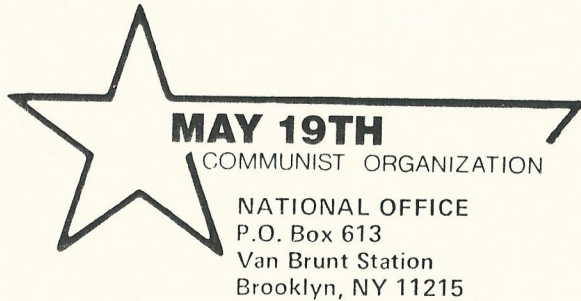
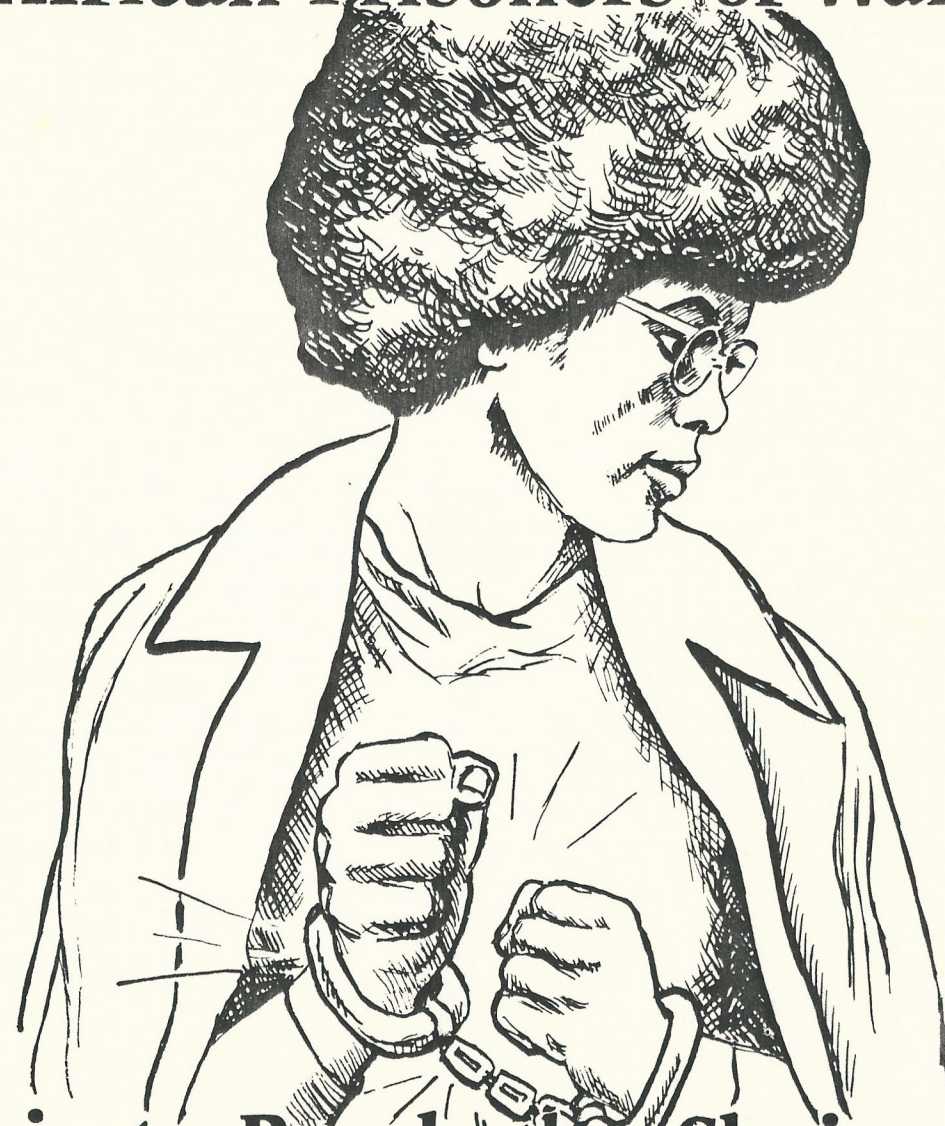


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To Free Assata Shakur and all African Prisoners of War



cover by Madame Binh Graphics Collective

is to Break the Chains of U.S. Imperialism



4-color original silkscreen poster, designed and printed by the Madame Binh Graphics Collective. Pictures imprisoned Black revolutionaries Assata Shakur and Sundiata Acoli as part of the historical stream of Black freedom fighters, from Toussaint L'Ouverture to Malcolm X, on the red, black and green field of the Black national flag.

These beautiful posters are \$5.00 each. All funds raised from the sale of posters, except those needed to cover production costs, go to the defense of Assata Shakur and other Afrikan prisoners of war.

Make checks payable to the Madame Binh Graphics Collective, P.O. Box 343, Times Plaza Station, Brooklyn, NY 11217.

WHO IS ASSATA SHAKUR

Assata Shakur (slave name Joanne Chesimard) is an imprisoned Black revolutionary, now serving a life sentence following her capture in 1973 and legal lynching in the U.S. courts.

Assata Shakur is a prisoner of war; a prisoner in the war raging between U.S. imperialism and the struggle of the colonized Black nation for self-determination and independence. By her own description, Assata is:

"... a Black revolutionary, and, as such, I am the victim of all the wrath, hatred and slander that amerikkka is capable of. Like all other Black revolutionaries, I have been hunted like a dog, and like all other Black revolutionaries, amerikkka is trying to lynch me.

"I am a Black revolutionary woman and because of this I have been charged with and accused of every alleged crime in which a woman was believed to have participated. The alleged crimes in which only men were supposedly involved, I have been accused of planning. They have plastered pictures alleged to be me in post offices, airports, hotels, police cars, subways, banks, televisions and newspapers. They have offered over fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) in rewards for my capture and they have issued orders to shoot on sight to kill."

When she was captured on the New Jersey Turnpike in May of 1973, Assata was a hunted fugitive, accused of committing dozens of criminal acts. "Shoot on sight" orders were in the minds of the state troopers who stopped the car carrying her and two comrades, Zayd Malik Shakur and Sundiata Acoli, and then shot and killed Zayd Shakur while seriously wounding Assata. Assata and Sundiata Acoli were convicted of murdering Zayd Shakur and a state trooper who was killed in the incident. In the five years since her capture Assata has faced six different criminal indictments in Manhattan, Brooklyn and Queens in addition to the murder charges stemming from the Turnpike Incident. In all of these six cases, she has either been acquitted or had the charges dismissed. Even her murder conviction is solely based on her presence at the shoot-out. The New Jersey statute on felony murder allows a jury to convict solely based on one's presence at the scene of a confrontation that results in the death of a person. This statute was used to railroad Assata Shakur, since the government *never proved* that she committed a violent act.

Why then were Assata, Sundiata, Zayd and other Black revolutionaries the targets of this intense hunt; why has Assata spent over two years of her imprisonment in solitary confinement in men's prisons; and why was she transferred to a new max-

imum security penitentiary for women in Alderson, West Virginia?

To answer these questions, we must understand that Assata Shakur, as a leader in Black people's struggle for freedom and independence, poses a grave threat to this system—to U.S. imperialism. To understand the attacks against Assata Shakur, we must understand that for 400 years the U.S. government has waged war against the people of the Black nation and their struggle against exploitation, genocide and white domination.

U.S. IMPERIALISM AND THE BLACK NATION

Colonial oppression is the forcible appropriation of a people's land, and the destruction and distortion of their institutions in order to exploit their nation's human and natural wealth to serve the economic and political needs of the colonizer. This is what characterizes the oppression of Black people within the U.S.

Africans of diverse nations and tribes were kidnapped from their societies by white European slave traders beginning in the 1500's to be forced into chattel slavery. The territories they were brought to, the so-called "New World", were inhabited by sovereign nations of indigenous peoples. White Europeans moved in, waging genocidal wars against the Native American nations, beginning a bloody history of signing treaties with their governments and then, ignoring those same treaties, trampling on their sovereignty. The Native Americans waged a fierce struggle against these acts and continue to resist to this day. The Europeans stole the land of these nations, appropriated the wealth and skills of these societies, then attacked their social and political institutions—in fact, their whole culture and way of life. Upon this stolen land the Europeans established an economy based on African slavery.

The wealth of the U.S. empire was built on stolen Indian land and resources and on the slave trade. It was wrung from forced African labor. Stolen land and slavery laid the basis for the U.S. to become a full-fledged imperialist power. Similarly, the empires of Western Europe were built on enormous profits generated by the slave trade and the subsequent plunder of the African continent, Latin America and Asia. It was the superexploited labor of Black people that was the backbone of U.S. capitalism. Black people were systematically denied the fruits of their labor and as chattel they were degraded as tools, as beasts of burden for the white slavocracy and white people as a whole.

The enormous super-profits extracted from Black people's labor provided the basis for material advantages for all white people; not just a higher standard of living but the privilege of survival itself, the chance to own land, to rise to a higher class and to participate in the



political processes of white democracy. The freedom of white people was defined by the enslavement of Black people. And because of the material reality of this white skin privilege, white people have been all too ready to defend the interests of the empire, becoming active agents in the genocide of Black and other Third World peoples. The U.S. that had been a colony of England was in reality a white settler nation, colonizing both the Native Americans and millions of Africans brought here as slaves. White people of all classes were in the front-line of defense of this settler nation, not only as slaveowners, but as slave-catchers, overseers, pioneer families and cowboys.

A new nation of African peoples inside the borders of the U.S. was forged as a result of this oppression and the historic resistance to it. In the Civil War, Black people won their centuries' old war to defeat chattel slavery, and the existence of the Black Nation became a distinct reality. As white people fled the plantations, Black people fought to claim the land where they and their ancestors had lived and worked for centuries, under the yoke of white domination. During Reconstruction, Black people engaged in a massive struggle for democracy—for land, universal suffrage, political representation, public education and women's rights. The defeat of Reconstruction marked a turning point in the U.S. empire's efforts to re-enslave Black

people. The mass demand of Reconstruction, for 40 acres and a mule, was never fulfilled. The entire nation of Black people was re-subjugated as "second-class citizens", legally and physically segregated as a result of the system of "Jim Crow", forced into semi-slavery as sharecroppers, tenant farmers and domestic servants. They were threatened with penal servitude and organized white supremacist terror—mass rapes, lynchings and burnings. This reign of terror was enforced by the Ku Klux Klan under the leadership of northern finance capital and a white southern bourgeoisie that had reconsolidated during Reconstruction.

After the Civil War, the continued ability of the U.S. to extract wealth from its internal colonies enabled the U.S. to expand, invade and colonize other nations of peoples (Mexico, Puerto Rico, the Philippines, Native Americans west of the Mississippi). The consolidation of the U.S. into a full-fledged imperialist system meant that all white people, even poor immigrants from Europe, were integrated into the social and political fabric of the "land of opportunity", the system of white supremacy. A significant number of poor and working class whites were able to rise right out of their class, based on the colonization of Third World nations.

The demands of U.S. capital crystallized into an effort to disperse the Black nation, beginning in the early 1900's, with the forced migration of millions of Black people off the land and into the urban areas of the North. But the fact of *nationhood* did not disappear. Rather, it meant that there was a colonized Black nation whose citizens were clustered in Black communities in the North—urban ghettos—as well as continuing to live and work on the subjugated territory in the South.

The demand of Black people for freedom has always been a demand, not for the individual, but for the nation—for the whole of African people in the U.S. This was true for the early slave rebellions with their eye on the successful revolution of Black people in Haiti; of the early struggles for an independent Black republic; of the movement around the time of World War I led by Marcus Garvey, which tied the struggle of Black people in the U.S. to their African homeland and the Caribbean; of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and the Revolutionary Action Movement who in the Sixties fought for the right of self determination of Black people, organized in the schools and the communities for the right of self-defense and against Black people's participation in the Vietnam War; of the Black Panther Party as an organized form to struggle for the democratic rights of Black people and for the right to armed self-defense; and for Malcolm X who placed the struggle of African people in the U.S. squarely in the midst of the world-wide struggle of

colonized people against U.S. imperialism. The declaration of independence of the Republic of New Africa, the naming of the nation, the election of the provisional government and the claiming of national territory (the states of Mississippi, Louisiana, Alabama, Georgia and South Carolina) in 1968 and the struggle to liberate that territory in the Kush District of Mississippi in 1971 marked the beginning of a new stage in this historic struggle. Throughout the U.S., and in the historic homeland of the South, revolutionary nationalists are carrying into practice a 500-year old struggle, summed up in the teachings of Malcolm X—that all revolutions are based on land—and that land is the basis of independent nationhood.

COINTELPRO: A WAR TERM

In the late 1960's and the early 1970's, the U.S. government was faced with a war on two fronts. In Indochina the Vietnamese, Laotians and Kampuchians won decisive victories against U.S. imperialism; inside the U.S., movements for national liberation—for land, independence and sovereignty—were growing and consolidating out of the struggles of the Black, Native American, Puerto Rican and Mexicano/Chicano peoples. The civil rights movement developed into a massive, militant movement for Black power and liberation.

A major part of the U.S. strategy to combat the war domestically was COINTELPRO, an FBI-directed counter-insurgency program aimed at destroying the movements for national liberation inside the U.S. borders. COINTELPRO is a war strategy. The entire mass movement of Black people, their families and communities came under attack by COINTELPRO, with the leadership particularly targeted for police assaults, assassinations and imprisonment. These criminal attacks were combined with media campaigns, special briefing sessions by the FBI for local police departments, inter-agency memos making baseless allegations, all designed to falsely portray the victims of these attacks as vicious criminals, in order to discredit revolutionary Black leadership in the eyes of the Black community and to create a climate of fear to justify an ever greater campaign of government terror. This campaign of organized terror on the part of the United States government has also been carried out against the Puerto Rican independence struggle, the Native American struggle for sovereignty and Chicano/Mexicano movement. All these struggles bore the brunt of military, political and economic covert attacks on the part of United States government agencies such as the F.B.I. and C.I.A.

The true nature of the COINTELPRO program and the fact that it continues to this day have been hidden from public view in a massive cover-up perpetrated by the very same government agencies and of-

officials who were responsible for this program's criminal activities to begin with. The indictments of John J. Kearney, former head of Squad 47 (the department in the New York FBI office responsible for the day-to-day attacks on the Black liberation struggle and its supporters in NYC) and more recently of Patrick Gray, former FBI chief, W. Mark Felt and Edward S. Miller only further confirm the conspiracy that is documented in volumes of evidence produced by Senate investigations, hundreds of newspaper articles, several grand jury investigations and numerous civil suits. What the government will not admit is that COINTELPRO is not a simple breach of civil liberties, carried out by a few corrupt officials, but a program that continues to exist today as an essential weapon in imperialism's arsenal to destroy Third World movements.

Assata Shakur's transfer to Alderson, West Virginia is an example of continuing COINTELPRO attacks on her, since it is based solely on FBI reports calling her a "known revolutionary" and not on her actions inside prison. It is also clearly designed to further the cover-up by preventing Assata's direct participation in the legal battles to prove massive government misconduct in her case. Only recently has the FBI been forced to admit the existence of seven volumes of files on Assata Shakur, evidence which has consistently been denied her and the court in all of her trials.

The "international war against terrorism" and the vicious media campaign accompanying it mark a renewed wave of imperialist counter-insurgency against the national liberation struggles. The recent police attack on former Attica brothers, Dalou (Mariano Gonzalez) and Jomo (Eric Thompson), in which Dalou was murdered and Jomo wounded and charged with the murders of Dalou and two policemen, are part of the domestic front of this counter-insurgency campaign. COINTELPRO continues because the movements for the liberation of Black people and other Third World people continue and are entering a heightened period of struggle.

THE ROLE OF PRISONS

Since her capture in 1973, Assata Shakur has been subjected to brutal and arbitrary treatment inside federal and state prisons. After her conviction in New Brunswick, she was first held in solitary confinement in an all-male prison in New Jersey. Then in March 1978, Assata was sent to the U.S. Women's Penitentiary at Alderson, West Virginia, a maxi-maxi unit created by the Federal Bureau of Prisons to isolate and contain Third World prisoners of war and other political prisoners. She was kept there for close to a year, isolated from the rest of the prison population, the vast majority of whom are Third

World, including other POWs such as the Puerto Rican Nationalist, Lolita Lebron. In Davis Hall however, Assata was one of the only Third World women and her life was constantly in danger from white women prisoners who were members of the Manson gang or sympathetic to the American Nazi Party. In January 1979, the Maximum Security Unit in Davis Hall was closed down by the Bureau of Prisons as a result of pressure from inside and out. Rather than being put in general population, Assata was again arbitrarily transferred to a maximum security section of a New Jersey prison. (For more information about the current situation see p.20.)

The treatment that Assata has received exposes that the network of federal, state, county prisons and local jails in reality constitutes a nation-wide repressive apparatus for U.S. imperialism. Prisons have always been a tool of control for the ruling class to maintain its power; in the United States prisons have become part of the machinery that enforces and perpetuates national oppression.



Funeral of Attica brother L.D. Barkley in Rochester, N.Y.

Since the rise of the national liberation struggles in the late fifties the prison population has drastically changed; it is now overwhelmingly Black and Third World people. In the words of a spokesperson

"Many Black prisoners today began their sentences in the days of civil rights era or the days of the Black Panther Party. In other words, there is a great relationship between the influx of Black prisoners and the rise of Black resistance. This is not because Black resistance flushed out Black criminals. It is because, the state, federal and local government agencies have been much more expedient to label Black resistance as criminal, jail them and thereby isolate them from their families, their friends and their community support."

But Black revolutionaries continue to organize inside the prisons. In the struggle against the brutal conditions that exist, a new front in the struggle for national liberation has been initiated. Third World prisoners have risen by the thousands at Soledad, San Quentin, Attica, Raleigh, Atmore-Holman, MacAlister, Napanoch and in prisons all over the country. Strikes, work stoppages and propaganda have been used to expose the near slavery conditions that prisoners face, the racism of the institutions and to educate communities on the outside to the reality that conditions inside are the most brutal expression of the colonial condition of Black people in the United States.

THE BLACK LIBERATION ARMY

In the words of Assata Shakur:

"There is and always will be, until every Black man, woman, and child is free, a Black Liberation Army...We must defend ourselves and let no one disrespect us. We must gain liberation by any means necessary."

The development of an armed front of the Black liberation struggle grows out of a heritage of 400 years of armed African resistance to colonial rule in this country; the heritage of Denmark Vesey, Nat Turner, the African Blood Brotherhood and the Deacons for Defense. In the early seventies, this heritage was continued—as an outgrowth of the mass movement of Black people, in response to the heightened government repression of that movement, and as an argument in practice for the necessity of armed struggle to achieve the liberation of the Black nation. It is politically expressed in most recent history by what came to be known as the Black Liberation Army.

Clearly it is Assata's politics and not any so-called "criminal" acts which make her the threat to the U.S. government that she is taken to be. Assata Shakur carries on centuries of Black people's refusal to accept slavery in any form and represents the re-emergence in our day of self-conscious revolutionary nationalist leadership of the struggle of Black people.

THE HERITAGE OF BLACK WOMEN'S RESISTANCE

Assata Shakur continues the long and militant history of Black women who have played a leading role in the struggle for Black liberation. This history, and the entire history of African resistance has been distorted and whitewashed by U.S. imperialism. But Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth and Assata Shakur are not exceptions.

Black women from the beginning of slavery were in the forefront of slave revolts, armed attacks and sabotage against white slave owners. They were central in the creation and defense of maroon communities which were made up of fugitive slaves and functioned as a rearguard in the struggle against slavery. Black women have led the struggles against rape and lynching as two sides of white colonial terror aimed at Black people as a whole. They have led in the struggle for quality education, against forced sterilization, for basic human rights and have always participated in armed resistance. Black women have been crucial in passing on the culture of resistance of African people to their children, and have waged an unrelenting battle for the survival of the Black family under the most adverse conditions.

Today, we see this tradition continued by the struggles of Black women like Joan Little and Dessie Woods, imprisoned because of their resistance to colonial violence and genocide. We see it in the women at Bedford Hills prison in New York who are carrying on a campaign against brutal prison conditions, inhumane medical treatment and continuing assaults on their dignity and privacy through the use of male guards.

Everywhere, Black women are fighting the brutal attacks of forced sterilization, rape, racist schools that destroy their children's minds, the drug plague that festers in their communities, police who terrorize their people. They join the women of Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) and Azania (South Africa) in leading the revolutionary struggle for women's liberation worldwide, as they struggle with their whole people for national independence and freedom, and against the genocidal violence of U.S. imperialism.

THE ROLE OF WHITE SUPREMACY

At every point the just and necessary struggle of Black people for their liberation has exposed the true nature of U.S. imperialism. The colonial oppression of Black people and their fight for human rights contradict the myth that the U.S. is a democratic society, with "liberty and justice for all." The genocidal conditions under which Black people live are the most graphic proof that those who produce the wealth do not benefit from it. The historical and daily terrorizing of Black communities exposes the violence which is essential for the



maintenance of the system.

The Black liberation struggle has had a tremendous impact on white people, both by exposing and heightening the contradictions inherent in the capitalist/imperialist system and by providing self-conscious leadership to all the progressive movements in this country—for example, the white abolitionist movement and the first women's movement in this country arose out of the Black abolitionist movement; the white student movement and the women's liberation movement of the 1960's arose out of the Black student movement and the Vietnamese-led anti-war movement. However, even these progressive movements, by and large, did not recognize the fundamental issues raised by the Black liberation struggle or accept the leadership of Black people. Rather, they looked for reforms and answers within the system to resolve the contradictions which had been exposed.

Mass movements of white people have also arisen in response to heightened contradictions, directly in opposition to Black people. The Populist movement after the Civil War, based in the white working class, supported the development of U.S. imperialism through westward expansion which meant waging war and stealing Native American and Mexican land as the solution to the problems of poor white people. This was posed instead of supporting Black people's fight for breaking up the Southern planter class by land re-distribution and democratization of the political system. Similarly, the women's suffrage movement, rejecting outright the earlier women's rights movement which had been tied to the anti-slavery movement, explicitly fought for the legal rights of white women based on the denial of those same rights for Black people—at a time when Black people were being raped, mutilated and lynched on a daily basis without the slightest protection of the law.

White supremacy has been U.S. imperialism's greatest weapon. Not only has it provided the imperialist ruling class with an ever-willing army to oppose the struggles of Black people and other colonized people, but it has also provided the material basis for blunting the contradictions that exist among different classes and sectors of white people and for turning potentially revolutionary movements into reformist or outright reactionary ones.

But today, U.S. imperialism is facing an international crisis, and imperialism as a world-wide system is on the decline. Oppressed Third World nations are wresting control of their lands, and national destinies from the grip of colonialism and imperialism. Victorious wars for national liberation are being won in the context of social revolutions that are transforming once colonized nations into nations building socialism. Imperialism is facing the loss of markets, raw materials, land and sources of cheap labor—the stolen human and

natural wealth of the Third World—the source of its super-profits. This is accompanied by the loss of strategic military and political footholds essential to imperialism's domination of the world.

The international situation in conjunction with the consolidation of the Black movement and the growing strength of the other national liberation movements within the U.S. borders and its colony of Puerto Rico, has tremendously heightened contradictions and brought on domestic crises. As the area dominated by U.S. imperialists shrinks, they are forced to extract more and more profits from colonized people within the U.S. For example, the Bakke decision overturned the long-fought for policy of affirmative action which was primarily aimed at raising the living standard of Third World people. It is a clear example of the participation of the government, the courts and the masses of white people in heightening the oppression of Third World people here to make up for imperialist's losses abroad.

The choices for white people have become very stark—there is no “middle ground” in which white working class people can fight to protect their own without actively fighting against the just demands of Third World people.

THE ROLE OF THE WHITE LEFT

For years, the white left has undermined and attacked the Black liberation movement in the name of defending the white working class or “grass roots” movements. Whether this consisted of calling revolutionary Black nationalists “dangerous extremists” or withholding vital resources from Black organizations that wouldn't bow to white demands and white leadership, the effect has been the same. More often than not, the white left has been an ally of the government in repressing the Black movement. Exposure of the COINTELPRO program has revealed how the FBI and Justice Dept. self-consciously employed the strategy of using the white left to attack Black organizations and leaders. Part of the choice which confronts progressive white people today is whether to continue being allies of the government or to break with this history and ally with the national liberation struggles.

This is very clear in relation to white women. The advances of the national liberation movements of the Third World have pushed forward the revolutionary struggle for women's liberation. Led by women of the Third World and of the socialist countries, this struggle defines imperialism—the criminal perpetrator of genocide against their people—as the enemy of women.

The white-dominated, reformist women's movements, with their headquarters in the U.S. and Europe, stand in stark contradiction to this. Epitomized by the “International Women's Year” Conference in Houston, Texas in 1977, and cloaked in the rhetoric of “equal

rights” and the “sisterhood of all women”, these movements are a mouthpiece for white supremacy, and only prop up the imperialist system. The politics they put forward have gained predominance among white women and lesbians, particularly since an earlier anti-imperialist sector of the women's movement was defeated by its own white supremacy and racism.

But the basis exists for a revolutionary movement for women's liberation to be built among women of the oppressor nations. Its task is clear: to learn the lessons of this history, to fight against white supremacy, and for the just demands of women, under the leadership of the national liberation struggles.

The contradictions in the world today—between the victorious national liberation struggles, and the genocidal counter-offensive of a weakened imperialism—define only *one path* for white people oppressed by this system to make a positive contribution to the revolutionary struggle. That is to build an anti-imperialist movement, in consistent opposition to white supremacy and genocide, and in solidarity with the struggles of Third World peoples for national liberation and socialism. At the heart of such a movement must be strong and active support for the struggle to free political prisoners and prisoners of war. This is why we must support Assata Shakur and other Black freedom fighters, those behind bars as well as those on the outside. Their struggle, along with the other national liberation struggles, is ushering in a new era in human history. It is an era that is about the rebuilding of nations out of the blood and ashes of centuries of colonization, oppression, genocide and war. It is an era about the building of new men and women—laying the foundation for a world free from all forms of exploitation.

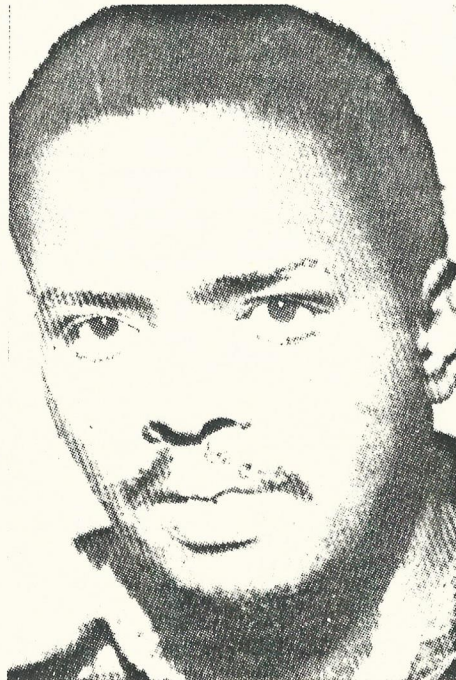
FREE ASSATA SHAKUR/FREE SUNDIATA ACOLI
FREE ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS
EXPOSE COINTELPRO
SUPPORT THE BLACK LIBERATION STRUGGLE
DEFEAT U.S. IMPERIALISM





credit: Amsterdam News

**EL HAJJ
MALIK SHABAZZ
(MALCOLM X)
1925-1965**
Slain leader of the
international rev-
olutionary
movement for
African peoples'
liberation.



**STEVEN BIKO
(1947-1977)**
Slain leader of
the Azanian (South
African) peoples'
liberation struggle

To My People

By **ASSATA SHAKUR**

Black brothers, Black sisters, I want you to know that I love you and I hope that somewhere in your heart you have love for me. My name is Assata Shakur (slave name jo anne chesimard), and I am a revolutionary. A Black revolutionary. By that I mean that I have declared war on all forces that have raped our women, castrated our men and kept our babies empty bellied.

I have declared war on the rich who prosper on our poverty. The politicians who lie to us with smiling faces and all the mindless, heartless robots who protect them and their property.

I am a Black revolutionary, and, as such, I am the victim of all the wrath, hatred and slander that amerikkka is capable of. Like all other Black revolutionaries, I have been hunted like a dog, and like all other Black revolutionaries, amerikkka is trying to lynch me.

I am a Black revolutionary woman and because of this I have been charged with and accused of every alleged crime in which a woman was believed to have participated. The alleged crimes in which only men were supposedly involved, I have been accused of planning. They have plastered pictures alleged to be me in post offices, airports, hotels, police cars, subways, banks, televisions and newspapers. They have offered over fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) in rewards for my capture and they have issued orders to shoot on sight and shoot to kill.

I am a Black revolutionary and, by definition, that makes me part of the Black Liberation Army. The pigs have used their newspapers and TVs to paint the Black Liberation Army as vicious, brutal, mad dog criminals. They have called us gangsters and gun molls, and have compared us to such characters as john dillinger and ma barker. It should be clear, it must be clear to anyone who can think, see or hear, that we are the victims. The victims and not the criminals.

It should also be clear to us by now who the real criminals are. Nixon and his crime partners have murdered hundreds of Third World brothers and sisters in Vietnam, Cambodia, Mozambique, Angola and South Africa. As was proved by the Watergate, the top law enforcement officials in this country are a lying bunch of criminals. The president, two attorney generals, the head of the fbi, the head of the cia, and half the white house staff have been implicated in the Watergate crimes.

They call us murderers, but we did not murder over 250 unarmed



Lynn Henderson/MILITANT/INS

Black men, women and children, and wound thousands of others in the riots they provoked during the sixties. The rulers of this country have always considered their property more important than our lives. They call us murderers, but we are not responsible for the 28 brother inmates and the 9 hostages murdered at attica. They call us murderers but we did not murder and wound over 30 unarmed Black students at Jackson State or Southern State either.

They call us murderers, but we did not murder Martn Luther King, Emmett Till, Medgar Evers, Malcolm X, George Jackson, Nat Turner, James Chaney and countless other Black freedom fighters. We did not bomb four (4) Black little girls in a Sunday School. We did not murder, by shooting in the back, 16-year old Rita Lloyd, 11-year old Rickie Bodden or 10-year old Clifford Glover.

They call us murderers, but we do not control or enforce a system of racism and oppression that systematically murders Black and Third World people. Although Black people supposedly comprise about 15% of the total amerikkkan population, at least 60% of murder victims are Black. For every pig that is killed in the so-called line of duty there are at least 50 black people murdered by police.

Black life expectancy is much lower than white and they do their best to kill us before we are born. We are burned alive in firetrap tenements. Our brothers and sisters O.D. daily from heroin and methadone. Our babies die from lead poisoning. Millions of Black

people have died as a result of indécant medical care. This is murder. But they have the gall to call us murderers.

They call us kidnappers, yet Brother Clark Squire (who is accused along with me of murdering a new jersey state trooper) was kidnapped on April 2, 1969, from our Black community and held on \$100,000 ransom in the New York Panther 21 conspiracy case. He was acquitted on May 13, 1971 along with all the others of all the 156 counts of conspiracy by a jury that took less than 2 hours to deliberate. Brother Squire was innocent. Yet he was kidnapped from his community and family. Over two years of his life were stolen, but they call us kidnappers. They call us kidnappers, but we did not kidnap the thousands of Brothers and Sisters held captive in amerikkka's concentration camps. 90% of the prison population in this country are Black and Third World people who can afford neither bail nor lawyers.

They call us thieves and bandits. They say we steal. But it was not us who stole millions of Black people from the continent of Africa. We were robbed of our language, of our Gods, of our culture, of our human dignity, of our labor and of our lives. They call us thieves yet it is not us who rip off billions of dollars every year through tax evasions, illegal price fixing, embezzlement, consumer fraud, bribes, kickbacks and swindles. They call us bandits, yet every time most Black people pick up our paychecks we are being robbed. Every time we walk into a store in our neighborhood we are being held up. And every time we pay our rent the landlord sticks a gun into our ribs.

They call us thieves, but we did not rob and murder millions of Indians by ripping off their homeland, then call ourselves pioneers. They call us bandits but it is not us who are robbing Africa, Asia and Latin America of their natural resources and freedom while the people are sick and starving. The rulers of this country and their flunkies have committed some of the most brutal, vicious crimes in history. They are the bandits. They are the murderers. And they should be treated as such. These maniacs are not fit to judge me, Clark Squire, or any other Black person on trial in amerikkka. Black people should, and, inevitably must, determine our destinies.

Every revolution in history has been accomplished by actions, although words are necessary. We must create shields that protect us and spears that penetrate our enemies. Black people must learn how to struggle by struggling. We must learn by our mistakes.

I want to apologize to you, my Black brothers and sisters, for being on the new jersey turnpike. I should have known better. The turnpike is a check point where Black people are stopped, searched, harassed and assaulted. Revolutionaries must never be in too much of a hurry or make careless decisions. He who runs when the sun is sleeping will stumble many times.

Every time a Black Freedom Fighter is murdered or captured the pigs try to create the impression that they have squashed the movement, destroyed our forces and put down the Black Revolution. The pigs also try to give the impression that 5 or 10 Guerrillas are responsible for every revolutionary action carried out in amerikkka. That is nonsense. That is absurd. Black revolutionaries do not drop from the moon. We are created by our conditions, shaped by our oppression. We are being manufactured in droves in ghetto streets, places like attica, san quentin, bedford hills, leavenworth and sing sing. They are turning out thousands of us. Many jobless Black veterans and welfare mothers are joining our ranks. Brothers and sisters from all walks of life who are tired of suffering passively make up the BLA.

There is and always will be, until every Black man, woman and child is free, a Black Liberation Army. The main function of the Black Liberation Army at this time is to create good examples to struggle for Black freedom and to prepare for the future. We must defend ourselves and let no one disrespect us. We must gain our liberation by any means necessary.

It is our duty to fight for freedom. It is our duty to win. We must love each other and support each other. We have nothing to lose but our chains!

In the spirit of:

Ronald Carter
William Christmas
Mark Clark
Mark Essex
Frank Heavy Fields
Woodie Changa Olugbala Green
Fred Hampton
Lil' Bobby Hutton
George Jackson
Jonathan Jackson
James McClain
Harold Russell
Zayd Malik Shakur
Anthony Kimu Olugbala White



We must fight on.

July 6, 1973

Middlesex County Workhouse

THE CURRENT SITUATION

As of the time of this printing (March, 1979), Assata Shakur is imprisoned in Clinton State Prison in New Jersey. After mounting protest, the special maximum security unit in which she had been kept at the Federal Penitentiary for Women in Alderson, West Virginia, was shut down and all the women in it except Assata transferred to general population. Assata was moved to the administrative segregation unit, where she was still kept in virtual isolation, surrounded by white women prisoners, several of whom were open Nazis.

Throughout this period Assata has legally been in the custody of the New Jersey corrections department and they have declared that they will never allow her to be treated like other prisoners. After Davis Hall was closed down, New Jersey threatened to arbitrarily transfer Assata to a maximum security prison in any state in the U.S. rather than allow her to be in general population in Alderson. Once again it was blatantly clear that Assata was being singled out and persecuted for her political beliefs as even the prison authorities have admitted that there was nothing that Assata had *done* which threatened prison security. Although she was finally transferred in February, 1979 to a prison in New Jersey (where she is also in a maximum security section), there is no guarantee that Assata will not be arbitrarily transferred again, at any moment, by the New Jersey prison authorities.

This new attack on Assata comes at the same time the appeal of her New Jersey conviction is about to be filed and when a renewed campaign in her support is being built. The appeal challenges the entire basis of her imprisonment and confirms the racist nature of her conviction. As Assata said in a recent letter to her supporters:

Reading the trial transcript and going over what transpired during the trial was a painful and infuriating experience. It was so clear on every page of the record, what a lynching, what a mockery of justice the trial was. . .

(continued...)

Current Situation (continued)

The major issues in the appeal are:

- an all white jury, selected by the judge, from a county where 70% of the people believed Assata was guilty before the trial was not a jury of her peers or one which could be fair and impartial
- the pretrial publicity and atmosphere in the courtroom was designed to create a clear impression of Assata's guilt
- the chief witness (Trooper Harper) lied on the stand
- the blatant racism of the judge prevented the defense from fully presenting its case—in particular, the judge kept key defense witnesses from testifying and documents about COINTELPRO activities were not admitted into evidence. Assata still has a suit pending against the F.B.I. for the release of these documents.
- there are serious questions raised by the mysterious death of Assata's first lawyer, Stanley Cohen; the disappearance of evidence; break-ins at attorneys' offices and general prosecutorial misconduct
- the conviction was the culmination of gross violations of Assata's human rights, including 2½ years in solitary confinement.

There needs to be clear support to prevent any further arbitrary transfers and to demand that Assata be granted her full human rights. In particular, there needs to be a large public campaign of support for the appeal. Again, as Assata said in her recent letter:

... The court does not respond to papers, but it may be forced to respond to the outraged cries of large numbers of people. My life sentence, like the life sentences of thirty million Black people, will be overturned by the only weapon we have—political action, political action on all levels. We can't wait until after the revolution for freedom to magically come to us, we've got to start taking our freedom now.

And finally, the fight to free Assata clearly requires enormous funds. Contributions are urgently needed (checks can be made payable to "Assata's Cell").

May 19th is the birthdate of Ho Chi Minh and El Hajj Malik Shabazz/Malcolm X. We commemorate them as leaders of their nations' struggles for land, independence and socialism. They continue to provide leadership in the worldwide struggle against imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism; and for the creation of a world without oppression and exploitation; a world without genocide, white supremacy and war; a world built for the benefit of humanity; a socialist world.

In our lifetime we are witnessing the culmination of thousands of years of struggle against class society. We have seen the collective strength of national liberation forever alter the balance of forces against imperialism. Revolution is the main trend in the world; and revolution is being led, ideologically and on the battlefield, by the national liberation struggles for proletarian power.

We have changed our name to the May 19th Communist Organization out of a commitment to follow that leadership. In this historic period the forces of national liberation are waging war all over the world: in Zimbabwe, victory is certain, and that victory will unlock the struggle in the whole region, towards the destruction of South Africa and the birth of free Azania, which will alter the material basis of world-wide white supremacist domination; in Iran, the glorious struggle of the masses of Iranian people has toppled the bloody dictatorship of the US-backed Shah and advanced the socialist revolution; in Puerto Rico, an armed clandestine front has emerged within the independence movement that is leading toward full people's war. Within the borders of the US, the struggles of the Black nation, the Native American nations and the Chicano/Mexicano people are building towards new levels of power and organization. It is this war of the oppressed and exploited peoples against imperialism that defines the terms, the direction and the timetable of proletarian revolution in this era.

As communists within the white oppressor nation our fundamental task is the defeat of US-led imperialism under the leadership of the national liberation struggles fighting for independence and socialism. For white people, the road to revolution and liberation is tied to our ability to organize in the working class to collectively defeat the system of white supremacy and for the right of self-determination of all oppressed nations inside the US. Any revolutionary movement of white people must be under the leadership of the national liberation struggles and must be prepared to fight alongside national liberation struggles against US-led imperialism to free the subjugated nations.