differently in dif-

ferent areas. In urban communities, the black student movement's main concern would be the organization of black ghetto youth. This can be done through liberation schools, black history clubs, black tutorial projects, athletic clubs and protective associations, etc. Black history programs should be established to instill pride and to combat daily brainwashing by the oppressor. New Student Groups located on a "Negro" college campus main concern will be to utilize and transform the "hip society". Why? Because from the hip society comes a generation of freaks. If We control the hip society it will produce revolutionary New Afrikan scientific socialists instead of freaks. What is the hip society?

The Hip Society

The hip society is a result of conditioning and of the frustrated hope that the American dream is true. The hip society transcends all class barriers among blacks and has its own social values and norms. The hip society is developed from frustration of not being able to do anything about one's condition and acts as a release from daily pressures. The hip society is built around a skewed concept of manhood and womanhood. This concept of manhood and womanhood comes from feeling a lack of security, identity and alienation. The man who can make the most women dress the best and maintain his "cool" is considered among his peers to be a hero. The woman who can jilt a cat and it not mean anything to her, get the most noses open and climb the ladder with prestige men is supposed to be into something. The women play, but usually they are looking for a husband...



The hip society is a hedonistic society...it is built on extreme pleasure-seeking in order to forget about the reality of the contradiction the New Afrikan student must face. By constantly challenging the values of the hip society and replacing them with the values of a revolutionary society, the contradictions of the system will be forced to crystallize. The New Afrikan student movement's key role in agitation on the Negro campus is to educate New Afrikan students about their historical role and destiny.

What is the historical role of the New Afrikan student?

The historical role of the New Afrikan student is to develop into the revolutionary intelligentsia capable of leading New Afrika to true liberation. Why? A social revolution cannot develop until all means of legal protest have been exhausted and the image and faith in bourgeois democracy is destroyed. It was not until New Afrika could develop a generation capable of being on top in the system by standards set forth by the system, that the contradictions of the system could polarize. In other words, We now have a whole generation with doctorates, masters and bachelor degrees who are qualified for the highest positions in government, industry, advertising, banking, etc...but usually they must settle for teaching jobs because of the color

of their skin. It was not until this happened that the system could provide New Afrikan youth with only one alternative, national liberation through socialist revolution.

The nature of New Afrikan/Scientific Socialist Student Movement Cadres:

The role of the New Afrikan student movement would be to politicize New Afrikan community youth. Political education should be a major goal of its program coordinating with the movement of revolutionary action.

In order for a New Afrikan student movement to be effective, its members must be well read in revolutionary socialist literature. They should know the nature of class and classless societies, imperialism, capitalism, racism, fascism and the nature of the international revolution. If you don't know the nature of the enemy, you stand less chance of defeating the enemy. Only an organization of New Afrikan youth that understands this can be part of the vanguard of the socialist revolution. For such an organization will have the responsibility of thousands, millions of lives in their hands.

E. Identify with past New Afrikan student movements

It is important for New Afrikan students to identify with past New Afrikan student movements, particularly the 1960's. The present reality is the result of what was accomplished and we have failed to grasp this. In the words of African revolutionary Amilcar Cabral, the struggle continues from generation to generation. The mantle for aggressive revolutionary activity usually ranges from 15 to 35. These are the generations that have the vitality of youth. One of the several weaknesses of the student movements of the 60's was the failure to build a mass cadre New Afrikan organization that had a serious youth section. We failed to recruit and train revolutionary successors 8 to 15 years old. As we became older, so did the movement and organizations. The other thing the student movement failed to clearly grasp and educate people around was objective and how to achieve the objective. For a certain period the objective was civil (national democratic) rights but how to achieve it was not clear. The objective in this period must be clear: "economic democracy" which can only be achieved through socialism.

Another weakness was limited vision. We felt self determination was right around the corner. We failed to have the concept of protracted struggle. Organizing the masses is a tremendous undertaking and requires great patience and strategy. The development of national consciousness is a long and difficult process depending on the traditions and stages of social development of peoples. The development of class consciousness seems to be just as long a process. The previous student movement failed to project a vision of working for the forthcoming generations.

...the strategy of revolution requires the escalation of demands and actions, stage by stage, in conflict with the enemy, utilizing the whip of the counter-revolution to deepen the conflict and to drive the revolution for-

ward, without stopping at the most extreme actions required to win. (James Boggs, Racism and the Class Struggle, New York: Monthly Review Press, 1970, p. 114.)

The other aspect which was a severe weakness on the part of progressives was the question of independent and continuous finances. Social movements have used various means of obtaining finances to function. What has been consistent is the drive to establish an independent political economy for the different movements. Every movement striving for power must have its own economic power base, its own means of sustaining itself - political economy.

F. New Afrikan Youth taking control of their destiny

New Afrikan youth (being 10 million strong) need to become part of the vanguard activists of the liberation movement. New Afrikan youth should resurrect the slogan of "Academic Excellence and Social Responsibility". The drive of New Afrikan youth should be to excel in science and mathematics and to re-educate themselves in the social sciences, to adopt a New Afrikan-responsible life style and to build a non-compromising "no-sell out", scientific activist leadership.

New Afrikan youth should reactivate the struggle for democracy and self-determination by starting mass demonstrations and a mass movement for reparations on the 30th anniversary of the sit-in movement, February 1, 1990. Demanding that the U.S. government pay New Afrikans at least 4 trillion for back pay. Youth should demand homes for the homeless, the passing of the Jesse Gray Housing Bill, the allocation of pension funds to rebuild the inner cities, proportional political economy representation of New Afrikans in every level of government and jobs according to their population numbers, and an end to economic inequality. They should demand that a section be written into the U.S. constitution which says that every citizen be guaranteed the right to a job, a worker's Bill of Rights, a 32-hour week with 40 hours pay, that the practice of racism be made a felony, and the right of all citizens to a free university education.

G. Our oppressors blame the victims instead of the system

The capitalist media is blaming the drug traffic and crime associated with it on New Afrikan youth and the unemployed now called the underclass. The system has been blaming the victims, the poor of America, rather than blaming the capitalist class. The only alternative New Afrikan youth have at this time in trying for a more egalitarian system is by working with the progressive wing of the democratic party and building an independent socialist people's party.

Muhammad Ahmed

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**A CALL TO
REFLECTION—
A CALL TO
ACTION
1998:
A Praxis on
Colonialism**

**The Case of the Mexicans
and Puerto Ricans -
Two People, One Destiny**



nizer. The treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, like all treaties which the United States had entered into with Native Americans, was not to be enforced as far as the native inhabitants were concerned; as the great Puerto Rican Nationalist, Pedro Albizu Campos would say, **“the United States wants the cage but not the bird.”** This sentiment echoed the words of the Mexican diplomat Manuel Crescencio Regón, who at the time of the signing of the Treaty said: **“...our race, our unfortunate people will have to wander in search of hospitality in a strange land, only to be ejected later. Descendants of the Indians that we are, the North Americans hate us, their spokesperson deprecates us, even if they recognize the justice of our cause, they consider us unworthy to form with them one nation and one society, they clearly manifest that their future expansion begins with the territory that they took from us and pushing (sic) aside our citizens who inhabit the land.”**

While the Treaty was lofty in its promises for the Mexican people in the occupied area, guaranteeing them “the enjoyment of all the rights of citizens of United States,” the stark reality was another. Through all kinds of machinations — legal and illegal — Mexicans became citizens without any language prerequisite; in other words, Mexicans became citizens of the US through an international treaty which superseded national law. As they were not required to have any knowledge of the English language, at that very moment the US legally became a bilingual country: English and Spanish. If these new citizens were to enjoy the blessings of the constitution, the US had to become an English and Spanish speaking country. Yet the promise was never kept; instead through poll

1998 marks two infamous anniversaries for the two largest Latino groups in what is called the United States; for Mexicans, 150 years since the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, and for Puerto Ricans, 100 years since the US invasion of their island.

On February 2, 1848, the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed; a humiliated and defeated Mexico accepted the Rio Grande as the border with Texas and ceded California, Nevada, New Mexico and parts of Colorado, Arizona and Utah to the United States. Thus the jewel on the crown of the expansionist and imperial design known as Manifest Destiny was set in place. The country which, in 1776, had declared itself independent from colonial domination, had now become the world’s major colo-

taxes and local laws requiring English literacy, Mexicans were totally disenfranchised from the body politic.

Thus began the Mexican sojourn into internal colonialism. Mexicans were now to be excluded from the civil society. The usual pattern of US federalism was initiated, i.e. the incorporation of the land by the settlers and the exclusion of the native inhabitants. It should be noted that no state has entered the Union since the adoption of the Constitution at the initiative of the native inhabitants of the territory. Instead, it has been the settlers who have petitioned for incorporation. A perfect example of this occurred in the cases of Hawaii and Alaska. By the time of incorporation, the native population had been reduced to an insignificant percentage.

Mexicans, on the other side of the US-imposed border, never recognized it as a legal border. As a matter of fact, in 1922, a report to the US Secretary of Labor reads: **“The psychology of the average Mexican unskilled worker from Mexico is that when he enters in any manner into the United States that he is only paying a visit to an unknown portion of his own country. He is independent and does not consider he is an immigrant alien, but rather in what is termed the United States by right of birth and possession, the country of his forebears, the territory acquired after the War of 1846 and the territory subsequently ceded in 1854 known as the Gadsden Purchase. To him there is no real or imaginary line.”**

It is clear that historically Mexicans have denied the existence of the border; they don’t see themselves as coming illegally into the US, for it is the US that crossed the border illegally into Mexico. The recent anti-Mexican hysteria in this country, embodied in the passage of Proposition 187 in California, is an acknowledgement of this reality by sectors of the establishment. In other words, it is clear to the Pete Wilsons of this country that a “Mexican Problem” exists. Their answer to the “Mexican Problem” is to deport them, to construct the “Tortilla Curtain.” These efforts are to no avail. There is a historical problem created 150 years ago which needs to be resolved and no racist legislation, no tortilla curtain, no militarization of the so-called border, no attacks on bilingual education, no attempts to set back the clock on representation by the challenging of congressional districts, no moves to continue to seize Mexican’s natural wealth as evidenced by NAFTA at the expense of the indigenous and popular masses of Mexico, can stave off the final solution: a Mexican Solution to the Mexican National Question.

For the past 150 years, Mexicans on both sides of the so-called border have resisted and attempted to come up with a Mexican solution from the earliest resistance of Father Jose Martinez, Tiburcio Vazquez and Las Gorras Blancas, to efforts by LULAC, Mexican Newspapers, and the Pachuco, to the Chicano/Mexicano movements of the past decades. All these efforts have cost the Mexican people. Despite imprisonment, lynchings, exile and danger to their lives, this resistance has been kept alive through the dangerous memories transmitted from generation to generation.

Just as there is no solution to the 150 year-old “Mexican Problem” that is not a Mexican solution, there is no

solution to the 100 year-old "Puerto Rican Problem" that is not a Puerto Rican solution.

On July 25, 1898, Nelson Miles invaded the island of Puerto Rico through the southern port of Guanica. Ever since then, Puerto Rico has been designated by the US Supreme Court as an area "belonging to, but not part of, the US." In other words, Puerto Rico has been a possession of the United States, literally a non-incorporated territory. As a result of the adoption of the Jones Act, Puerto Ricans were made US citizens in 1917, and, like Mexicans in 1848, were not required to possess prior knowledge of English as a prerequisite for US citizenship. For Puerto Ricans on the island it has meant nothing more than they had to pay the highest tax exacted from any human being — a blood tax. Puerto Ricans now had the "right" to fight in US wars but had no right to representation. Remember the slogan that inspired and fueled the revolution of 1776: taxation without representation is tyranny.

For 100 years, Puerto Ricans have never been consulted as to their political status. Even though the structure of the island's government has undergone a series of reform efforts from the Foraker Act of 1900, to the Jones Act of 1917, to Law 600 in 1950, and finally to the creation of the ELA (Free Associated State) in 1952, the question of the sovereignty of Puerto Rico is in the hands of the US Congress. According to the Treaty of Paris of December 10, 1898, the US congress is the only entity which can decide the political fate of Puerto Rico.

While every attempt has been made to de-nationalize and de-"Puerto Ricanize" Puerto Rico, Puerto Ricans have resisted. Puerto Rican resistance has taken many forms, from direct political action, to cultural resistance and civil disobedience. For their resistance, like Mexicans, Puerto Ricans have had to pay a very heavy price, including massacres, bombings, imprisonment and assassination of their people. This repression is exemplified by the fact that today in US prisons there are 15 Puerto Rican men and women serving disproportionate sentences for their activities on behalf of Puerto Rico's right to be a free and independent nation, to actualize themselves as a free people.

In this year that marks 100 years of colonialism for Puerto Ricans and 150 years for Mexicans, we are calling upon all our Latino brothers and sisters to join us in a praxis on colonialism, to reflect upon these long years of mental, physical, cultural and psychological imposition of colonialism, as well as the cultures of resistance which have continually fought against it.

We are calling upon you to let your creative juices flow, whether you are a cultural worker (poets, musicians, journalists, graphic artists, muralists, dramatists), teachers or lawyers, engineers or doctors; children in the streets, women at work, or youth in schools. Paint murals, write poetry, write and direct plays, create videos; hold teach-ins; whatever you do, organize in the name of anti-colonial resistance, keeping in mind these questions: What have these many years of colonialism meant to you? What does it mean for our future? How are issues of the attacks on immigrants (i.e., Proposition 187), gentrification, criminalization of youth, criminal injustice, the

National Question, political prisoners, police brutality interrelated with this reality?

With this in mind, we are convening two alternating all day brainstorming sessions in Chicago's active Latino communities...During these sessions, we will participate in discussions and focus groups about different issues affecting the Mexican and Puerto Rican communities. As a result of these discussions, we will draw up a framework to build for the following activities:

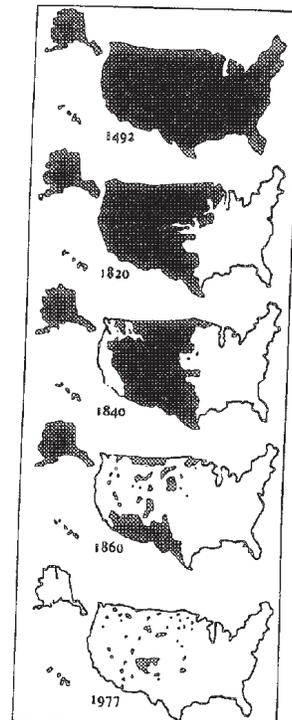
- **Jericho '98:** a mobilization to Washington DC on March 27, 1998 to demand the release of all Political Prisoners in US prisons.

- **Puerto Rico 98: No to the Colony: Freedom for the Puerto Rican Political Prisoners;** a mobilization to Washington DC on July 25, 1998, coinciding with a massive concentration in Guanica, Puerto Rico, to protest 100 years of US colonialism in Puerto Rico and demand the release of Puerto Rican Political Prisoners.

- **A Day Without Latinos: October 12, 1998;** 150 Years and the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo: A People Without Borders; and, a National Day of Reflection and Action in all US cities with sizable Latino populations.

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"bogarding" indigenous land

CROSSROAD Support Network News & Updates



• We have a New Address! **3420 West 63rd Street, Chicago IL 60629**; Voice/FAX: 773-737-8679; e-mail: crsn@aol.com • **Richard Mafundi Lake** has been moved to another prison. Write to: Richard Mafundi Lake, #07992; 1000 St. Clair Road, #G4-C-132; Springville, AL 35146-5582 • We send out condolences to Comrad-Brother **Masai Ehehosi** on the loss of his sister • Congratulations to **Antonio Camacho Negron**, a Puerto Rican patriot, on his recent release from prison after 11 years in u.s. federal prisons. • Comrad-Brother **Sekou Kambui** (Say-koo Kam-boo-

ee) was given a three-year 'hit' at his December parole hearing. Write to: Sekou Kambui Defense/Support Committee, 827 G. Tyler Circle, Hoover, AL 35226 for more information • Comrad-Brother **Sundiata Acoli** (Soon-dee-ahh-tah Ahh-koh-lee) turned sixty-one on January 14, 1998. In 1994, he was given a twenty-year 'hit' at his parole hearing. Please write letters of support to the judges who are hearing the appeal to void the twenty-year 'hit', and demand an immediate release for Sundiata. Write to: Judge Long/Judge Cliff, Superior Court of New Jersey, Appellate Division, CN-006, Trenton, NJ 08625 (refer to *Squire*, #39794-066); donations of \$ or stamps may be sent to: SAFC, P.O. Box 5539, Harlem, NY 10027 • We welcome the formation of CRSN-South (1066 R.D. Abernathy Blvd, SW, Box 232, Atlanta, GA 30310; 404-820-6809; FAX: 404-589-9541; crsnsouth@hotmail.com) • Comrad-Brother **Sekou Odinga** (*Burns*, #05228-054) has been placed in total isolation at USP Lumpoc. He gets no exercise or recreation, no pen or paper, no reading material (except for the Koran), no visits, no phone calls. According to the **December 12 Movement** (D12m@aol.com), "the order securing Sekou states **NO HUMAN CONTACT!!!!**" In this context, We should take note of an article which appears in the February 1998 issue of *Prison Legal News*, **Bureau of Prisons Gag Rule Enacted** (p. 3). The article states "...the new rules allow the Federal Government to target BOP prisoners who are deemed to present a threat to "National Security" for the purpose of eliminating the ability of those prisoners to communicate with the outside world..." The article further quotes section 501.2 (in part) as follows: "...These special administrative measures ordinarily may include housing the inmate in administrative detention and/or limiting certain privileges, including, but not limited to, correspondence, visiting, interviews with representatives of the news media, and use of the telephone, as is reasonably necessary to prevent the disclosure of classified information." Please write letters of protest to: Michael Adam, Warden USP Lumpoc, 3901 Klein Blvd, Lumpoc Ca 93436 [805-735-2771; FAX: 805-736-6959]; Attorney General Janet Reno, Dept. of Justice, 18th & Constitution, NW Washington, DC 20530 [202-514-2000; FAX: 202-514-4371]; Kathleen Hawk, Director - Bureau of Prisons, 320 1st Street, NW Washington, DC 20534; [202-307-3250; FAX: 202-514-6878]. Demand that Sekou be returned to general population! • Comrade **Dan Pens**, editor of *Prison Legal News*, recently received a fourteen-year 'hit' at his own parole hearing... • **Standing Deer** (a/k/a Robert Wilson, #640289, Estelle Unit, Huntsville, TX 77340), a 65 year-old Native political prisoner, is a brother who has spent many years paying for his refusal to participate in a U.S. government conspiracy to murder **Leonard Peltier** at Marion USP. He has been a staunch and well-known advocate for the rights of Native and all prisoners. Standing Deer now has quite a few medical problems. We

would like for you to contact prison authorities to request that Standing Deer be put into the Geriatric Unit of the prison. Letters should be sent to: Warden Figueroa, Estelle Unit; phone: 409-291-4200; FAX: 409-295-5407. Please send copies of any letters to: Robert Vincent, Medical Director (Estelle Unit); Dr. Dickerson (Standing Deer's physician; Wayne Scott, P.O. Box 99, Huntsville, TX 77342; and Anna Standing Deer Wilson, P.O. Box 690, Mohegan Lake, NY 10547 • We received a press release regarding Comrad-Brother **Russell "Maroon" Shoats**. Look for his biography, *The Making of a Political Prisoner*, from *Truth Message Literary Works*, 5336 Columbia Ave, Philadelphia PA 19131 to be released soon. Shoats has spent the last 24 years in prison for the death of a policeman in a case known as the "Philly 5." Although tortured through sensory and perceptual deprivation, Maroon remains a committed New Afrikan Freedom Fighter who will not rest until the New Afrikan peoples are free from oppression and have become a free and self-governing nation. In his efforts to become liberated from the prison system, Shoats was adamant about not harming people. In fact, he was praised for avoiding the death of John Rollison, a guard who told the *Scranton Times*, "if it wasn't for Shoats I would be a dead man right now" (Philadelphia Daily News, 8/1/80). For more information, contact Shofam Corporation c/o S. Shoatz, P.O. Box 1685, Manhattanville, NY 10027 • We received a copy of a new pamphlet from Comrad-Brother **Abdul Shakur**, entitled *Poverty, Prisons, & Crime*. All proceeds from sales of the pamphlet will go to the **Ruchell Magee Defense Fund**. Send \$3 to RMDF, P.O. Box 8306, South Bend IN 46660-8306; e-mail: mathiel@michiana.org • In view of successful organizing by Chicago-based Puerto Rican independence activists, the FBI has targeted the **Puerto Rican Cultural Center** (PRCC) throughout the 1980s and the 1990s for COINTELPRO destabilization. In addition to intensive surveillance of PRCC activists, the FBI has consistently attempted to discredit the work of the PRCC by disseminating to the public the misinformation that the PRCC is essentially a "terrorist" operation run by the FALN. In 1983, the FBI raided the building of the PRCC's alternative high school, destroying much of the school's property, under the guise that the FBI was searching for evidence that would substantiate the link between the PRCC and the FALN. The FBI failed to find any evidence and later issued an official apology. Of course, the apology was insincere. Currently, the attack continues; in early 1997, the local Puerto Rican community was being flooded with a well-funded publication — "*El Pito*" — whose central goal was to discredit the PRCC through personal and political slander. Soon after, the FBI and Illinois State Police began issuing subpoenas to PRCC activists in reference to a Dec. 10, 1992 bombing in Chicago that the FBI was attempting to link to the PRCC. In brief, it appears that an *agent provocateur* had been working at the center! **Rafael Marrero** is turning out to be a key witness in the assault on the PRCC. For more information on how you can help, contact *Friends of the PRCC*, 773-342-8022 (also, see story pps 13-14) • 111 death row prisoners, including **Mumia Abu-Jamal**, are on a hunger strike to protest the latest SCI Greene (Waynesburg, PA) changes to Capital Case Practices. Please call, write, e-mail and fax prison officials and Dept of Corrections with your protests. Contact Martin F. Horn, Secretary - Commissioner, PA Dept of Corrections, 2520 Lisburn Road, P.O. Box 598, Camp Hill, PA 17001-0598; 717-975-4859; FAX: 717-977-0132 • In Cleveland, OH, the number of homeless vendors selling the street paper there, *Homeless Grapevine*, has dropped in the last month from 40 to eight. This has happened because the city of Cleveland has begun to enforce a law which requires *Homeless Grapevine* vendors to buy a \$50 license in order to sell the paper...32 vendors, who once had a job, are now back on the street — begging, or hustling, or robbing, or maybe sleeping under a bridge, waiting to die. For more information, contact

Homeless Grapevine at 216-241-1104 or neoch@bbs2.rmrc.nrt (taken from *Streetwise*, 12/9/97) • Brother **Afhamu Mtuwaji Shambulia**, the son of Sis. Ama Shambulia in Birmingham, AL was murdered on March 6 1998. He was a New Afrikan Scout and a New Afrikan Panther for a few years. Sister Ama has volunteered to cook for Camp Pumziko for the last few summers. Please send condolences to the Shambulia Family at 1113 7th Ave., West apt A, Birmingham, AL 35204 • A **Black Radical Congress** is being organized for June 19-21 in Chicago, IL; write to: BRC, P.O. Box 5766, Chicago IL 60680-5766 for more info • **Hiphop Ojective to Liberate the Lyrical Empowerment of Rap!** (H.O.L.L.E.R.!) is “a network movement working to bring out and develop the cultural, political, and empowering elements of Rap Music through a number of objective projects. One of our primary goals is to put together a “United Hip Hop Front” of Rap Artists, Label Execs, Vee-Jays/DeeJays, promoters, producers, Rap activists, and other Hip Hop enthusiasts...” For more information, contact H.O.L.L.E.R.!, 244 Fifth Avenue, suite 2690, 2nd floor, New York, NY 10001-7604; 718-658-5713; holler97@aol.com • **Critical Resistance: Beyond the Prison Industrial Complex**, a national conference and strategy session, will be held at the University of California, Berkeley in September 24-27, 1998. For more information: Critical Resistance Organizing Committee, P.O. Box 3201, Berkeley CA 94703; critresist@aol.com • **Can't Jail the Spirit: A Collection of Autobiographies of Political Prisoners** is a 206-page book, attractively published and ready to use to subvert the deceptions of the United States government. If the U.S. holds no political prisoners, then who are these people? Why are they in prison? Why is the U.S. trying to keep them there forever? The book can be ordered for \$15 +\$3 postage from: Committee to End the Marion Lockdown, P.O. Box 578172, Chicago, IL 60657-8172; (773) 235-0070; CEML@aol.com. All profit from these sales will go to the Jericho '98 Campaign and the Puerto Rican Cultural Center in Chicago • The 30th Anniversary Celebration & Convocation for **The Provisional Government of The Republic of New Afrika** will be held in Washington, DC on March 27-29 at the Marcus Garvey Academy of Arts & Sciences, 300 Bryant St., NE; call 302-772-7749 for more information • **Subscriptions to CROSSROAD** are \$5 for 6 issues; \$15 for organizations; \$25 for international subscribers.

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