

# CROSSROAD

A New Afrikan Captured Combatant Newsletter  
Vol. 3, No. 4 Spring 1992

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# **AN INTERVIEW WITH ASSATA SHAKUR**

*At one time she was labeled the "Most Dangerous Woman in America." Assata Shakur, an uncompromising, broad-minded, revolutionary has seen the reality of amerikkka. A memorable shero of revolutionary struggle, she documented the horrendous episode of her "encounter" with the u.s. government and the FBI counter-insurgency operation, COINTELPRO, in her book ASSATA: An Autobiography (Lawrence Hill Books).*

*Having survived COINTELPRO, Assata remains grounded in liberatory principles. After her liberation from a u.s. Maximum Security prison by New Afrikan and Anti-Imperialist forces, Assata received political asylum from the Cuban government; she continues to reside there today.*

*As a warrior, teacher, and thinker, Assata brings over twenty years of experience to struggle. Her revolutionary outlook and analysis, should be heard, discussed and critiqued.*

**CROSSROAD** recently received the following interview conducted by Meg Starr, of the Free Puerto Rico Committee, and Matt Meyer, of the War Resister's League. This interview will be run in two parts. We encourage your feedback! Any questions or comments will be printed (unless we are requested not to). Send all correspondence to: Spear and Shield Publications, 1340 N. Irving Park Rd, suite 108, Chicago, IL 60613.

MS: You mentioned you were working on a book, could you tell me something about it?

Assata Shakur: The book is essentially about the ideological development of the Black Liberation Movement, the relationship between the Black Liberation Movement in the united states and world revolutionary movements. It deals, in some parts, with the changes in Eastern Europe—in passing. It also explores some ideas i am currently dealing with in terms of things i think are important for Afrikans living in the united states to think about. These are just some ideas i want to fill out. i am trying to write the book in a way that does not say, "these are the answers; this is the answer." i'm trying to just deal with: this is what i'm thinking at the moment. Hopefully, that will change, hopefully that will grow. But, these are some things to throw

out for people to reflect on, and to give me some feedback on. i'm trying to write in a non-arrogant, non-absolutist way, and i think that's important right now for people interested in making ideological input; to develop a style of writing, and a style of work that is contra-arrogant. i think arrogance is one of the things that has really stifled the world revolutionary movement and really hindered communication between people.

MS: As you're doing that, I'm sure you are thinking a lot about the sixties and seventies. Do you have any things that you feel were particular lessons? And I know you don't want to put this in dogmatic terms, but any particular lessons from the sixties and seventies that you've been thinking about?

Assata Shakur: Well, i think all of us have learned many many lessons from the sixties and the seventies. The sixties and seventies for me were my political education, my political period of growth and development—the beginning of my political growth and development. i think that one of the things that i learned, or think i learned, is that it's not important so much who directs, who is in the vanguard, it's that people work together wherever they are—whether they're in a union; whether they're in a block committee; whether they're working in a political organization; whatever place they are: to do work; to become active; to become aware; to increase the level of activity rather than to concentrate on being the vanguard, on trying to lead a movement. A lot of times people who were trying to lead didn't know where they were going.

Leadership has to be, in the new sense of leadership, a collective process, and the concept of vanguard has to be collectivized, has to be put in the context of the 1990s and approaching 2000, because people come from many different experiences and have many different concepts of freedom. The point is for us to sit down and make some kind of agreement on some basic things and understand that what is going to be freedom for me, is not necessarily going to be freedom for you. Self determination must be a very important part of what

we're talking about when we talk about political organization—political activity—that has to be underlined because everybody doesn't have the same dream. So, there has to be room for everybody to attempt to move toward that dream, as long as that dream does not include oppressing other people; exploiting other people.

MS: It's interesting that you're using the word leadership and what that has meant for the left, because this next question has something to do with that. When I was young, my political development was being shaped by the Black Movement in a lot of different ways. (I might now look back on it and say in my consciousness-raising group as a woman, all these terms like stereotype were being used, things that we were getting from the Black Movement, but not knowing we were getting them from the Black Movement.) One of the terms that's come up from the sixties and seventies, in talking about the leadership of the Black movement, within the movements in the united states, that it had a role in radicalizing lots of other parts of the movement. I wonder how you see that—the leading role of the Black movement?



Assata Shakur: Well, i think it's logical, and i also think it's correct that the people that are most oppressed, in any given country, should have a great deal to say about the direction that a movement must take, should take etc. Logically, the most oppressed people should have a great deal of influence in what happens. If that doesn't happen,

then what you have is a very elitist, racist movement.

So, if the Black Liberation Movement, the Movement for Puerto Rican Independence, the movement of oppressed people in general, the movement for the liberation of the Indigenous people; if these movements are not in first focus, are not up front in the movement as a whole, then something is wrong. i think that necessarily the "working class" movement has to deal with the most oppressed workers, workers who are dealing with an oppression that is much greater. Those workers must be heard. Those workers must have some kind of role in leadership of the movement as a whole. Because without that you have a distortion, you have something that does not reflect the reality. It just disintegrates into something that is arrogant, racist, and Eurocentric. i think that for too many years the ideological input into the movement has been Eurocentric. The ideas and the revolutionary examples of Third World people have been ignored, minimalized, minimized. The contributions of so many revolutionary people have just been overlooked by the European movement, by the white left in the united states. This has not been studied with any seriousness, that trend must be changed. i think that for a revolutionary ideology to evolve, that is truly

scientific in nature, it must come from the experiences not of Europe, but from all of the world; the experience of Afrikans, the experiences of Asians, Latin Americans, and of Europeans. But it must reflect a body of knowledge that comes from the whole world, and a theory of history that is based on the experiences of the whole world, not just

Europe. That is one of the errors that must be corrected at this time.

The bankrupt kind of ideology, the kind of stagnation that has been coming out of the European experience, for the last years, shows that something else must be developed. The most oppressed people in the world right now are Afrikans, Asians, and Latin Americans. So, the ideological input of Afrikans, Asians, and Latin Americans is not only important, it is essential. It's necessary because imperialism has reached such a state it's really difficult to separate racism from imperialism; Eurocentrism from imperialism, because they're connected. By perpetuating an ideology that is Eurocentric, is also perpetuating an ideological imperialism.

So, in order to destroy imperialism, there must be an ideological movement from the people who are victimized by imperialism. This is not to say that other experiences are not important, and not to say the contributions of European revolutionaries — Marx, Engels, Lenin— are not valid, not important. You don't throw them out. But, that must be expanded.

A science, to be a science, cannot be stagnant; it has to grow. If it does not grow, then it becomes a dogma. A science must be something that is constantly expanding, constantly growing, and one of the problems has been that there has been no systematic way in which socialist theory could grow because of the dogmatism has just dominated—for years—the ideological, and in many ways, practical aspects of the left. That has to be re-thought, and those tendencies have to be thrown out the window, because they don't help and they've done a lot to hinder people's freedom.

MM: I guess from that, we were wondering if you could speak generally about what you think the role now of north americans or european americans are within the revolutionary process—what can european americans do to be a positive part of the process?

AS: Well, i think that one thing that needs to be done is education. People really need to educate themselves and to educate other people to communicate with others; to make use of the tremendous amount of technology that is in the hands of white north americans. People have access to computers,

have access to videos, have access to all kinds of technology that needs to be exploited. i mean the idea that some revolutionary people have had to organize people has been prehistoric in reality. Somebody has an idea that to organize people is with a leaflet. You go up to somebody and hand them a leaflet and the leaflet says "Workers Of The World Unite," this is 1991 going into 1992. You have so many things at your disposal.

What needs to be done is to use those things to organize in a creative way; to organize other white people, other people, in some cases Black people. But, i think the principle task of white revolutionaries is to organize white people and to struggle against racism—not only in terms of institutional forms, but in terms of struggling against one's own racism. i think it is dishonest to say that white people living in a racist society; receiving a racist education with racist teachers, and often with racist parents: reading racist books; looking at racist television; etc. etc., are not affected by racism. Everybody living in a racist society is affected by racism. White people have to deal with racism on two planes. One: on a political level, and two: on a personal level. And that's a life-long battle for one who's seriously interested in struggling against racism.

In that same way that Black people, who are affected by racism, have to struggle constantly with the feelings of inferiority which are inflicted by the society on an overall basis, and that's a constant struggle; to struggle against racism in it's institutional forms and all of it's forms. The struggle against racism and the struggle for a new society is one that is a lifelong process. It has to take many forms. It has many aspects.

i can say "well you are white and therefore you should struggle in this manner." There is a large area of issues that white people can struggle around—issues that especially affect your life. People don't become part of a struggle for abstract reasons, people become part of a struggle because they feel outrage—because they feel stepped on.

Obviously, most white people in the united states are not going to feel outraged by extreme poverty, some will, but the majority won't. Most will become involved in issues that are related to the environment, women, etc. etc. etc., so coming from there—whether it's the environment, whether it's women—and relating that to an international

system of imperialism, understanding the underlying roots, and understanding in order to struggle against any form of oppression one has to go to the source. One must look at the whole system, and it's not just the united states; it's not just the military industrial complex it's a system of international imperialism that is causing the destruction of the environment, that is causing the oppression of women, that is causing so many ills; that is causing racism, that is causing people to starve in Afrika, that is causing people to be tortured in El Salvador, it is an international system that must be struggled against.

i think that one of the things people that struggle (i don't care who they are), need to be real conscious of right now is that revolutionary movement needs to be internalized at a much higher level. People really need to do networking, to touch base, not just in their neighborhood, in their city, not just in their state or country, but at an international level.

People who are concerned about the environment need to deal on an international level. People who are struggling to liberate political prisoners should organize on an international level, because this is the only way we're gonna win. What we're struggling against is an international system of imperialism and those imperialists are organizing very effectively internationally.

So, in order to struggle against that, and to be effective, we've got to make outreach; to not have an exclusionary type of mentality when it comes to approaching other people, but to have an inclusionary type of outreach. Come in, let's get together, what can we agree on, what can we work together on. That has got to go from being just a general idea to a skill that's a well-tooled, well-developed skill.

Part II of, "An Interview With Assata Shakur" in the May issue of **CROSSROAD**.

# Dangerous Memories

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# Sundiata's Freedom is Your Freedom

A Publication of the Sundiata Acoli Freedom Campaign  
P. O. Box 5538, Manhattanville Station, Harlem, NY 10027



*"His love for Black people is so intense that you can almost touch it and hold it in your hand."*

Assata Shakur

Sundiata Acoli is one of the longest held political prisoners in the United States. He is an extraordinary human being who, despite almost two decades of brutal and dehumanizing treatment at the hands of the U.S. government, remains firmly committed to the liberation of Black people in the United States. Although Sundiata is special, he is at the same time also representative of the many other Black people the United States has imprisoned for fighting for the liberation of their people. Indeed, Sundiata is one of the many Black political prisoners the U.S. has tried to bury inside its prisons; people who fought

and continue to fight to transform this country and who have been made to pay a heavy price.

As the 1990s open, Sundiata Acoli is actually one of the longest held political prisoners in the world, having spent 18 years in prison. For eight months he endured 24 hours a day in a specially created cell in a New Jersey prison which, according to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, is smaller than the space requirements for a German shepherd dog. Sundiata also spent eight years locked down 23 hours a day in the worst prison in the United States, the United States Penitentiary at Marion. In fact, Sundiata, like so many other dissidents in the U.S., has been constantly brutalized in an effort to either destroy him or force him to renounce his politics. The efforts the U.S. has expended trying to destroy Sundiata is a testimony to his importance as a leader of the Black Liberation Movement.

In the last few years, we have seen the release of political prisoners in many parts of the world, from Nelson Mandela to Soviet dissidents. Yet here in the United States most people appear to be either unaware or unconcerned with our own Nelson Mandelas. We must change this situation if we ever hope to create a humane society.

The time is long past due to free Sundiata Acoli. But the only way this will happen is if there is enough of an outcry from people like you. We hope that you will commit some time and energy in this direction for two reasons. First, because the injustice of his 18-year imprisonment demands redress. And second, because his release will enable him to even more fully contribute to the struggle for the liberation of Black people in the U. S.

## Historical Background

Sundiata Acoli was born in 1937 in Vernon, Texas, a small town below the Panhandle, where he grew up, went to Booker T. Washington High School, did agricultural work, hunted, fished, played sports, and did all the other things kids do while

growing up. Upon graduation he went to Prairie View A & M College at Prairie View, Texas. He graduated in 1956 with a B.S. in Mathematics. After unsuccessfully looking for work in New York City, he took a job as a mathematician/computer programmer for NASA at Edwards Air Force base in California. Three years later Sundiata returned to New York where he worked with computers for the next 13 years.

The 1960s were a time of intense

ferment and change, particularly among Black people. The civil rights movement and later the movement for Black liberation and power instilled a sense of new possibilities and transformation, as Black people en masse challenged the power structure.

Sundiata was an integral part of that process. He first became politically active in the summer of 1964, doing voter registration work in Mississippi with the Student Nonviolent

Coordinating Committee. He was not a member of SNCC or any other organization. He was simply a computer programmer in New York City who read about the murder of three civil rights workers. The article implied that the murders would deter volunteers from going south to register voters and it listed the Conference of Federated Organizations (COFO) in New York City as the coordinator of the volunteer project. Sundiata called COFO and volunteered. They said yes, if he paid his own fare to Mississippi. Sundiata bought an airline ticket and flew down. In the fall, he returned to his mathematician/computer career but felt that:

*I couldn't be proud of survival under the system in America, because too many of my brothers and sisters hadn't survived.... I was aware of the subtle pressures working to force upon me the acceptance of white values, to give up more and more of being Black . . . . I loved being Black — the Black mentality, mores, habits and associations. I looked around for an organization that was dedicated to alleviating the suffering of Black people.*

In 1968, Sundiata joined the Black Panther Party (BPP) chapter in Harlem. The BPP was one of the most important political organizations of the 1960s. It particularly captured the imagination and energy of young Black people and mushroomed into chapters in many cities. The BPP supported community programs such as community control of schools, tenant control of slum housing, free breakfast programs for school children, free health care, day care, and legal clinics, political education classes for the community, and publication of a weekly national newspaper. Perhaps most notably, the BPP also fought against rampant police brutality in the Black community and was committed to armed self-defense.



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The Black Panther Party's enormous popularity was matched by an enormous hatred of the BPP by the United States government, which launched a major political/military offensive to destroy it as well as other Black organizations. The ultimate goal was to destroy the Black Liberation Movement. To this end, the FBI along with local police departments, unleashed what was later revealed to be the Counter Intelligence Program, otherwise known as COINTELPRO. Panther headquarters around the country were militarily assaulted by local and federal police forces. False rumors and divisions were propagated that caused internal squabbling in the Black movement. COINTELPRO also left scores of Black revolutionaries dead and many others imprisoned. For example, in 1969 alone, 28 Panthers, including Fred Hampton and Mark Clark, were murdered and 749 others were arrested and/or imprisoned.

Sundiata was one of those arrested. As he has written:

*On April 2, 1969, i was arrested to stand trial in the Panther 21 case. Twenty-one of us were accused of conspiring to carry out a ridiculous plot to blow up a number of New York department stores and the New York Botanical Gardens. Although the legal process took two years and the trial lasted eight months — the longest criminal prosecution in New York history — the jurors took only 56 minutes to acquit all the defendants of every charge. Police agents appearing at the Panther 21 trial had also attended some group political education classes held at my apartment.*

*Although an ad hoc organization of my fellow workers named "Computer People for Peace" had raised and posted bail for me during the Panther 21 trial, and although several other defendants had been released on bail, the judge refused to let me out on bail. i had to do the entire two years on trial in jail until released on acquittal. i endured 2 years of political internment.*

After Sundiata was released, he was constantly followed and harassed by the F.B.I. and local police forces. He finally decided that he could not be effective in the pursuit of Black liberation under these conditions, and so he went underground. On May 2, 1973, Sundiata, Assata Shakur, and Zayd Malik Shakur were ambushed by state troopers on the New Jersey Turnpike. The incident that ensued resulted in the murder of Zayd as well as the serious wounding of Assata. Trooper Werner Foerster was

also killed. Sundiata managed somehow to elude arrest on that day. However, police launched a two-day massive search of the surrounding area: "When I was arrested, police immediately cut my pants off me so that I only wore shorts. Whooping and hollering, a gang of New Jersey state troopers dragged me through the woods, through water puddles, and hit me over the head with the barrel of their shot gun. They only cooled out somewhat when they noticed that all the commotion had caused a crowd to gather at the edge of the road, observing their actions."

Sundiata was tried in an environment of mass hysteria and convicted, although there was no credible evidence he had killed the trooper or even been involved in the shooting. At sentencing the judge stated that Sundiata was an avowed revolutionary and sentenced him to life and to 30 more years, to be served consecutively!

## Incarceration

Since his incarceration, Sundiata has been subjected to all the worst that U.S. prisons have to offer — and that is saying a lot. During his pre-trial detention he was denied all medical care, was kept in isolation the entire time, was permitted no visits from family, friends, or anyone except his attorney; and was not permitted to receive or read any newspapers. A light was kept on in his cell 24 hours per day, he was fed very sparse meals, and state troopers were allowed to come into the jail and threaten him.

After sentencing he was transferred to Trenton State Prison (TSP), New Jersey, which was built before the Civil War in 1835, and had been condemned for years as uninhabitable. Shortly after his arrival the warden visited San Quentin Prison in California to study its maximum security wing called MCU (Management Control Unit) or "O" Wing. He returned to Trenton and copied the exact setup, including the name MCU, and instituted it at Trenton State Prison. Overnight they rounded up 250 prisoners and put them in this instantly erected MCU. Sundiata was the first prisoner they rounded up. Within a month they had released the prisoners back into population except for about 50, including Sundiata. These 50 were accused of being "politically oriented."

After many stays in the "doghouse," contracting tuberculosis, and constant battling with prison officials, Sundiata was transferred to the United States Penitentiary at Marion. Marion, considered to be the worst prison in the U.S., has been condemned by Amnesty International for violating the United Nations' Standard Minimum Rules for the

Treatment of Prisoners. Marion is located over a thousand miles from Sundiata's home, and is supposedly reserved for prisoners who commit violent acts while in prison. (No such charges have ever been filed against Sundiata.) Most prisoners at Marion are locked down for 22-23 hours per day, subjected to many degrading practices such as anal finger probes and being shackled spread eagle to their bed blocks. Drinking water at Marion Penitentiary is drawn from a federally-designated emergency toxic waste dump clean-up site, and many prisoners suffer unexplained skin rashes and benign tumors.

At Marion Sundiata was immediately put on controlled visit status (restricted to non-contact visits where prisoners spoke over the telephone while sitting in a small booth) as punishment for being the co-defendant of Assata Shakur, who had just escaped (in 1979) from the Clinton, New Jersey Women's Prison. Sundiata remained on control visit status during his entire eight years at Marion, and was usually the only prisoner classified as such.

Sundiata writes:

*"I was permitted visits with immediate family and attorneys only, with no friends or associates allowed. Because of the great distance and costs, these visits were possible only every one to three years. Prison officials constantly berated my children and threatened to cut off their visiting privilege for playing (i.e., not sitting still in the visiting booth). They once declared a baby blanket a non-permitted item, and took it out from under my daughter's infant sister who was sleeping on the floor, causing the child*



and mother to cry. Only 24 total hours of visiting were permitted each month. Once my mother travelled 2000 miles to visit me, unaware that I had already used 16 visiting hours that month. Prison officials rudely cutoff her visit after only 8 hours, causing my mother to cry. In another instance, legal aide Anne Else traveled 550 miles to visit me. The FBI and Marion staff eavesdropped on our meeting until they were inadvertently discovered in the act by another prisoner, Leonard Peltier. The FBI then interrupted my visit and called Anne Else to the front office, where they attempted to interrogate, terrorize and intimidate her into not filing a lawsuit against them.

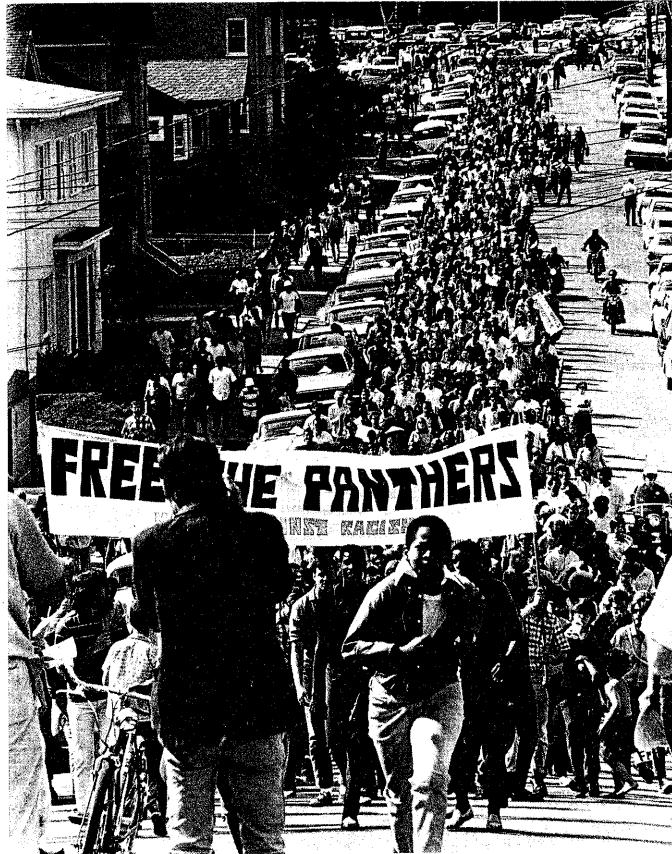
In still one more instance of harassment, Scott Anderson, editor of the Milwaukee Courier newspaper, traveled over 500 miles to interview me. He was allowed one hour to conduct a tape-recorded interview over a phone in the visiting booth. At the end of the hour he discovered that Marion officials cut off the sound to the tape recorder's telephone soon after the interview began. The officials refused to let him redo the interview. At Marion I was also not permitted to telephone my lawyer unless I could prove it was less than five days before he was to appear in court on my behalf, otherwise all communications to my lawyer had to be written.

After eight years, in large part due to demonstrations at Marion and substantial national pressure to end the lockdown, Sundiata was transferred to Leavenworth, where he remains today.

\*\*\*\*\*

Assata Shakur was one of the key targets of COINTEL-PRO. She was called the "soul of the Black Liberation Army" by the government. After spending 6 years in prison, Assata Shakur escaped in 1979. In her autobiography, written from her new home in Cuba, Assata describes Sundiata's character:

*There is something about Sundiata that exudes calm. From every part of his being you can sense the presence of revolutionary spirit and fervor. And his love for Black people is so intense that you can almost touch it and hold it in your hand.*



Sundiata is a true hero. He has been an unceasing fighter for the liberation of Black people and for this he has been made to spend the last 18 years of his life in prison. And if we do not do something about it, the U.S. government will be only too pleased to watch Sundiata die in his cell. Join us in our campaign to ensure Sundiata's freedom.

## For more information

about the efforts to free Sundiata or to be added to the mailing list, please write to: Sundiata Acoli Freedom Campaign, P.O. Box 5538, Manhattanville Station, Harlem, New York 10027. If you would like to order more of these pamphlets, please send requests to Sundiata Acoli Freedom Campaign, P.O. Box 579154, Chicago, Illinois 60657-9154. Single copies are free of charge. For multiple copies, please send a contribution for printing and postage.

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# ON SEXIST OPPRESSION

**Sanovia Muhammad,  
Coordinator of the New Afrikan Women's Taskforce,  
New Afrikan People's Organization**

As conscious New Afrikan women, it is incumbent upon us to challenge sexist oppression, wherever, we find it!!! However, We call on all conscious New Afrikans to take this challenge, recognizing that for all of us to be free and independent, we all must be involved in this struggle.

Sexism runs rampant in religions, institutions and social structures and we must fight against it everywhere. However, at this writing i am most concerned about how we support and perpetuate this oppression in writings. Male centered language, conceptually promotes women's oppression. This language often talks about freedom like it will benefit men only, and liberation as man's domain. Take for example the following:

*"To build a new Society that is better than what We now know and as perfect as Man can make it; To create conditions in which freedom of religion abounds and man's pursuit of God and/or destiny, place, and purpose of man in the Universe will be without hindrance". (The New Afrikan Declaration of Independence).*

In December, i was in dialogue with young sisters at the University of Chicago at Urbana. They are strong Black women, struggling for their identity, and challenging the sexism that continues to perpetuate itself on college campuses. They spoke about the condescending ways they are treated, especially when they espouse changes in the status quo. Coming from the perspective of a revolutionary nationalist, encouraging them to be a part of an organization and a movement that believes and promotes the equality and development of women, and an independent New Afrikan Nation i have to be able to show them concretely, not in a line on a piece of paper, the implementation of this theory. So if i stand with them and discuss the Declaration of Independence, in the context of a society promoting egalitarian principles, and as we read it, the emphasis is on "mankind", "man's pursuit of", "man's genius", etc., there is a glaring contradiction that must be dealt with. We understand, historically, the era that this document was written in. We also understand that as an archival document, we cannot change it. However, as striving

revolutionaries and as examples to our communities, we are obligated to oppose the use of this malecentered language in the movement For us to accept the analysis that this language is inclusive of the entire Nation is preposterous. If it is inclusive then let us refer to "womankind" and accept that it includes men. No! our language must refer to our people collectively. This is not to assume that there will not be times where it is necessary to be male centered and female centered. However, whenever we are talking about the survival and liberation of our New Afrikan Nation, we are definitely talking about the participation of its women and men.

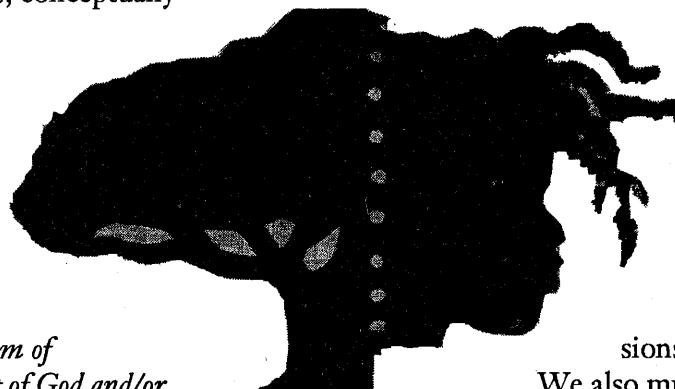
For those of us who use this document and others like it, we must acknowledge the sexism, and reflect in our discussions, our progress on the issue.

We also must reflect that this progress/development comes out of the historical contributions women have made to the liberation of the Black Nation and our struggle to be free of exploitation. For this reason and others, how we define, explain and promote our movement is crucial.

This is one example, but there are many. Most of the political writings, by men, where we learn and develop political theory, are sexist, intentional or not. Understanding that it arises out of an ingrained system of white male supremacy, the fact that some of our best minds perpetuate it, should indicate the seriousness of our task. We cannot continue into the year 2000 supporting, or promoting backward ideas and practices, written, verbal or otherwise .

Our movement,where revolutionary consciousness is highest and where the concept of creating a better world and a better people is a goal, has to take the leadership in addressing and correcting this issue . In our struggle against oppression, in all its forms, the struggle against the oppression of women, one half of our Nation, must be a priority on our agenda.

We must all be committed to the full participation of women in the struggle for National Liberation, in word and deed.



# *“The Revolutionary Art of Rap Music”*

Sanyika Shakur



“... Airplanes flying, overseas people dying, politicians lying, i’m trying not to escape, but hit the problem head on by bringing out the truth in a song...”

Boogie Down Productions “I’m Still Number One”

Music, song and dance have always been a prevalent cultural characteristic in Afrikan societies, both traditional and contemporary. The deep soulful rhythm of the drum has had many meanings in our cultural development; in retention on the Continent as well as in the Diaspora.

The “residue” that remained throughout our colonial experience that allowed for the root-taking of the New Afrikan Nation here was held intact—internally influenced—by the atavistic throw back of our music, song and dance, i.e. culture.

For New Afrikans held in the clutches of colonialists so ruthless and intent to repress the smallest manifestation of culture — music, song and dance became a dangerous, but self satisfying rebellious activity.

It was not carried out simply for it’s own sake, but as a necessary requirement for the grounding and passing of this Afrikan, henceforth New Afrikan, cultural entity. There was a message in the music. When New Afrikans planned escape from the colonial violence, songs were utilized as communication networks to spread the word so others could join in the flight to the North.

Songs would warn those who stayed behind to expect repression as a result of the others flight. Songs were utilized as “secure communications” between those who “needed to know” that action against colonialism was to be taken, e.g. escape or revolt.

Songs, mostly Spirituals, were in accord with the

National aspirations of New Afrika. That is, songs were sung to stipulate, retain and pass on the need for independence and an economic system based upon equal distribution — run by a government of our own. The spiritual in verse, most were political in context. “Relations” between people centered on the seizure and retention of state power.



After the granting of formal independence to New Afrika (“emancipation”) in 1865, the “Nationalist trend” was over-run by the “integrationist trend.” This, of course, was only an issue magnified by the settler-empire thru a handful of puppets, or neocolonial leaders (those New Afrikans struggling to convince the New Afrikan masses of the authenticity of paper-citizenship and the soundness of the ideological formulation of integration).

The New Afrikan masses never fully accepted this misinformation but, because an alternative to struggle was presented, more than enough followed suit. Because these neocolonial mis-leaders had at their disposal the states propaganda apparatus (media), their ideological formulation was projected as the alternative to poverty, joblessness and suffering; all at a time when colonial-genocidal violence was peaking across the empire.

Those with the ability to sing, play musical instruments and dance were elevated as petit-bourgeois, and utilized as tools against the masses.

The singers and musicians were “turned” by agents of imperialism. They became a “class” from the Nation, but not of, or for, the Nation. Escapism became a “thing to do,” as many New Afrikans wore “smiles of

the empire" to promote its "good intent" with regards to the integration of New Afrika into the vestibule of imperialism via paper-citizenship.

From that time until this, the entertainer class has been utilized to promote the ethnic pluralism of the empire state.

However, it would be unfair to say that all those with these talents have been consistent with the wishes/threats of the empire. Of course there have been those

stalwarts who have refused to surrender the cultural integrity of New Afrika for the sake of climbing the social ladder of another nation.

Those are the "controversial" artists we hear of periodically thru criticism by the bourgeois media. During the high tide of the "Black Liberation Movement" (BLM) in the 1960s, New Afrikan artists broke the "taboo" of caste and class and brought the masses sounds consistent, once again, with their aspirations. Tho, let us overstand here that our aspirations then were not the products of analyses grounded in the dialectical-materialist method of thinking.

Thus, our ideological formulation was not New Afrikan, but "Black"; our theory was not protracted peoples war, but "liberation." So, the sounds produced by artists of and for the Nation were consistent with this one-sided "Liberation Movement."

James Brown came across as our musical theorist with tunes like "Say it Loud, I'm Black and Proud", "Try Me" and "Papa's Got a Brand New Bag".

Then, we were given the opportunity to hear our



aspirations, feelings and attitudes blaring over the hi-fi by the Last Poets, who carried us into the early 70s.

Of course, Brother Gil Scott-Heron went on to manifest the "people beat" on up to the present. Not too many have been as consistent and accurate as

Brother Gil; but for a long while he has been out there alone, yet undaunted, by this fact.

As of late, we have been allowed the pleasure of hearing Sister Tracy Chapman bringing us the reality of the contradictions still

in existence, i.e., imperialism to National oppression.

The traditional network of communication is being reinstated for the coming "actions against colonialism" and its maintainers. Out of the National oppression of New Afrika has come another quarter of voices resisting the colonial domination of the Nation by amerikkkan imperialism: Rap music.

Rapping is not new, by far, but the attention it is now receiving would lead one to believe as such. But, let us overstand that "King Heroin" by James Brown was a rap. Brother Gil Scott-Heron has always rapped. A poem is essentially a rap. But, we must give credit where credit is due: the rappers now have evolved it into an art seldom paralleled and rivaled by few previously.

What makes these Brothers and Sisters so "controversial" is their rejection of class and caste, and their strict adherence to grassroots culture. These New Afrikans are not exempt from the cultural hegemony of amerikkkanism, by far, some profess perverted social mores of that decadent culture in their raps.

However, let it suffice to say that most are in

accord with our historical reality as colonized people of the third world, violently removed from First World, i.e., Afrika. The most atavistic manifestation outside of themselves is their adoption of the drum as the musical leader.

Leading this revolutionary rap campaign is the rap group Public Enemy, consisting of seven Brothers: Chuck D, Flavor Flav, Terminator X, and their security squad, the SIWs, or "Security of the First World." There was an eighth member, Professor Grif (Minister of Information), but Bro was purged after a statement about Jews.

These Brothers have pulled no punches in their information campaigns to educate (thru agitation) and organize New Afrikans for National independence, and against u.s. colonial domination. The SIWs don battle fatigues, combat boots and berets. They are martial artists and politically educated.

Chuck D is a cadre member of the Nation of Islam (NOI) and openly advocates this in the raps. In one such song, "Black Still in the Hour of Chaos", they stipulate:

i got a letter from the government the other day.  
opened and read it; it said they were suckers! They  
wanted me for their army or whatever; picture me giving  
a damn, i said never! Here is a land that never gave a  
damn about a Brother like me and myself because they  
never did..."

Clearly, they are educating against a u.s. draft into the colonial army; which is one of the "options" out of the ghetto offered by state-pigs. This rap goes on to explain how the refusal to fight for his historical enemy, and what measures he took as he was "packed into a cell like a slave."

He coordinated a liberation from the konzentration kamp along with 52 other Brothers, after he caught a "c/o [correctional officer] falling asleep on death row, and grabbed his gun."

Public Enemy has been to Rikers Island several times and has extensive dealings with New Afrikan prisoners. The group was created on a college campus. All of the songs on the second album, "It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold us Back" (1988), are

wrought with lyrics designed to "slap" the listener into consciousness.

In one song they pledge support for comrade-sister, Assata Shakur. On



-Flavor Flav, Public Enemy  
*Tour of a Black Planet*

the flip-side of their album cover they are shown in a kamp cell standing on an amerikkkan flag! In an issue of Ebony (1988), they say: "...We are Black Nationalists fighting to restore the pride of the 1960s." When in concert, a lecture on consciousness precedes the show. Mixed into their music are excerpts from speeches by Malcolm X, Minister Farrakhan, Angela Davis, and Jesse Jackson. The Brothers have alarmed the establishment with their absolute adherence to Revolutionary Nationalism and their strict anti-amerikkkan stance. They have captured the ears of the youth of New Afrika, as well as Puerto Rican and other oppressed peoples.

Boogie Down Productions (BDP) is another stalwart standard bearer in this regard. The leader, KRS-1 (s/n Kris Parker) has consistently demonstrated his vanguard qualities thru h

This Brother was homeless for seven years before becoming a rapper. His d.j., Scott La Rock, was murdered by drug dealers after taking a stand against them. The murder came on the heels of a rap he and KRS-1 engineered called ".9mm," where they begin by saying: "There was a crack dealer by the name of Peter, had to bust him down with my .9 millimeter..."

BDP has initiated an organization named "Stop the Violence Movement" (STVM), aimed at the crimes which New Afrikans commit upon each other — as a result of our colonial situation. BDP brought together some of the hottest New Afrikan rap groups to do a song called "Self-Destruction", and gave all proceeds

(\$150,000) to the Urban League.

Now, no doubt this shows a lack of concrete analyses of "whose who" in our social development (as those funds could have been diverted to a revolutionary cause, as opposed to an integrationist facade organization); but too, it points up our failure to be there when the petty-bourgeoisie were.

However, it does show a willingness on these Citizens part to raise such funds for a cause. Surely, had cadres from the New Afrikan Independence Movement been there, the neocolonial Urban League would have been the ideological loser.

Rap music is the contemporary "voice in the fields" desperately urging the people to prepare to strike for freedom - "By Any Means Necessary!"

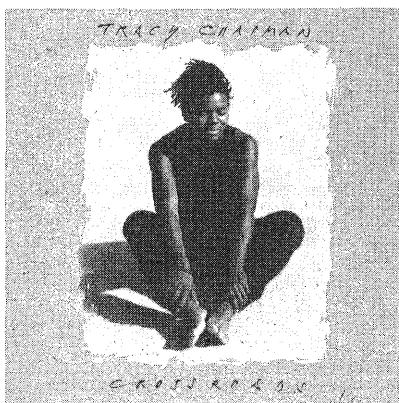
These Brothers and Sisters have persuaded the Nation's youth to shun gold chains and sport Afrikan medallions displaying the geographical shape of our Continent with our National colors of red, black and green.

Hairstyles, attire and attitudes are being influenced by these rappers. The dashiki is back, as well as the fez. Our National colors are once again flying in uncommon places, such as amerikkkan colleges, high schools and primary schools.

Rap, like other honestly intended educational programs, is subject to co-option by hostile forces. Such counterrevolutionary campaigns like "chesrob", "newkil" and "cointelpro" must be understood as still in existence because the order they were designed to protect is still in existence! So, it is only dialectical and materialist to think, and thus believe, that some type of

insidious counter-revolutionary program is still in functioning order.

As our struggle intensifies and repression is tightened, such groups will come



under attack right along with the Movement. Thus, our responsibility as cadres is to try and bring these Sisters and Brothers into the fold—if they do not already belong to such formations—and shield them as much as possible. Rappers are doing the work of field cadres, and most don't even belong to organizations!

If we want to feel the beat of the Nation, we'll have to start listening to rap music. I remember seeing a video, and the Brother who was rapping was holding a copy of the Autobiography of Assata Shakur.

In one of BDP's videos, projected on the wall behind KRS-1 were huge pictures of Malcolm X (with the M-1), Minister Farrakhan and Mommar Khadaffi.

In Public Enemy's "Night of the Living Baseheads", the SIWs are shown marching in front of the Audubon Ballroom ~where Malcolm was murdered) over a caption that reads: "Audubon Ballroom 23 Years Later".

I've yet to see any videos showing our "Mandelas," i.e., Sundiata Acoli, Dhoruba bin-Wahad, James "Blood" Miller, etc; tho with a little political education, i'm sure we could have 'em reading the New Afrikan Creed. Or, better yet, produce our own rap group out of youths in the New Afrikan Independence Movement (NAIM).

This, would insure our ideological development is at work as well. Also, not one rap group i've heard has used our ideological terminology. All are still using "Black." We should, as i've already set about doing, try to obtain their directory addresses (or the addresses of those handling their promotional dealings), and forward material such as CROSSROAD and VITA WA WATU to make our presence felt.

In closing, let me say that this phenomenon must be seen as a springboard. It must be seized to insure that we have, and keep, the initiative in this up-coming round of Revolution.

**Re-Build!  
Free the Land!**

**SOCIETY CAN NEVER THINK THINGS OUT  
IT HAS TO SEE THEM ACTED OUT BY ACTORS  
DEVOTED ACTORS AT A SACRIFICE  
THE MOST ABLEST ACTORS,  
*i CAN LAY MY HANDS ON*  
*- God to Job***

***In Robert Frost's Masque of Reason***

**Tchaka Olugbala Shabazz  
Maximum Control Complex  
Westville, Indiana**

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On September 23rd, 16 prisoners at the Maximum Control Complex at Westville Indiana launched a "hunger strike" to protest the inhuman conditions at the prison. The prisoners decided that under conditions of extreme repression a "hunger strike" is the best method to dramatize grievances of the powerless. The grievances are:

- 1. Suspected water contamination;**
- 2. Sensory deprivation;**
- 3. Unreasonable and dehumanizing searches;**
- 4. No remedial programs;**
- 5. Lack of Due Process;**
- 6. Inadequate law library;**
- 7. Mail tampering**
- 8. Insufficient recreation time;**
- 9. Chilly cells temperature; and**
- 10. Out-of-cell movement in leg-irons and handcuffs.**

These grievances in their totality amount to cruel and unusual punishment - human rights violations. In a word - violence.

The Maximum Control Complex (MCC) represents the Department of Corrections' most recent attempt to deal with the so-called "unmanageable" and/or "high-security" prisoner in the penal system. Geographically it is located in the northwest part of Indiana, situated on the same grounds

with the old Westville Correction Center. It's a newly constructed facility — composed of four rotunda cellhouses, with 56 individual cells to a house. Highly compartmentalized, each cellhouse is divided into four sections (blue, pink, yellow, & beige) with 14 cells to a section. The cell-doors are electronically operated from a control center located in the center of each cellhouse. Externally, everything looks sanitized and orderly; but underneath is a mass of human rights and constitutional violations. The MCC isn't concerned with rehabilitation. It's primary concern is isolation and punishment. This is to say, to repress, alter or break the will of the individual. Plain and simple, it is a system of paternalism operating off the peculiar theory that since "We cannot annihilate them physically, they can, at least, be psychologically mutilated."

There is the notion in this society that just because prisoners are not kept in dark dungeons or hung upside-down from the walls by their thumbs that somehow they are not "doing hard time." Granted, in comparison to prisons in other parts of the world, prisons in Amerika have better living conditions, extend more "privileges" and inflict less corporal punishment. However, this doesn't absolve Amerika from addressing and correcting the Human Rights Violations that do exist in the prisons, especially since it proclaims to be the torchbearer of

democracy . It cannot have it both ways!

Basically, the general public has a narrow and selective view of violence. The media, with its selective and sensational "news" is largely responsible for shaping and reinforcing this narrow conception. But according to Behavior Scientists, human violence occurs on three levels: A: Personal; B: Institutional; and C: Structural.

Briefly defined:

Violence is any relation, process, or condition by which an individual or a group violates the physical, social, and/or psychological integrity of another person or group.

For instance, chronic unemployment is violence to the lives of people. Excessive mortality is violence; so is massive homelessness. In short, all these are forms of structural violence; but because they aren't visibly bloody it's generally perceived as nonviolent!

Personal violence, unlike structural violence, is easily identifiable because there is a perpetrator and a victim. Moreover, usually the weapon is a gun, knife, or club. For example, a cold-blooded stabbing in a gambling dispute, an auto accident that leads to an attack; with a tire iron, or a battered and frightened woman who shoots her husband to death. All of these are clear acts of personal violence, and the kind we commonly associate with events of violence.

Institutional violence usually occurs in nursing homes, mental hospitals, and prisons; but because it is hidden from view the general public tends to disregard it. This is, unless the media reports some flagrant incident. However, if an orderly vindictively punches an elderly person for requesting a bedpan, an attendant slaps a mental patient for being "uncooperative" or guards club a prisoner for kicking on a celldoor to get attention — just because the public isn't aware of it doesn't make it any less painful or violent. On the other hand, if "behavior control and human experimentation" is being conducted on prisoners and just because it isn't bloody or the public isn't aware of it, doesn't make it any less harmful



or violent. Both structural and institutional violence flows from top to bottom (vertical), is sanctioned by law and considered legitimate. While personal violence is usually expressed on the same level (horizontal) and is considered illegitimate.

In 1963 the U.S. Federal Bureau of Prisons opened a "Super Maximum Security" prison at Marion, Illinois as a replacement for Alcatraz. It was to house "the most aggressive and dangerous inmates in Federal custody." Over the years due to the policy of "isolation and repression", Marion has come to represent a case study in Maximum Control Units. In fact, scores of lawsuits have been filed, challenging the conditions at the prison; various "investigative teams" have toured it and have written "reports;" Amnesty International (Human Rights Org.) has condemned it; and in 1985 an Oversight Hearing was conducted before the House of Representatives, Subcommittee on Courts, Civil Liberties, and the Administration of Justice.

Concerning the policy of "isolation and repression." In a 1973 trial case, a clinical psychologist, whose field of expertise is the effects of isolation, after having examined the Marion Control Unit testified:

I would say that if we want to produce, to make animals out of human beings, that this is the perfect procedure for doing it. And that humanizing them means affording them some human contact with each other, and in a limited way with whatever the rules prescribe, with the world outside. The more limited they are, the more animal-like they will be in their behavior.

During the same proceeding, after touring the "Unit" twice, Dr. Frank Rundle, a psychiatrist specializing in the effects of long-term solitary confinement, concluded:

The state of affairs I observed at Marion Prison is destructive to inmates, staff, institution, and society-at-large. If the current conditions continue, there will be continuing psychological harm to staff and inmates alike, and the likelihood of further destruction of property and loss of life.

Again Dr. Rundle, this time before the 1985 House of Representatives, Subcommittee Oversight Hearing, testified:

Second, holding inmates in locked cells for 23 hours daily, allowing very little opportunity for physical activity, no programs for work participation, no open visiting and severely restricted communication with family, little opportunity for interaction with peers, and no acceptable means of expression of anger in many ways leads to a sustained state of rage, and resentment and preoccupation with thoughts of violent vengeance against institutional staff, and the society-at-large.

For some men held under these conditions for prolonged periods of time, the purpose for living becomes to inflict harm or death upon the perceived tormentors .

Three, the damage inflicted upon some inmates held for extended periods of time under such conditions as now exists in Marion will be permanent. Some of these men will eventually be released to the outside world as emotional cripples and will be liabilities to society, either because they are incapable of maintaining themselves through legitimate work or because they represent physical danger to others.

Lastly, I don't see myself as an advocate for prison reform, but rather my concern is for the harm which is done psychologically to thousands and perhaps tens of thousands of inmates which I believe is avoidable.

I do not think that the way that Marion Prison is operated and many others I have seen is necessary in order to protect the inmate and the staff.

We have let these individuals speak at length because of the similarity of the situation, the importance of

their findings and their professional opinions. Here we have two distinguished doctors, on public record, criticizing this policy of "isolation and repression." Both point out how this policy harmfully affects prisoners, staff ultimately society-at-large (because most prisoners the "emotionally crippled" will some day be released). This situation impacts on guards through interaction because in the process of dehumanizing prisoners they at the same time dehumanize themselves. Internalized, this stress and dehumanization is then carried back into their homes and environment. This is called the Boomerang Syndrome. What could be a more clear indictment against this type of policy? Why, the authorities are producing "hate factories." For how can people be humanized by dehumanizing them? It's all upside-down logic.

Yet everyday in the name of justice, in every prison in this country, institutionalized violence is being inflicted upon prisoners, and "this daily wave of a million tiny assaults builds up a vast reservoir of resentment." Nevertheless, in spite of what the "prisoncrats" say, not all of us are hopelessly lost. In fact, after having time to think and reflect, some of us are deeply sorry for the crimes we have committed against the community and wish to return as contributing members rather than social parasites. In any case, from our point of view, as long as this dehumanizing problem continues to exist — it's all "crimes in the face of crimes." It's just that "once force (i.e., institutions) wear the cloak of legitimacy and another the rages of criminality."

In closing, we would like to send our warmest regards to all the people, "forces", church congregations, organizations, and sympathetic journalists for their support of the "hunger strikers." Furthermore, we urge all concerned people to continue their



support by coming out to the rallies, writing letters, and making calls to register your protest with the Governor's office and the Department of Corrections. For at this hour the struggle continues....as the "hunger strikers" enter the 36th day of fasting.

#### Acknowledgements:

Jan Susler, El-Sangre Miller, Regis Debray,  
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Shasha Malik Olugbala

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### **RECENT UPDATE - LAWYERS DENIED ACCESS TO VISIT PRISONERS & DOCUMENT WESTVILLE ATROCITIES**

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On March 9, 1992 Erica Thompson and I, both attorneys, tried to visit prisoners at the Maximum Control Complex (MCC) at Westville. Erica called the MCC to find out what the procedures for getting a legal visit were and followed those procedures. When we arrived on March 9th, we were told by the warden of the MCC, Charles Wright, that we were not entitled to a visit. He said that because we were attorneys from Illinois, and not Indiana that we'd be unable to visit. It was then that we spent about three hours on the pay telephone in the visiting room trying to overturn Wright's decision. We had a conversation with someone from the legal department of the Dept. of Corrections and someone from the Attorney General's Office, both in Indianapolis, who indicated that Wright was absolutely wrong and that they would call him and tell him to let us visit. They both indicated they did so, but that Wright had gone over their heads to John Nunn, Deputy Commissioner of Operations, 2nd in command to James E. Aiken, Commissioner of the Dept. of Corrections, and Nunn sanctioned Wright's refusal to let us in. Nunn said "it was policy" that only Indiana attorneys were allowed in; but a person from the legal department told me that she could not find any policy, anywhere,

that said such a preposterous thing.

Needless to say Erica and I were fuming; we had gotten up at 5:00 a.m. to visit, had a pre-arranged and pre-approved visit and we were forced to deal with this bureaucratic mess all in an effort to deny the prisoners access to lawyers and to outside exposure. We believe that the basis for their refusal was further punishment for the prisoners, and fear on the prisonrats' part that we'd find out and make public the horrors of MCC.

The atrocities are numerous: extreme and unprecedented beatings, denial of medical care, unnecessary and abusive use of physical restraints, water poisoning, inadequate and in some cases no opportunity for communication with the outside, etc). So we decided to hold a press conference later that day. It is our belief that at least three papers, if not more, carried the story. We explained in our interview that it was absurd, illegal and unprecedented that "out-of-town" attorneys be denied access. Well, by the time the press came Wright had already come up with another story - that he refused us access because we had refused to sign some papers, an alleged prerequisite to gaining entry. How ridiculous! We scolded the press for even entertaining the idea that we'd refuse to sign any papers, or believe that if there were any papers necessary to complete that we wouldn't have done so prior to our visit just to make sure everything went smoothly.

Legal action will be taken in the near future to combat these human rights and unconstitutional violations.

For Freedom! Mariel Nanasi, Attorney-at-Law

**CROSSROAD** is now seeking articles, book reviews, information, poetry, and commentary for future issues. Material on women, gay and lesbian issues, healthcare, and arts criticism as related to the New Afrikan Independence Movement is strongly encouraged. Please submit materials typed and double-spaced, or legibly handwritten.

**CROSSROAD** reserves the right to edit all material.

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**CROSSROAD** will be published four times a year, in May, August, November and February at \$3.00 for people on the outside and \$1.50 for prisoners. Please note that all correspondence, including submissions, regarding **CROSSROAD** and any other matters should be directed to:

Spear & Shield Publications  
1340 W. Irving Park, Suite 108,  
Chicago, Illinois 60613.

We apologize to our loyal **CROSSROAD** readers and subscribers for the long hiatus, one reason for which has been our lack of funds. We are now beginning an on-going drive to solicit financial donations and people willing to act as Spear and Shield sustainers, providing regular donations of \$25.00, \$50.00, \$100.00, or more to help ensure the survival of **CROSSROAD**, **VITA WA WATU**, and of Spear and Shield itself. This will also help with the expansion of a number of other future Spear and Shield projects.

We are also seeking people who are willing to act as local distributors of **CROSSROAD** and other Spear and Shield publications. If you and/or someone you know are interested, please contact us as soon as possible.



# **POLICE TORTURE OF BLACKS EXPOSED IN CHICAGO**

## **White Cops Demonstrate Support for Torturers**

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### *History of Uncovering Police Commander Burge*

In 1989, during the civil rights trial of Andrew Wilson against Police Commander Jon Burge and the City of Chicago, evidence was evoked by Wilson's attorneys from the People's Law Office showing Burge had electroshocked Andrew Wilson, (an accused cop killer) while Wilson was in custody. The electronic shock box described by Wilson, which Burge cranked to send an electric current through his hands, ears and genitals, was similar to the "Tucker telephones" used initially against prisoners in Arkansas and later against the Viet Cong. (Burge served as an M.P. in Vietnam.) In addition, then Lt. Burge and two detectives working under him, placed a garbage bag over Wilson's head until he passed out, and then revived him to continue their interrogations and beating. This technique, known as "dry submarino" is also internationally recognized as an effective means of interrogation and punishment because it is so frightening and leaves no marks.

In 1989, after the first civil rights trial ended in a hung jury a police insider informed Wilson's attorneys that Burge had used electroshock and "dry submarino" on many other persons in custody and gave the attorneys information which led to the uncovering of additional victims. The insider acknowledged that Burge was notorious for the use of his "black box" against Black suspects and his information led to the discovery of **fifteen other victims of Burge's torture**. However, the federal judge refused to allow the other victims to testify in the second civil rights trial. He also refused to allow any evidence corroborating Wilson's account of torture, including an expert, the Deputy Medical Examiner of Cook County, who found that Wilson's rendition of the facts were consistent with being tortured. Additionally, the judge excluded Blacks from the jury and when this occurred, not surprisingly, the jury refused to award Wilson damages. The trial judge did everything possible to accommodate Burge's attorney, who was paid \$750,000 of city funds.

### *Mounting the Political Campaign*

Nevertheless, armed with what was now testimony from sixteen victims, all Black, of electroshock, "dry submarino" and russian roulette, the Task Force to Confront Police violence, Citizens Alert, and other community forces, began a campaign to expose Burge and make the police department fire him.

For the next 18 months demonstrations and protests were held. The sights for these protests included Commander Burge's Detective Area Headquarters (he had risen through the ranks to the point where he was the Commander of Detectives), City Hall, the Police Board, and Mayor Richard M. Daley's house. City Council meetings were disrupted until demands were met for full hearings into Burge's torture. These hearings occurred on Christmas Eve, 1990 and received widespread TV coverage including photos of a replica of Burge's black box. Local agitation resulted in an international report from Amnesty International calling for investigation into torture in Chicago. Stark stickers appeared throughout the streets of Chicago saying "Daley supports Police Commander Burge's Torture of Blacks." Mayor Daley had denied the accuracy of the Amnesty Report saying it had no basis, Police Superintendent Le Roy Martin also continued to support Burge. Martin was Burge's supervisor, at Area II, during the time when Burge was torturing suspects.

### *The City Cuts Burge Loose*

As it became clearer and clearer that the protest and exposure of Burge would not go away and that he was becoming a liability to the Mayor and police chief, the Office of Professional Standards (the police investigation agency) reversed an earlier ruling and recommended Burge be fired for torturing Andrew Wilson. The Mayor and police chief, after sitting on the OPS recommendation for a year, reversed themselves and concurred in the OPS decision. As a result, Burge has

been removed from duty and is being tried administratively, along with two detectives for torturing Wilson. The hearings have given public airing to several of Burge's victims besides Wilson. Their accounts together with the testimony of an international torture expert supporting the victims' accounts of electroshock and "dry submarino" have appeared on the nightly news. The City's embarrassment continues.

In February, 1991 a further bombshell was released in the form of an even more far-reaching OPS investigation and finding. This finding is based on the accounts of over 58 victims of Burge and other Area II detectives between 1972 and 1985. The finding states:

In the matter of alleged physical abuse, the preponderance of the evidence is that abuse did occur and that it was systematic. The time span involved covers more than ten years. The type of abuse described was not limited to the usual beating, but went into such esoteric areas as psychological techniques and planned torture. ...

The number of incidents in which an Area II command member is identified as an accused can lead to only one conclusion. Particular command members were aware of the systematic abuse and perpetuated it either by actively participating in same or failing to take any action to bring it to an end. This conclusion is also supported by the number of incidents in which the Area II offices were named as the location of the abuse.

The potential explosiveness of these findings of the racist brutality of an entire segment of the Chicago Police Department over a decade is simmering in the public consciousness. The Mayor and police chief have rejected this report and still refuse to acknowledge its significance or admit its accuracy.

#### Burge and Fraternal Order of Police Retaliate

As the hearings proceed and additional evidence comes out against Burge and the other two detectives who face being fired, the officers implicated and the police union have mounted their own counter-attack. With the total support of the white-dominated Fraternal Order of Police, the B.O.Y committee (for Burge, O'Hara and Yucaitis) was formed. Many current police brass including former superintendents are on its honorary list. The BOY committee raises money and political support for the "good ole BOYS" on trial.

Using police role calls, states attorney's office meetings, and the strong arming of tavern owners in Chicago to demand a keg of beer, or its money equiva-

lent, for a fundraiser, the FOP and BOY committee sold thousands of \$20 tickets to a benefit party for the "boys" at the Teamsters Hall on February 25, 1992. They circulated a document saying the People's Law Office was in a conspiracy with all the criminals to bankrupt Chicago and make themselves rich. The F.O.P. memo continues:

"Violation of Civil Rights" is going to be the career criminal's defense of the 90's. If the series of events described above continues to head in the direction it is currently heading, then the number of felons removed from the streets will be dramatically reduced, jobsecurity will be greatly diminished, and your legal exposure will be substantially increased.

On the night of the BOY fundraiser 200 protesters led by the Task Force to Confront Police Violence and the Malcolm X Grass Roots Movement showed up opposite the entrance to Teamsters Hall. The protesters chanted "Take the Torture Toys From the Torture Boys," "No Burge, No KKK, No Fascist USA," "Code of Silence Equals Racist Violence," and "Burge Tortures Blacks, City Throws a Party." We carried signs depicting Burge and fellow detectives carrying out their atrocities while their buddies were clinking beer mugs in support of the "Killer Kop Klub."

But inside thousands of white police officers stood and applauded Burge. With tears in his eyes Burge stated he was overwhelmed with emotions and could not speak but assured the crowd he would continue to fight. A not so speechless representative of the National Fraternal Order of Police said Burge's was a critical case that demanded the support of police throughout the country. He told the crowd if Burge loses, then criminal suspects and greedy lawyers will bankrupt every city in the country and the police will all lose their jobs. Mike Royko, a popular populist commentator in Chicago echoed the F.O.P. line saying Burge was an okay fellow, even if he did torture some people a few years ago and that the demonstrators should "get a life" and stop worrying about Burge as long as he didn't torture them.

#### Outcome Unknown

Even though the count of known victims of torture and extreme violence by Burge is up to 72, he is only being prosecuted for the Wilson case alone. This, in and of itself is a grand distortion of the facts and ignores reality completely. The decision on whether Burge is fired will be made in the upcoming months by the police board, appointed by Mayor Daley. The Board is made up of a majority of professionals and will be given transcripts of the entire disciplinary proceedings. The BOY committee and FOP have already approached

the Board with the thousands of signatures they have solicited on petitions supporting Burge. The lawyer prosecuting Burge may be "legally competent," but ignores the political overtones of this case. He is passionless and has neglected to implicate the police department, and its fraternal agencies in a pattern of torture and cover-up. Burge's lawyer, on the other hand, is very political, plays to the media constantly, and paints a ferocious and racist picture of the "victim" decorated police officer versus the heinous criminal.

There is an increasing awareness and outrage against Burge in the Black community, while elected Black leaders remain silent. The agitation by the Task Force and Malcolm X Grass Roots Movement joined by others, continues. The Board's decision on whether to fire Burge hangs in the balance of the political forces and is not yet clear.

#### Some Lessons

What we do know is that torture and brutality against Blacks and other people of color in Chicago has been and continues to be a policy of the Chicago Police Department and it is not limited to Jon Burge. Like Burge, there are hundreds of other officers who have

repeatedly been accused of excessive force. In fact, there is a list of "repeater" cops who we target; Burge is at the extreme end of the spectrum of tolerated, condoned and encouraged police abusers. Indeed Burge has been steadily promoted by both Black and white superintendents fully aware of the allegations against him. Rather than disciplining Burge and other repeat offender police, the City's policy has been to promote them.

What we do know is that there is a hard core (indeed the majority) of white police officers represented by the police union that supports police violence against Blacks. We also know that group has a substantial base in the larger white community and most white people are reluctant to confront this core of racism.

Lastly, we know that political exposure and work can have an effect. The "secrets" of racist police violence and its acceptance at the police station like the "secrets" around the racist beating of Rodney King are out in Chicago for all to see. A substantial anti-racist force has been put together out of the outrage coming from this exposure and from the struggle to confront police torture and brutality.

**TASK FORCE TO CONFRONT POLICE VIOLENCE  
P.O. BOX 25501 CHICAGO, IL. 60625**



## Support for cop protested

Demonstrators denounce police officers attending a benefit for an officer accused of brutality outside Teamsters Hall at 328 S. Marshfield Ave. Tuesday night. Story page A3.

Staff photo by Scott Strazzante

# **ACTIONS AGAINST CONTROL UNITS MAY '92**

## ***Where will we be? What will we do?***

September of 1991 marked the 20th anniversary of the great rebellion at Attica prison. In memory of that historic event, members of national liberation struggles, prison activists, and many others from 14 states, Puerto Rico and Canada participated in a conference, initiated by the Committee to End the Marion Lockdown (CEML) in Chicago, to chart a course to abolish control unit prisons.

It was decided at the conference to devote a weekend of activities across the country, in Canada and Puerto Rico, that would proclaim our opposition to these notorious institutions. Since the Bureau of Prisons (BOP) is planning a replacement for Marion prison in Florence, Colorado that is specifically designed as a control unit prison, it is particularly important that the activities raise this issue. Allowing the prison at Florence to open would set a precedent and would drag the entire prison system down to even greater inhumanity. We must stop the BOP from opening Florence.

Those generating the activities at each site should raise the issue of Florence and whatever local issues are appropriate. Each location will choose the best target (local control unit prison, federal building, congressional

office, etc.) and the most appropriate activities. These could include demonstrations, press conferences, teach-ins, delegations, and video showings.

In the next issue of *Walkin' Steel*, CEML's newsletter, lists many of the plans. (Thus far there are activities planned in 17 cities.) The next issue will report on the activities and summarize the lessons learned from this campaign.

This is an historic opportunity. While much of the progressive community has collapsed in the face of Bush's New World Order, this series of activities across the country, and even internationally, will challenge the racist hysteria behind the law and order terror that is sweeping the U.S., the country where Black people are incarcerated at a rate five times more often than Black people in South Africa.

We call on all those progressive people concerned with justice and opposed to racism to join us. Please contact us to get more information or to let us know what your plans will be for that weekend. Together we can construct a harmony of opposition to the New World Order.

Contact CEML for more information at: PO Box 578172, Chicago, IL 60657 (312) 235-0070

# PAN AFRICANIST CONGRESS OF AZANIA (PAC) OBSERVER MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

## South Africa - The Last Colony in Africa

### THE RIGHT OF PEOPLES TO SELF-DETERMINATION AND ITS APPLICATION TO PEOPLE UNDER COLONIAL OR OTHER DOMINATION OR FOREIGN OCCUPATION PAC STATEMENT TO THE 48TH SESSION OF THE UN COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS GENEVA - 27TH JANUARY TO 6TH MARCH 1992 DELIVERED BY DR. S.E.M. PHEKO

UNDER AGENDA ITEM 9

211 EAST 43rd Street, Suite#504-506, New York, NY 10017  
Tel:(212)986-7378; Telex:237884; Fax:(212)682-3109

The period 1991 to 2000 has been declared "International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism" by the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 43/47 of 22 November 1988. And of course, the UN General Assembly Resolutions such as 1514,1541, 1654, 1810, 3314, 2526, 2131 and the UN Charter, Articles 1(2), 55 and 56 as well as the 1977 Geneva Protocol I, Article 1(4) support the right to self-determination for all peoples. Colonialism is a violation of jus cogens.

It is therefore, abominable that vigorous attempts are being made by some countries to remove South Africa from the list of territories to be decolonized. Many countries involved in the preservation of colonialism in South Africa are the traditional practitioners of slavery, colonialism, racism and apartheid.

It is important therefore, to restate loud and clear that South Africa is the last bastion of colonialism in Africa; notwithstanding that many have been fooled about the colonial situation in this African country. Even those who ought to know better, are mesmerized by the Eurocentric or Westocentric interpretation of international law on the South African colony.

They talk about self-determination and decolonization being applicable everywhere in the world, except in South Africa (Azania). The indigenous African people of Azania were colonized and lost their land and national sovereignty. It does not make sense to welcome the independence of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania which was lost only 50 years ago, but tena-

ciously oppose the right of the dispossessed African people of South Africa (Azania) to self-determination. The colonization of this African country is much longer than that of the European countries of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

There was no country called "South Africa" before the 20th September 1909 but four British colonies of Natal, Cape, Transvaal and Orange Colony. In the so-called South Africa, the colonialists tried not only to mutilate and fake the history of Azania (South Africa); they also manipulated international law. South Africa is the only British Colony in Africa that has not been decolonized. Colonialism remains entrenched in South Africa with its off-shoot apartheid and racist minority alien rule being the symptom of the colonial disease.

Through the South Africa Act of 1909, the British Government united the four colonies of Cape, Natal, Transvaal and Orange River Colony. Some colonial lawyers and those influenced by the imperialist interpretation of international law have suggested that this statute decolonized the African country. But facts are too plain to succumb to this conundrum. Firstly, the very colonial statute that created "South Africa" was racist and colonialist. Section 44 of the South Africa Act 1909 stipulates the qualification of people to be elected members of the South Africa minority settler parliament as those who ...

"(b) have resided for five years within the limits of the Union as existing at the time when he is elected;

(c) be a British subject of European descent.”<sup>1</sup>

This clearly provided for the exclusion of the Africans even though they have been in their country not for five years, but for earlier than 200 B.C. and are not British subjects “of European descent”. It must also be noted that during the debate on the South Africa Bill 1909, the Prime Minister of the time said, “It is not the English way to rule whites as subject people.”<sup>2</sup>

The implication was that it is the English way to rule Black people or Africans as subjugated people as the case is in South Africa today.

It must also be observed that according to Article 35 of the South Africa Act the limited right of Africans to vote in two of the British Colonies of Natal and Cape which were part of the four colonies which make “South Africa” provided for the abolition of the vote for the Africans if two thirds of the majority of the settler members of the colonial parliament in South Africa so wished.<sup>3</sup>

The European settlers did not hesitate to abolish this fundamental human right in 1936. This left over 76% indigenous Africans, the owners of the land voteless.

There are also clear reasons why “South Africa” was created to be a perpetual colony. Constitutional lawyers Gilbert Dold and C.P. Joubert have explained why the four British Colonies in South Africa were united under settler minority European rule, instead of decolonizing the overwhelming indigenous Africans that had been colonized. They write:

“Long before the Union (of the four British Colonies in Azania) was brought about, many recognized that the colour question in all its aspects had to be dealt with, not piecemeal ... by separate governments, but as one complex whole ... there was always the danger of natives rising ... the white population if united under one government would be strong enough to deal with the danger of that kind ...”<sup>4</sup>

Colonial historians Fowler and Smith also give the reason for the creation of colonial South Africa. They observe;

“The Transvaal was concerned with the Bapedi and Swazis, Natal with ... Zulus

... and the Orange Free State with the Basuto. The Cape with the warlike Xhosa tribes ... unified control of native tribes in South Africa would minimize the danger of costly Native Wars and maintain peaceful conditions for whites”.<sup>5</sup>

Of course, another reason why Britain decided not to decolonize the African country was the discovery of diamonds in 1867 followed by that of gold in 1886.

Sir George Grey, a British Colonial Governor in the Cape, when recommending the Union of the British Colonies in South Africa said;

 “I believe that nothing but a strong Federal Government which unites within itself all the European races in South Africa can permanently maintain peace in this country, and free Great Britain from constant anxiety for the peace of her possessions here.”<sup>6</sup>

This is not a language of decolonization. Some colonial lawyers have argued that because South Africa became a member of the League of Nations in 1919 and of the United Nations on 7th November 1945, it must be considered an “independent sovereign state”.

The learned friends conveniently ignore the fact that:

(a) according to Article I Paragraph 2 of the Covenant of the League of Nations certain colonies could become members of the League of Nations. The Article reads: Any self-governing state ... or colony not named in the Annex may become a member of the League of Nations if its admission is agreed to by two thirds of the assembly ....<sup>7</sup>

Another point which the learned friends who apologize for the fraudulent “independence” of South Africa, conveniently ignore is the fact that India was a member of both the League of Nations and of the United Nations before she became a sovereign independent state on 15 August 1947- as a result of her decolonization by Britain.

The Philippines then an American Colony was a

member of the United Nations before she became independent on 4th July, 1946, having deposited its ratification on the 11th October 1945.<sup>8</sup>

South Africa's membership of the League of Nations in 1919 and that of the United Nations on 7th November 1945 did not make this colony an "independent state". Membership of these ... organizations as can be observed from membership of India and of the Philippines was not a process of decolonization.

The respectable academic Professor Oliver O.J. Lissitzyn of Columbia University says "... a colony though not a state might have the capacity to have international obligations".<sup>9</sup>

South Africa is an example of a monumental manipulation of international law by a colonial power. South Africa is a gigantic colonial fraud of the 20th century. It also demonstrates the degree of racism, kith and kin politics and economic interests of those who perpetuate the lie that the Africans in South Africa should fight only against apartheid, not for their right to self-determination and independence.

In 1909 when the four British Colonies were united there were over 5,000,000 Africans in Azania - now called "South Africa". But the union of the four colonies was enacted for European settlers. The population of the settlers was as follows:

Cape Colony	167,546
Natal	34,746
Transvaal	106,493
Orange River Colony	41,014
Total	349,799.10

In the minority racist colonialist parliament in South Africa the settlers were represented as follows:

Cape Colony	51 members of parliament
Natal	17 members of parliament
Transvaal Orange	36 members of parliament
River Colony	17 members of parliament 11

The indigenous Africa population was over 5,000,000. They were ignored by the colonial power and the colonial settlers. They remained helpless spectators as their national tragedy unfolded before them and has lasted to this minute despite the euphoria about the "dying" apartheid - the manifestation of racist colonialism.

#### "THIS SHALL BE THE WHITEMAN'S COUNTRY"

As soon as the settlers were granted power by Britain in this African country, Azania - they confirmed the worst fears of the African people. They embarked upon turning the African country into a "whiteman's country". The Hansards of 1910 and 1911 for both Houses of the South African colonial parliament prove this conclusively.

On 30th November 1910, Colonel Sir A. Wooll-Sampson, M.P. Braamfontein, told the Colonial House of Assembly in Cape Town that the white voters and those they had elected were determined to make South Africa a whiteman's country. He hoped that a vote would be taken on this matter, so that the people (Europeans) should be able to see who were prepared to make South Africa a whiteman's country .... The time had come when honorable members had to carry out their promises to the electors and assure South Africa that they were all in earnest when they said, "This shall be a whiteman's country".<sup>12</sup>

Of course, today, there is a carefully orchestrated campaign of deception by certain quarters that there is change in South Africa warranting not only the lifting of sanctions and other pressures against the racist colonialist regime of South Africa, but "that the independence of Namibia has rendered irrelevant the consideration of apartheid in the framework of decolonization."<sup>13</sup>

This is the most demonic colonial thinking of the 20th century. It is devoid of truth and is nakedly demonstrating that the so-called "New World Order" intends to perpetuate white racist colonialist rule in South Africa in a new complexion.

In South Africa there is no fundamental change on the issue of racist colonial rule. Africans are still under alien rule. The change in South Africa is one of tactics, and not of heart to do justice to the colonized Africans. Statements made by prominent leaders of the apartheid regime make this clear. Mr. Roelf F. "Pik" Botha, Pretoria's Foreign Minister has told the Europeans in South Africa:

"The man who washes your car, sooner or later wants to own a car. The man who polishes the rugby ball wants to play rugby sooner or later. These are the elementary facts we brought ourselves to accept ... we are not handing over power, we are improving ... the whiteman's security."<sup>14</sup>

Addressing the recent Congress of his party in Bloemfontein in September 1991, Mr. F.W. de Klerk said, "The National Party has never been asked for a mandate to hand over power to ... anybody ... we are certainly not prepared to exchange one form of domination for another."

Of course, Mr. de Klerk was repeating what he told the minority parliament on 17 April 1990 and to which he is accountable. He did not mince his words. The so-called Constitutional Proposals for Participatory Democracy do not contradict anything he has said. Mr. de Klerk has said, "... there are really only three alternatives with which to replace the existing constitutional model ... they are partition, simplistic majority rule on the basis of one man one vote, or power sharing. Majority rule tends to naturally impose unity at the expense of diversity. We believe that majority rule is not suitable for a country like South Africa ... those who enjoy full political rights at present are not prepared to bow out apologetically from the stage of history ... We shall not throw the freedom and values that have been built over three and half centuries aboard." <sup>15</sup>

## COLONIAL ATTITUDE

This does not differ from the statements by past European members of the minority colonialist parliament in South Africa that they intend to make this African country a European country. It must be noted that the "freedom and values" built over three and half centuries are those of colonialism and apartheid. The 1973 United Nations Convention of the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid has declared this odious system of dehumanization and social degradation as a crime against humanity. This crime is akin to genocide and is on par with war crimes.

Anyway, South Africa is the last bastion of colonialism in Africa. This colony was fraudulently smuggled into the League of Nations and the United Nations on the basis of racism, economic and other interests.

As Professor I.I. Lukashuk of Kiev University in Ukraine correctly puts it,

"Colonial powers did not always abide by international law. Colonial powers tried increase their influence during the drafting and implementation of multi-lateral treaties. The colonial powers re-

quired for themselves extra votes not only for their utterly arbitrary amalgamation on behalf of which they acted for their selfish interests..." <sup>16</sup>

It is perhaps important to point out that the Pan Africanist

Congress of Azania (PAC) which is fighting for self-determination in South Africa queried the credentials of the South African regime to represent the colonized and dispossessed people of Azania at the United Nations. This query by the P.A.C. led to the expulsion of South Africa from the United Nations General Assembly.

Writing about this, Dr. Tom Lodge of the Witwatersrand University in South Africa states:

"In November 1974 PAC lobbyists succeeded in obtaining the expulsion of South Africa from the United Nations General Assembly and in July 1975 the O.A.U. Meeting adopted as official policy a long document prepared by the PAC arguing the case for the illegality of South Africa's international status". <sup>17</sup>

The following table gives a list of some British Colonies which were decolonized:

<u>FORMER BRITISH COLONIES</u>	<u>DATE OF INDEPENDENCE</u>		
India	15th August	1947	
Ghana (Gold Coast)	6th March	1957	
Nigeria	18th October	1960	
Sierra Leone	19th April	1961	
Tanzania (Tanganyika)	9th December	1961	
Uganda	9th October	1962	
Kenya	12th December	1963	
Malawi (Nyasaland)	6th July	1964	
Zambia (Northern Rhodesia)	30th September	1966	
Lesotho (Basutoland)	4th October	1966	
Mauritius	12th March	1968	
Swaziland	6th September	1968	
Fiji	4th October	1970	
Seychelles	5th October	1976	
Zimbabwe	18th June	1980	
Southern Rhodesia			
South Africa (Azania)	?	?	?

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South Africa is missing from the list of British Colonies that were decolonized. It is the only British colony in Africa which was never decolonized. The only time South Africa will be an independent and sovereign state in international law shall be when the vast dispossessed indigenous African majority whose country was colonized, regain control of their inalienable right to self-determination. The colonized people of Azania agree with the representative of India to the United Nations, Mr. Jha. At the 987th Meeting of the UN Security Council in 1961 over the Indian territory of Goa which Portugal claimed as its colony, he said:

"We accept many tenets of international law. They are certainly regulating international life today. But the tenet which says and which is quoted in support of colonial powers having sovereign rights over territo-

## End Apartheid



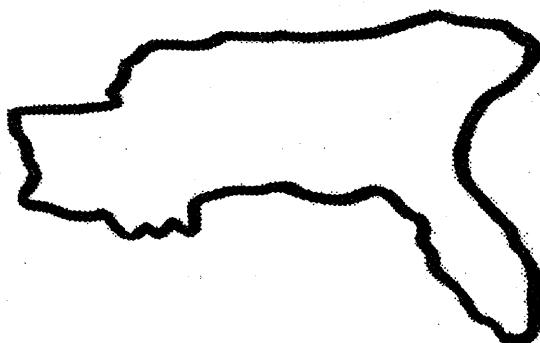
ries which they won by conquest in Asia and Africa is no longer acceptable. It is the European concept ... it is time in the twentieth century that it died."<sup>19</sup>

The African people in South Africa have the right to self-determination. They demand decolonization of their country now. Not the white washing of the crime of apartheid and the double standard condoning colonialism and racism in this African country-Azania-colonially called "South Africa" since 20th September 1909 by colonialists.

#### NOTES

1. South Africa Act 1909 Section 44
2. South Africa Bill 1909 Debate
3. South Africa Act Section 35
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5. Fowler and Smith, *History for Senior Certificate and Matriculation*, page 428
6. Gilbert Dold and J.C. Joubert, op cit. page 43
7. Covenant of the League of Nations Article I(2)
- S.E.M. Pheko, *South Africa Betrayal of a Colonized People - Issues of International Human Rights Law* Page 32 ISAL. London 1990
8. S.E.M. Pheko, op. cit. page 32
9. Oliver J. Lissitzyn, *Colonies and Other Possessions*, HRV Vol. 125, Page 66
10. South Africa Act 1909 Article 34
11. Ibid Article 33
12. Union of South Africa House of Assembly Debates First Session, First Parliament
13. Representative of the Netherlands to the 4th Committee at the UN Headquarters November 1991
14. Supplement Irish Times, May 1990
15. F.W. De Klerk statement to the minority colonialist parliament of South Africa 17 April 1990
16. I.I. Lukashuk, HRC Vol. 135, 1972 page 237
17. Tom Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945* page 134, Raven Press, Johannesburg 1982
18. S.E.M. Pheko, op. cit. page 29
19. Mr. Jha, Representative of India at 98th Meeting Security Council 17th to 18th December 1961.

Spear & Shield actively supports the campaign to observe 500 Years of Resistance. We will cover this campaign more extensively in future issues of **CROSSROADS**.



**FREE  
THE LAND!**

# 500 Years of Resistance

## 1492-1992

*The Quincentennial celebration of Columbus' "discovery" of the Americas marks an important time in our history—a turning point. It is time to dispel the lingering myths and shatter the legacy of Columbus that still exists today.*

*Indigenous peoples and other peoples of color throughout the Americas suffer still from the pervasive notions of manifest destiny, ownership of land and greed. It is those same peoples who resist and fight those notions today, just as they have fought for the last 500 years.*

*On October 12, 1992, the eyes of the world will be on the Americas, particularly the U.S. Many will celebrate the 500th anniversary of this "discovery". Most of the world, however, will remember the last 500 years as a fight against genocide, racism, colonialism and political internment.*

*All across the U.S. and the world, people are resisting the governments call for a celebration and are remembering this year to be a year of International Solidarity with Indigenous People. As well as a year to fight for self-determination of oppressed nationalities within U.S. borders and to demand the release of all Political Prisoners and Prisoners of War.*

### The National Freedom Now Networks have 5 Basic Points of Unity:

1. Recognition of the sovereign rights of the Indigenous Peoples in the Americas;
  - a.) Recognition of the transnational character and struggles of the Indigenous Peoples in the Americas that transcend artificial geo-political boundaries;
  - b) Recognition of the League of Indigenous Sovereign Indian nations and the International Indian Treaty Council to assume its rightful seat in the UN General Assembly and other appropriate UN bodies.
2. Abolition and dismemberment of the US federal state and all other white supremacist empires and states in the Americas;
  - a) Recognition of the New Afrikan nation and its struggles to establish an independent New Afrikan State;
  - b) Recognition of Northern Mexico as a legitimate part of the Mexican nation and support of the struggle for the liberation and socialist reunification of Mexico;
  - c) Support for the independence of Puerto Rico;
  - d) Consultation and discussion between the Indigenous Peoples' and the oppressed nations within the US colonial empire toward developing treaties which support and guarantee self-determination and independence for all oppressed nations in the US.
3. Development of a democratic, socialist confederation of all liberated nations in the US.
4. Freedom for All Political Prisoners & Prisoners of War in North America.
5. Support of all freedom-loving and justice minded people for the above.

# Freedom Now National Networks

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