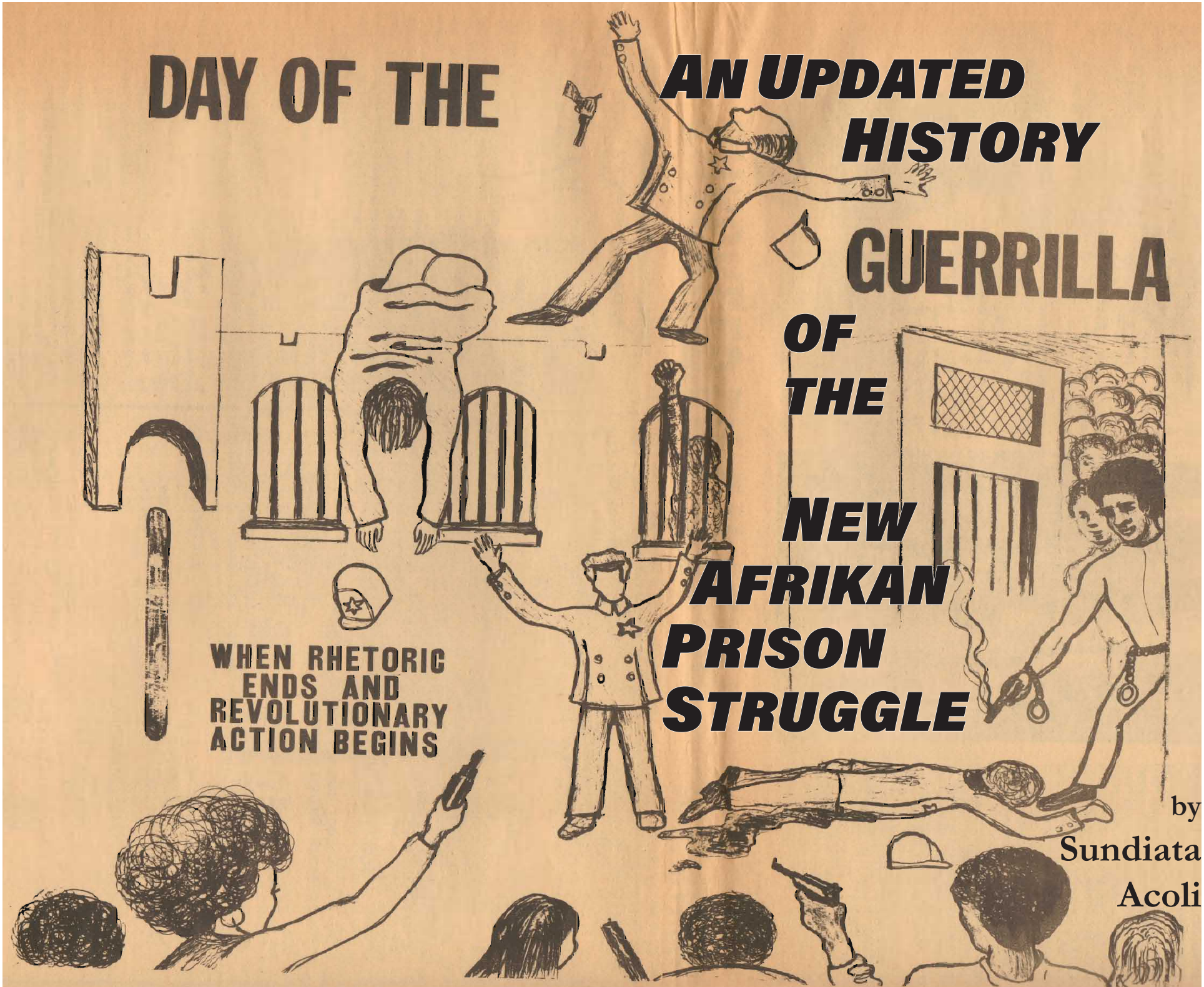
DAY OF THE GUERRILLA

An Updated History of the New Afrikan Prison Struggle



by Sundiata Acoli

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Cover image found in the early 1970s periodical "By Any Means Necessary," published by the Ruchell Magee Defense Committee

Just the best night's sleep in a long while.
Aromas of fine wines
and SCENTS of baked breads draw the masses to dine
outdoors in the street.
The Haves share freely
with the Nots now as both have equally
when they meet.
No need for snatching, grabbing
or fighting to be first.
There's enough for all now
in this wisely-shared universe.
A TASTE of honey
on earth, sweeter than the sweetest pastry,
milk, or sugar tea.
People living free,
controlling their own lives and destiny,
as it should be.
Looking back, SIGHTING
ahead to a legacy of lightings
delayed by theft.
But back on path at last,
seeking keys from the present past
to the age-old mysteries of LOVE & JOY, LIFE and DEATH.

AN UPDATED HISTORY OF THE NEW AFRIKAN PRISON STRUGGLE

Sundiata Acoli

Sundiata's preface: This article was first written at the request of the New Afrikan People's Organization (NAPO) [in the late 1980s —Ed.]. Its original title was "The Rise and Development of the New Afrikan Liberation Struggle Behind the Walls." It was first published, in 1992, as "A Brief History of the New Afrikan Prison Struggle," and then updated in 1998 to its present form. Although this work focuses almost exclusively on New Afrikan prisoners and their struggle, it is by no means intended to discount the many long heroic prison struggles and sacrifices by all other nationalities—the Puerto Ricans, Native Americans, Mexicans, whites, Asians, and others. Raphael Cancel Miranda, who led the work stoppage of the United States Penitentiary in Marion, Illinois, in 1972 in response to the beating of a Mexican prisoner, has been one of my heroes and role models since I first became aware of him long ago. The same can be said of Lolita Lebrón, with whom Assata Shakur did time at the Alderson Women's Penitentiary—and of numerous other prisoners of different nationalities whom I've done time with and struggled together with during the long years of my imprisonment. There are so many deserving prisoners of all nationalities that it would extend this article indefinitely to include them all—and I did not feel justified in including some if I couldn't include all. Nor did I feel presumptuous enough to write a prison history of other nationalities who are best suited to record their own history. My main intent is to chronicle the history of

the New Afrikan prison struggle which, for too long, has been written by others who often took it upon themselves to read out of history those Black prisoners and Black prison organizations which did not conform to their preconceived notions of what was fit to include. The updated 1998 edition expressed appreciation to Zakiyyah Rashada, Nancy Kurshan, Steve Whitman, Joan McCarty, and Walee Shakur for providing prison source data. Any incorrect interpretations of the data are strictly mine. Also my warm gratitude to Mtumwa Iimani for her typing, editing, and helpful suggestions in the updating of the original version.

The "New Afrikan liberation struggle behind the walls" refers to the struggle of Black prisoners, "behind the walls" of U.S. penal institutions, to gain liberation for ourselves, our people, and all oppressed people. We of the New Afrikan Independence Movement spell "Afrikan" with a "k" as an indicator of or cultural identification with the Afrikan continent and because Afrikan linguists originally used "k" to indicate the "c" sound in the English language. We use the term "New Afrikan" instead of Black, to define ourselves as an Afrikan people who have been forcibly transplanted to a new land and formed into a "New Afrikan" nation in North America. But our struggle behind the walls did not begin in America.

The 16th Century through the Civil War

The Afrikan prison struggle began on the shores of Afrika, behind the walls of medieval pens that held captives for ships bound west into slavery. It continues today behind the walls of modern U.S. penitentiaries where all prisoners are held as legal slaves—a blatant violation of international law, as is the present U.S. policy of executing minors and the mentally impaired.

The conception of prison ideology began to take form as far back as the reign of Louis XIV of France (1643–1715) when the Benedictine monk Mabillon wrote: "Penitents might be secluded in cells like those of Carthusian monks and there being employed in various sorts of labor." In 1790, on April 5th, the Pennsylvania Quakers actualized this concept as the capstone of their fourteen-year struggle to reform Philadelphia's Walnut Street Jail. No longer would corporal punishment be administered. Henceforth, prisoners would be locked away in their cells with a Bible and forced to do penitence in order to rehabilitate themselves. Thus was born the "penitentiary."

The first prison physically designed to achieve total isolation of each prisoner was the Eastern State Penitentiary, better known as Cherry Hill, in Philadelphia, constructed in 1829 with cells laid out so that no pris-

SENSES OF FREEDOM

Sundiata Acoli

August 31, 2014, FCI Cumberland, Maryland

Freedom FEELS sublime
like a slow Sunday morn in the springtime
of your lover.
The kids are outside
delighting in the new turn of the tide
and each other.
Children are priceless again,
women are liberated.
All races are respected
and the people placated.
SOUNDS of a Sax Supreme,
riffs of laughter, Salsa and Country themes
all syncopate with the Trane.
Indigenous drums toll:
"The Long War's Over" as soft wind chimes knell
in matching refrain.
No "Shots fired!" today.
No mother crying for her child.
No stroll thru the morgue tonight.

latest version of this article was published—the number of children whose mother was incarcerated rose by a staggering 131 percent. At that time, the number of U.S. children with a parent behind bars had risen to a record 1.7 million (at least).]

The term "crime" has become a code word for "Black and other people of color." The cry for "law and order," "lock 'em up and throw away the key," and for "harsher prisons" is heard everywhere. Nothing is too cruel to be done to prisoners. Control units and control prisons abound across the landscape and prison brutality and torture is the order of the day. The "war on drugs" continues apace, by now transparent to all as a "war, actually a preemptive strike, on people of color" to knock out our youth—our warrior class—and to decrease our birth rate, destabilize our families, re-enslave us through mass imprisonment, and ultimately to eliminate us. The threat is serious and real. We ignore it at our own peril.

Despite the government massively imprisoning our youth and covertly fomenting deadly internecine wars among Black street gangs, the abhorrence of the Afrikan community and persistent "Peace Summits" sponsored by Afrikan spiritual, community, and prison leaders have produced, somewhat positive, although checkered results.

The New Afrikan liberation struggle behind the walls now follows the laws of its own development, paid for in its own blood, intrinsically linked to the struggle of its own people, and rooted deeply in the ebb and flow of its own history. To know that history is already to know its future development and direction.

oner ever saw any person other than his guards. This "separate system" represented by Cherry Hill was being rivaled by an alternative, the "silent system," which was designed specifically for exploiting mass convict labor. Under the latter system, prisoners were housed in solitary cells but worked together all day as an ideal source of cheap reliable labor, under rigorous enforcement of the rule that all convicts must maintain total silence. The model for this system was set up at Auburn, New York, in 1825, where they initiated the "lock step" so that guards could maintain strict control as the prisoners marched back and forth between their cells and their industrial workshops.

By 1850, approximately 6,700 people were found in the nation's newly emerging prison system. Almost none of the prisoners were Black. They were more valuable economically outside the prison system because there were other means of racial control. During this time most New Afrikan (Black) men, women, and children were already imprisoned for life on plantations as chattel slaves. Accordingly, the Afrikan struggle behind the walls was carried on primarily behind the walls of slave quarters through conspiracies, revolts, insurrections, arson, sabotage, work slowdowns, poisoning of the slave master, self-maiming, and runaways. If slaves were recaptured, they continued the struggle behind the walls of the local jails, many of which were first built to hold captured runaways. Later they were also used for local citizens.

Even before the end of the Civil War, a new system had been emerging to take the place of the older form of slavery: the convict lease system. Thus, shortly after 1850 the imprisonment rate increased, then remained fairly stable with a rate of between 75 and 125 prisoners per 100,000 population. The Afrikan struggle continued primarily behind the slave quarters' walls down through the issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation. This was a declaration issued by President Lincoln on January 1, 1863, during the height of the Civil War. It declared the slaves free only in those states still in rebellion and had little actual liberating effect on the slaves in question. Their slave masters, still engaged in war against the Union, simply ignored the declaration and continued to hold their slaves in bondage. Some slave masters kept the declaration secret after the war ended following Lee's surrender on April 9, 1865. As a result, news of the Emancipation Proclamation did not reach slaves in Texas until June 19, 1865. This date, called "Juneteenth," is celebrated annually by New Afrikans in Texas and outlying states as "Black Independence Day."

Post–Civil War to the 20th Century

Immediately after the Civil War and at the end of slavery, vast numbers of Black males were imprisoned for everything from not signing slave-like labor contracts with plantation owners to looking the "wrong" way at some white person or for some similar "petty crime." Any "transgression" perceived by whites to be of a more serious nature was normally dealt with on the spot with a gun or rope—provided the Black was outnumbered and out-armed. "Black-on-Black" crime was then, as now, considered to be "petty crime" by the U.S. justice system. But petty or not, upon arrest most New Afrikans were given long, harsh sentences at hard labor.

Within five years after the end of the Civil War, the Black percentages of the prison population went from close to zero to 33 percent. Many of these prisoners were hired out to whites at less than slave wages. This new convict-lease system appeared to have great advantages for the landowners: they did not own the convicts, and hence could afford to work them to death. (The movie *Gone with the Wind* actually uses this new form to glorify the older system by comparison.) The president of the Board of Dawson discovered that in 1869 the death rate among leased Alabama Black convicts was 41 percent. Some restraints were obviously necessary; Mississippi managed to reduce its annual death rate for leased Black convicts between 1882 and 1887 to a mere 15 percent. Overnight prisons had become the new slave quarters for many New Afrikans. Likewise, the Afrikan prison struggle changed from a struggle behind the walls of slave quarters to a struggle behind the walls of county workhouses, chain gang camps, and the plantations and factories that used leased convicts as slave laborers.

The 20th Century through World War II

From 1910 through 1950, Blacks made up 23 to 34 percent of the prisoners in the U.S. prison system. Most people conditioned by prison movies like *The Defiant Ones* (starring Sidney Poitier, a Black, and Tony Curtis, a white) or *I Am a Fugitive from a Chain Gang* (starring Paul Muni, a white in an integrated chain gang), or *Cool Hand Luke* (starring Paul Newman, a white, in a southern chain gang) erroneously assume that earlier U.S. prison populations were basically integrated. This is not so. The U.S. was a segregated society prior to 1950, including the prisons—even the northern ones. Roger Benton's 1936 overview of Louisiana's Angola prison and its historical background states:

Only two prison elements grew faster than the Afrikan prison population. One was the number of jobs for prison guards and the other was prison slave labor industries. A California guard with a high school diploma makes $44,000 after seven years, which is more than the state pays its PhD public university associate professors and is $10,000 more than its average public school teacher's salary. The national ratio for prisons is one guard for every 4.38 prisoners. And although the prisoners are usually Black or others of color, the guard hired is most often white, since most prisons are built in depressed, rural white areas to provide jobs to poor, unemployed white populations.

After decades of the U.S. loudly accusing China of using prison labor in their export products, the U.S. sells prison products to the public. It set off a stampede by Wall Street and private corporations—Smith Barney, INM, AT&T, TWA, Texas Instruments, Dell, Honda, Lexus, Spaulding, Eddie Bauer, Brill Manufacturing Co., and many others—to shamelessly invest in prisons, set up slave labor factories in prisons to exploit every facet of the prison slave-labor industry for super profits, while callously discarding civilian workers for prison slave laborers.

From 1980 to 1994, prisoners increased 221 percent, prison industries jumped an astonishing 358 percent, and prison sales skyrocketed from $392 million to $1.31 billion. By the year 2000, it is predicted that 30 percent of prisoners (or 500,000) will be industry workers producing $8.9 billion in goods and services.

Although crime has been decreasing for five straight years, as we approach the new millennium we find that prison expansion has continued at a record pace and that the prison population has mushroomed over the last decade to an astonishing 1.75 million souls—the majority of whom are Black, period—not counting the 675,000 on parole and the 3,400,000 on probation for a grand sum of six million people under the jurisdiction of the criminal "justice" system. The prisons/jails have been majority Black since 1993 when Blacks ascended to 55 percent. Other prisoners of color made up 18 percent and whites shrank to 27 percent of the prison population. There are now over two Blacks for every white prisoner, and the ratio increases daily.

The incarceration of women continues to accelerate. There are over 90,000 women in prison today; 54 percent are women of color, and 90 percent of women in prison are single mothers. Upon imprisonment they lose contact with their children, sometimes forever. There are 167,000 children in the U.S. whose mothers are incarcerated. [*Editor's note: Though specific contemporary statistics are hard to ascertain on a federal level, an August 2008 Bureau of Justice Statistics special report determined that from 1991 to 2007—ten years after the*

up and say, Oh, it is not interdiction that we should be concerned about. As long as there is a desire for drugs they are going to continue to flow, and what we have to do is just concentrate on telling them, Just say no.

They say: Ms. Waters, we do not understand that and we do not know why a first time offender, who happens to be black or Latino, ends up with a 5-year sentence. And why is the Federal Government targeting our communities? They are not targeting white communities who are the major drug abusers. They are targeting our communities from the Federal level. Thus, our kids go into the Federal system and the whites who are drug abusers and traffickers go into the state systems. They get off with their fancy lawyers with probation, with 1 year, with no time, and our kids are locked up.

Mr. Chairman, for those of my colleagues who say, Well we know it is unfair, but just keep letting it go on for a while and we will take a look at it—are they out of their minds? How can they stand on the floor of Congress pretending to support a Constitution and a democracy and say, "We know it is not fair, but just let it continue and we may take another look at it"?

When I give them the facts they know them to be true, and I will say it again. In Los Angeles, the U.S. District Court prosecuted no whites, none, for crack offense, between 1988 and 1994. And my colleagues tell me that they think it may be applied unequally? This is despite the fact that two-thirds of those who have tried crack are white and over one-half of crack regular users are white. This is a fairness issue and it is a race issue.

Mr. Chairman, I do not care how they try and paint it. I do not care what they say. This is patently unfair. It is blatant and my colleagues ought to be ashamed of themselves. It is racist, because their little white sons are not getting up in the system. They are not targeted. Our children are.

Mr. Chairman, they are going into the Federal system with mandatory sentences and it is a race issue. It is a racist policy.

Despite the best arguments and passionate pleas of CBC members Waters, Jackson-Lee, Conyers, Watts, Fattah, Flukes, Lewis, Mfume, Payne, Rush, Stokes, Scott, and similar speeches by non-CBC members Clayton, Baker, Frank, Schroeder and Traficant, Congress voted 316 to 96 to continue the same 100 to 1 disparity between crack and powder cocaine sentences. Instantly, prison exploded in riots, 28 in all, although most were whited-out of the news media, while across the country prison officials instituted a nationwide federal prisons lock down. The disparity in crack/powder cocaine sentencing laws remains to date; the only change made was the removal of the C-SPAN TV channel from all federal prisons' TVs.

> There were actually six camps at Angola, five of which were composed of men and one for women. Only in the women's camp were whites and coloreds mixed. Camps A, B, C, and D were all colored and constituted by far the bulk of the population, furnishing the state with the cheap convict labor so sorely needed to raise and harvest the mammoth sugar cane crop necessary to satisfy the hungry maws of the gigantic and profitable grinding and refining plant. Once you saw the operation of the plant—the terrific busyness of everybody during grinding time—once you learned what the plant meant to the state in dollars-and-cents profit, you understood why it was so easy to convict and imprison a Negro in the South, and gained a new understanding of the whole basis for the subjugation of the Negroes. Although only 40 percent of the entire population of Louisiana at this time was colored, 83 percent of the prison population was made up of Negroes.

Blacks were always, at least from the time of Emancipation, the majority population in the southern state prisons. But elsewhere the early populations of the more well-known or "mainline" state and federal prisons—Attica, Auburn, Alcatraz, and Atlanta—were predominantly white and male. Whenever New Afrikans were sent to these "mainline" prisons they found themselves grossly outnumbered, relegated to the back of the lines, to separate lines, or to no lines at all. They were often denied outright what meager amenities existed within the prisons. Racism was rampant. New Afrikans were racially suppressed by both white prisoners and guards. All of the guards were white; there were no Black guards or prison officials at the time.

In the period between the Civil War and World War II, the forms of convict labor spilled over and intermingled with "free" labor. Thus, we find Virginia convicts being worked by a canal company. Tennessee worked a part of its convicts within the prison walls, a part on farms, and the rest were leased to railway companies and coal mines. North Carolina and South Carolina employed a portion of their convicts within the walls. The rest were scattered under various lessees. Much of the tunneling of the Western Carolina Railroad through the Blue Ridge was accomplished by convict labor. Georgia convicts were leased to lumber camps and brickyards. Alabama employed hers in railroad building, in mines, and sawmills. Mississippi convicts were leased to railway contractors and planters. Until 1883, the lessees of Texas convicts employed a portion of them in a cotton mill and at other times within the walls of the penitentiary, and placed the remainder in railway construction camps. Arkansas convicts were leased to plantation owners and coal mines. In

Florida, the majority of the convicts were leased to turpentine farms. A smaller number were employed in phosphate mines.

The Afrikan prisoners continued to struggle behind the walls of these segregated convict-lease systems, county workhouses, chain gang camps, and state and federal prisons, yet prison conditions for them remained much the same through World War II. Inside conditions accurately reflected conditions in the larger society outside the walls, except by then the state's electric chair had mostly supplanted the lynch mob's rope.

Post–World War II to the Civil Rights Era

Things began to change in the wake of World War II. Four factors flowing together ushered in these changes. They were the ghetto population explosion, the drug influx, the emergence of independent Afrikan nations, and the civil rights movement.

The Ghetto Population Explosion

Plentiful jobs during the war, coupled with a severe shortage of white workers, caused U.S. war industries to hire New Afrikans in droves. Southern New Afrikans poured north to fill these unheard of job opportunities, and the already crowded ghetto populations mushroomed.

Drug Influx

New Afrikan soldiers fought during the war to preserve European democracies. They returned home eager to join the fight to make segregated America democratic too. But the U.S. had witnessed Marcus Garvey organize similar sentiments following World War I into one of the greatest Black movements in the western hemisphere. This time the U.S. was more prepared to contain the new and expected New Afrikan assertiveness. Their weapon was "King Heroin."

The U.S. employed the services of the Mafia during World War II to gather intelligence in Italy to defeat fascist Mussolini. Before the war, Mussolini embarked on a major campaign against the Mafia, which enraged the group's leaders. (Fascism was a big Mafia itself so it couldn't allow another Mafia to exist.) Mussolini's activities turned Mafiosi into vigorous anti-fascists, and the American government cooperated with the Mafia both in the United States and in Sicily. In the eyes of many Sicilians, the United States helped restore the Mafia's lost power. The Americans had to win the war, so they couldn't pay much attention to these things. "They thought the Mafia could help them,

convictions, and no white person had been convicted of a federal crack offense in the Los Angeles area since 1986—or ever in Chicago, Miami, Denver, or sixteen states according to the 1992 survey. As a result, there are now more Afrikan men in prison than in college, and one out of every three Afrikan men aged twenty to twenty-nine is in prison, jail, or on probation or parole. Most of the convictions were obtained by an informant's tainted testimony only, no hard evidence, in exchange for the informant's freedom from prosecution or prison.

After lobbying Congress for a few years, Families Against Mandatory Minimums (FAMM), a predominately white lobby group, succeeded in getting harsh mandatory sentences lowered for marijuana and LSD convictions. Both drugs are more commonly associated with white offenders, and FAMM's success resulted in the release of numerous white offenders from long prison sentences.

Blacks and other prisoners of color patiently waited for similar corrections to be made to the gross disparity between crack and powdered cocaine sentences. Several years passed before the answer came during a 1995 C-SPAN TV live broadcast of the congressional session debating the disparity in sentencing. Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) member Maxine Waters's summation speech, typical of those made by congresspersons in favor of correcting the disparity, included the following:

> Mr. Chairman, we have been before this body this evening pointing out the disparity, pointing out the inequality, pointing out the injustice of the system as it operates now. I am surprised at much of the rhetoric and all of these so-called conversations that my friends on the other side of the aisle have been having in minority communities. I am glad to know that my colleagues are going there. I am glad to know that they are communicating. But let me tell my colleagues what the mothers in my community say where I live.
>
> They say: Ms. Waters, why do they not get the big drug dealers? What is this business under Bush that stopped resources going to interdiction? Why is it large amounts of drugs keep flowing into inner cities? Where do they come from and why don't they get the real criminals, Ms. Waters, why is it 19-year-olds who wander out into the community and get a few rocks of crack cocaine? Why is it they end up in the Federal system? Why is it they end up with these 5-year minimum mandatory, up to 10-year mandatory sentences? Why can't you get the big guys?
>
> They say: We believe there is a conspiracy. This is what mothers in these communities say. We believe there is a conspiracy against our children and against our communities. They do not understand it when policymakers get

commanders might be ordered to help the CIA, "fly drugs into the U.S. to fund covert operations" and "work hand in hand with civilian police agencies" as "government paid assassins." Disillusioned and embittered with the U.S. government, McVeigh soon left military service, gravitated deeper into the right-wing militia service, and surfaced four years later upon his arrest in the Oklahoma City bombing case.

The mid-90s found white anarchists Neil Batelli and Mathias Bolton collaborating with Black POWs Ojore Lutalo, Sekou Odinga, and Sundiata Acoli, which resulted in the transformation of their local New Jersey Anarchist Black Cross into an ABC Federation (ABCF) which now serves as a role model of the proper way for organizations to provide political and financial support to PP/POWs of all nationalities. The period also witnessed the re-sprouting of Black revolutionary organizations patterned after the BPP (the Black Panther Collective, the Black Panther Militia)—along with the NOI Minster Louis Farrakhan's emergence at the October 16, 1995, Million Man March (MMM) in Washington, D.C., as an undeniable force on the New Afrikan, Islamic, and world stage. In the meantime, the U.S. moved further to the right with the passage of a series of racist, anti-worker legislation. The government ratified the NAFTA treaty to legitimize the policy of private corporations sending U.S. jobs overseas. California passed Proposition 209, which killed affirmative action programs throughout the state. Then, it floated Proposition 187, whose purpose was to implement statewide racist anti-immigration legislation. But this failed to pass. The federal government killed Black voting districts and passed Clinton's Omnibus Crime Bill, which greatly increased the number of crime statutes, death penalty statutes, policemen and armaments, arrests of people of color, youths tried as adults, three-strike convictions, and prison expansion projects.

The so-called War on Drugs sent Blacks and other people of color, more commonly associated with crack cocaine, to prison in droves while allowing white offenders to go free. Five grams of crack worth a few hundred dollars is punishable by a mandatory five-year prison sentence, but it takes 500 grams, or $50,000 worth of powdered cocaine, more commonly associated with wealthier whites, before facing the same five years. In the mid-90s, 1,600 people were sent to prison each week. Three out of every four were Black or Latino, with the rate of Afrikan women imprisonment growing faster than that of Afrikan men.

Blacks were 90 percent of the federal crack convictions in 1994. The normal assumption follows that Blacks are the majority of crack users. Wrong! Whites are the majority of crack users but were less than 4 percent of the crack

and perhaps they did," said Leonardo Sciascia, perhaps the best-known living Sicilian novelist and student of the Mafia.

During World War II, the Office of Strategic Service (OSS), the forerunner of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), helped to commute Lucky Luciano's sentence in federal prison and arrange for his repatriation to Sicily. Luciano was among the top dons in the Mafia syndicate and the leading organizer of prostitution and drug trafficking. The OSS knew that Luciano had excellent ties to the Sicilian Mafia and wanted the support of that organization for the Allied landing in Sicily in 1943. When Luciano left the U.S., numerous politicians and Mafia dons gathered together at the Brooklyn docks to wave him goodbye in what was the first of many occasions that international drug dealers were recruited by the U.S. government to advance its foreign policy interests.

After the war, in return for "services rendered," the U.S. looked the other way as the Mafia flooded the major U.S. ghettos with heroin. Within six years after World War II, due to the Mafia's marketing strategy, over 100,000 people were addicts, many of them Black.

The Emergence of Independent Afrikan Nations

Afrikans from Afrika, having fought to save European independence, returned to the Afrikan continent and began fighting for the independence of their own colonized nations. Rather than fight losing Afrikan colonial wars, most European nations opted to grant "phased" independence to their Afrikan colonies. The U.S. now faced the prospect of thousands of Afrikan diplomatic personnel, their staffs and families coming to the UN and wandering into a minefield of racial incidents, particularly on state visits to the rigidly segregated capital, Washington, D.C. That alone could push each newly emerging independent Afrikan nation into the socialist column. To counteract this possibility, the U.S. decided to desegregate. As a result, on May 17, 1954, the Supreme Court declared school segregation illegal.

In its landmark *Brown vs. Board of Education* case, which heralded the beginning of the end of official segregation in the United States, the Supreme Court had been made fully aware of the relations between America's domestic policies and her foreign policy interest by the federal government's amicus curiae (i.e., friend of the court) brief, which read:

> It is in the context of the present world struggle between freedom and tyranny that the problem of racial discrimination must be viewed . . . [for] discrimination against minority groups in the United States has an adverse effect upon

> our relations with other countries. Racial discrimination furnishes grist for the communist propaganda mills, and it raises doubts even among friendly nations as to the intensity of our devotion to the democratic faith.

Malcolm X provides similar insight into the reasoning behind the U.S. decision to desegregate. During his February 16, 1965, speech at Corn Hill Methodist Church in Rochester, New York, he said:

> From 1954 to 1964 can be easily looked upon as the era of the emerging African state. And as the African state emerged . . . [w]hat effect did it have on the Black American?
>
> When he saw the Black man on the [African] continent taking a stand, it made him become filled with the desire to also take a stand. . . . Just as [the rulers of the U.S.] had to change their approach with our people on this continent. As they used tokenism . . . on the African continent . . . they began to do the same thing with us here in the States: . . . tokenism. . . . Every move they made was a token move. . . . They came up with a Supreme Court desegregation decision that they haven't put into practice yet, not even in Rochester much less in Mississippi. [Applause.]

Origin of the Civil Rights Movement

On December 1, 1955, Ms. Rosa Parks defied Montgomery, Alabama's bus segregation laws by refusing to give her seat to a white man. Her subsequent arrest and the ensuing mass bus boycott by the Montgomery New Afrikan community kicked off the civil rights movement. Martin Luther King Jr., a young college-educated Baptist minister, was chosen to coordinate and lead this boycott primarily because he was a new arrival in town, intelligent, respected, and had not accumulated a list of grudge enemies as had the old guard. His selection for leadership catapulted him upon the stage of history. The 381-day boycott toppled Montgomery's bus segregation codes.

Reverend Joseph E. Lowery was part of a group of young activist ministers who had begun to test segregated public transportation laws, in addition to Martin Luther King Jr.—and Ralph Abernathy in Montgomery, Alabama; Fred Shuttlesworth in Birmingham, Alabama; Theodore "T.J." Jemison in Baton Rouge, Louisiana; and Charles K. Steel in Tallahassee, Florida. "The earliest boycotts were in Baton Rouge and Tallahassee, but they were unsuccessful," says Lowery. "We used to meet monthly in Montgomery to share our pain." After the success of the Montgomery bus boycott, the ministers met in New Orleans in February 1957 and formed the Southern Christian Lead-

Chicago in the aftermath of the Simi Valley, California, verdict that acquitted four policemen of the Rodney King beating, setting off the Los Angeles riots.

In 1994, Shiriki Uganisha responded to the call of POWs Jalil Muntaqim, Sekou Odinga, Geronimo ji Jaga, and Mutulu Shakur, by hosting a national conference in Kansas City, Missouri, where various NAIM organizations discussed forming themselves into a national front. After a year of holding periodic negotiations in various cities, the discussion bore fruit in Atlanta, Georgia. On August 18, 1995, NAPO, the December 12th Movement, Malcolm X Grassroots Movement, the Malcolm X Commemoration Committee, the Black Cat Collective, International Campaign to Free Geronimo, the Sundiata Acoli Freedom Campaign, and various other POW and grassroots organizations formally unified under the banner of the New Afrikan Liberation Front, headed by Herman Ferguson.

The mid-90s brought the World Trade Center bombing which marked the beginning of the U.S. strategy to substitute Islam for the former Soviet Union as the world's new bogeyman. It produced the first foreign Islamic PP/POWs—Amir Abdelgani, Rasheed Clement El, Sheik Omar Eahman, and others.

The mid-decade also brought forth a growing right-wing white militia movement that had obviously studied the guerrilla tactics and political language of the '60s left-wing movements but not its philosophy of avoiding innocent deaths—and which culminated in the bombing of the Oklahoma City Federal Building causing 168 deaths. Upon arrest, Timothy McVeigh, a right-winger and by then the chief suspect, usurped the language of the left by claiming POW status. He was subsequently convicted. But largely overlooked in the media coverage of his case was McVeigh's firsthand verification of the U.S. government's involvement in bringing drugs into this country (and the ghettos) and its use of the police in carrying out assassinations, notable because the overwhelming majority of people killed or assassinated by police in this country are people of color.

Timothy McVeigh had been an All-American boy—a longhaired, blue-eyed patriot who enlisted in the army to defend the American way of life that he so fervently believed in. He rose rapidly through the military ranks (private to sergeant) in two years, and was accepted into the Special Forces: the elite, top 4 percent of the military's forces. There he learned something that average thinking persons of color have known most of their lives but found difficult to prove. McVeigh's own words provide the proof.

In an October 1991 letter to his sister and confidant, Jennifer, McVeigh disclosed his revulsion at being told that he and nine other Special Forces

prisoners. Projections suggest that over 75 percent of them will be Black and other people of color. More are women than previously. Their percentage rose to 5 percent in 1980 from a low of 3 percent in 1970. Whites are arrested at about the same rate as in Western Europe while the New Afrikan arrest rate has surpassed that of Blacks in South Africa. In fact, the U.S. Black imprisonment rate is now the highest in the world. Ten times as many Blacks as whites are incarcerated per 100,000 population.

The '90s and Beyond

As we began to move through the '90s, the New Afrikan liberation struggle behind the walls found itself coalescing around campaigns to free political prisoners and prisoners of war, helping to build a national PP/POW organization, strengthening its links on the domestic front, and building solidarity in the international arena. 1991 brought the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War. It freed many of the CIA's Eastern Europe personnel for redeployment back to America to focus on the domestic war against people of color. In the same manner that COINTELPRO perfected techniques developed in the infamous Palmer raids at the end of World War I and used them against Communist Party USA, SCLC, NCC, BPP, NOI, RNA, and other domestic movements, repatriated CIA operatives used destabilization techniques developed in Eastern Europe, South Africa, Southeast Asia, etc., to wreak havoc in New Afrikan and other domestic communities of color today.

Although the established media concentrated on the sensationalism of ghetto crack epidemics, street crime, drive-by shootings, and gang violence, there was a parallel long, quiet period of consciousness-raising in the New Afrikan colonies by the committed independence forces. The heightened consciousness of the colonies began to manifest itself through apparent random sparks of rebellion and the rise of innovative cultural trends, i.e., rap/hip-hop "message" music, culturally designed hairstyles, dissemination of political/cultural video cassettes, re-sprouting of insurgent periodicals, and the resurrection of forgotten heroes; all of which presaged an oppressed people getting ready to push forward again. Meanwhile, the U.S. began building the Administrative Maximum Facility (ADX) control unit prison at Florence, Colorado, which would both supersede and augment USP Marion, Illinois. ADX at Florence combined, in a single hi-tech control prison complex, all the repressive features and techniques that had been perfected at USP Marion.

In 1992, Fred Hampton Jr., son of the martyred Panther hero Fred Sr., was sent behind the walls. He was convicted of firebombing of a Korean "deli" in

ership Conference (SCLC), with Martin Luther King Jr. later nominated as chairman of the board. A month later, in March 1957, Ghana became the first of a string of sub-Saharan Afrikan nations to be granted independence.

As northern discrimination, bulging ghettos, and the drug influx were setting off a rise in New Afrikan numbers behind the walls, southern segregation, the emergence of Independent Afrikan nations, and the resulting civil rights movement provided those increasing numbers with the general political agenda: equality and antidiscrimination.

Civil Rights through the Black Power Era

Religious Struggles in Prison

Meanwhile, behind the walls, smart segments of New Afrikans began rejecting Western Christianity. They turned to Islam as preached by Elijah Muhammad's Nation of Islam (NOI) and by Noble Drew Ali's Moorish Science Temple of America (MST). The NOI preached that Islam was the true religion of Black people, that Blacks were the original people on earth, and that Blacks in America were a nation needing land and independence. The MST preached that the Asiatic Black people in America must proclaim their nationality as members of the ancient Moors of Northern Africa. These new religions produced significant success rates in helping New Afrikan prisoners rehabilitate themselves by instilling them with a newfound sense of pride, dignity, piety, and industriousness. Yet these religions seemed strange and thus threatening to prison officials. They moved forthwith to suppress these religions, and many early Muslims were viciously persecuted, beaten, and even killed for practicing their beliefs. The Muslims fought back fiercely.

Civil Rights Struggles in Prison

Like American society, the prisons were rigidly segregated. New Afrikans were relegated to perform the heaviest and dirtiest jobs—farm work, laundry work, dishwashing, garbage disposal—and were restricted from jobs as clerks, straw bosses, electricians, or any position traditionally reserved for white prisoners. Similar discriminatory rules applied to all other areas of prison life. New Afrikans were restricted to live in certain cell blocks or tiers, eat in certain areas of the mess hall, and sit in the back at the movies, TV room, and other recreational facilities.

Influenced by the anti-discrimination aspect of the civil rights movement, a growing number of New Afrikans behind the walls began stepping up their struggle against discrimination in prison. Audacious New Afrikans began

violating longstanding segregation codes by sitting in the front seats at the movies, mess hall, or TV areas—and more than a few died from shanks in the back. Others gave as good as they got, and better. Additionally, New Afrikans began contesting discriminatory job and housing policies and other biased conditions. Many were set up for attack and sent to the hole for years, or worse. Those who were viewed as leaders were dealt with most harshly. Most of this violence came from prison officials and white prisoners protecting their privileged positions; other violence came from New Afrikans and Muslims protecting their lives, taking stands and fighting back. From these silent, unheralded battles against racial and religious discrimination in prisons emerged the New Afrikan liberation struggle behind the walls during the civil rights era of the 1950s. Eventually the courts, influenced by the "equality/anti-discrimination" aspect of the civil rights movement, would rule that prisons must recognize the Muslims' religion on an "equal" footing with other accepted religions, and that prison racial discrimination codes must be outlawed.

Black Power through the Black Liberation Era

As the civil rights movement advanced into the '60s, New Afrikan college students waded into the struggle with innovative lunch counter sit-ins, freedom rides, and voter registration projects. On April 15, 1960, a student conference was called under the auspices of Ms. Ella Baker, a field worker for the SCLC. The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) was formed during this period to coordinate and instruct student volunteers in nonviolent methods of organizing voter registration projects and other civil rights work. These energetic young students, and the youth in general, served as the foot soldiers of the movement. They provided indispensable services, support, and protection to local community leaders such as Fannie Lou Hamer, Ella Baker, Septima Clark, Bob Moses, Amzie Moore, Daisy Bates, and other heroines and heroes of the civil rights movement. Although they met with measured success; white racist atrocities mounted daily on defenseless civil rights workers.

Young New Afrikans in general began to grow increasingly disenchanted with the nonviolent philosophy of Martin Luther King. Many began to look increasingly toward Malcolm X, the fiery young minister of NOI Temple No. 7 in Harlem, New York. He called for "self-defense, freedom by any means necessary, and land and independence." As Malcolm Little, he had been introduced to the NOI doctrine while imprisoned in Massachusetts. Upon release, he traveled to Detroit to meet Elijah Muhammad, converted to Islam, and was

Herman Ferguson at sixty-eight years old voluntarily returned to the U.S. on April 6, 1989, after twenty years exile in Ghana, Afrika, and Guyana, South America. He had fled the U.S. during the late '60s after the appeal was denied on his sentence of three and a half to seven years following a conviction for conspiring to murder civil rights leaders. Upon return he was arrested at the airport and was moved constantly from prison to prison for several years as a form of harassment.

The '80s brought the Reagan era's rollback of progressive trends on a wide front and a steep rise in racist incidents, white vigilantism, and police murder of New Afrikan and Third World people. It also brought the rebirth and re-establishment of the NOI, a number of New Afrikan POWs adopting orthodox Islam in lieu of revolutionary nationalism, the New Afrikan People's Organization's (NAPO) and its chairman Chokwe Lumumba's emergence. From the RNA as banner carrier for the New Afrikan Independence Movement (NAIM), the New Orleans assassination of Lumumba Shakur of the Panther 21, and an upsurge in mass political demonstrations known as the "Days of Outrage" in New York City spearheaded by the December 12th Movement and others.

The end of the decade brought the death of Huey P. Newton, founder of the Black Panther Party, allegedly killed by a young Black Guerrilla Family adherent on August 22, 1989, during a dispute over "crack." Huey taught the Black masses socialism and popularized it through the slogan "Power to the People!" He armed the Black struggle and popularized it through the slogan "Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun." For that, and despite his human shortcomings, he was a true giant of the Black struggle, because his particular contribution is comparable to that of other modern-day giants, Marcus Garvey, Elijah Muhammad, Malcolm X, and Martin Luther King.

AIDS, crack, street crime, gang violence, homelessness, and arrest rates have all exploded throughout the Black colonies. The nation's prison population on June 30, 1989, topped 673,000, an incredible 372,000 increase in less than a decade, causing the tripling and doubling of prison populations in thirty-four states and sizable increases in most others. New York City prisons became so overcrowded they began using ships as jails. William Bennett, former U.S. secretary of education and so-called drug czar, announced plans to convert closed military bases into concentration camps.

The prison-building spree and escalated imprisonment rates continue unabated. The new prisoners are younger, more volatile, have long prison sentences, and are overwhelmingly of New Afrikan and Third World nationalities. It is estimated that by the year 1994 the U.S. will have over one million

The decade also brought behind the walls Mumia Abu-Jamal, the widely respected Philadelphia radio announcer, popularly known as the "Voice of the Voiceless." He maintained a steady drumbeat of radio support for MOVE prisoners. While moonlighting as a taxi driver on the night of December 9, 1981, he discovered a policeman beating his younger brother. Mumia was shot and seriously wounded, the policeman was killed. Mumia now sits on death row in greatest need of mass support from every sector, if he's to be saved from the state's electric chair. [After a widespread international campaign and legal battle, Abu-Jamal was removed from death row and eventually resentenced to life in prison without parole. —Ed.]

Kazi Toure of the United Freedom Front (UFF) was sent behind the walls in 1982. He was released in 1991.

The New York 8—Coltrane Chimurenga, Viola Plummer and her son Robert "R.T." Taylor, Roger Wareham, Omowale Clay, Lateefah Carter, Colette Pean, and Yvette Kelly were arrested on October 17, 1984, and charged with conspiring to commit prison breakouts and armed robberies, and to possess weapons and explosives. However, the New York 8 was actually the New York 8+ because another eight or nine persons were jailed as grand jury resisters in connection with the case. The New York 8 were acquitted on August 5, 1985.

That same year Ramona Africa joined other MOVE comrades already behind the walls. Her only crime was that she survived Philadelphia Mayor Goode's May 13, 1985, bombing which cremated eleven MOVE members, their families (including their babies), home, and neighborhood.

The following year, November 19, 1986, a twenty-year-old Bronx, New York youth, Larry Davis (now Adam Abdul Hakeem) would make a dramatic escape during a shootout with police who had come to assassinate him for absconding with drug-sales money that some cops had appropriated for themselves. Several policemen were wounded in the shootout. Adam escaped unscathed but surrendered weeks later in the presence of the media, his family, and a mass of neighborhood supporters. After numerous charges, trials, and acquittals in which he exposed the existence of a New York police–controlled drug ring that coerced Black and Puerto Rican youths to push police-supplied drugs, he was sent behind the walls on weapon possession convictions. Since incarceration, numerous beatings by guards have paralyzed him from the waist down and confined him to a wheelchair.

On July 16, 1987, Abdul Haqq Muhammad, Arthur Majeed Barnes, and Robert "R.T." Taylor, all members of the Black Men's Movement Against Crack, were pulled over by state troopers in upstate New York, arrested, and subsequently sent to prison on a variety of weapon possession convictions.

given the surname "X" to replace his discarded slave-master's name. The X symbolized his original surname lost to history when his fore-parents were kidnapped from Afrika, stripped of their names, language, and identity, and enslaved in the Americas. As Malcolm X he became one of Elijah Muhammad's most dedicated disciples and rose to National Minister and spokesperson for the NOI. His keen intellect, incorruptible integrity, staunch courage, clear resonant oratory, sharp debating skills, and superb organizing abilities soon brought the NOI to a position of prominence within the Black ghetto colonies across the U.S.

Origin of the Revolutionary Action Movement

During the fall of 1961, an off-campus chapter of the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) formed at Ohio's Central State College, called Challenge. Challenge was a black radical formation having no basic ideology. Part of its membership was students who had been expelled from southern schools for sit-in demonstrations. Others were students who had taken freedom rides or from the North, some of whom had been members of the NOI and Afrikan nationalist organizations. Challenge's main emphasis was struggling for more students' rights on campus and bringing a Black political awareness to the student body. In the yearlong battle with the college's administration over student rights, members of Challenge became more radicalized. Challenge members attended student conferences in the South and participated in demonstrations in the North. Donald Freeman, a Black student at Ohio's Case Western Reserve University maintained correspondence with Challenge's cadre discussing the ideological aspects of the civil rights movement.

In the spring of 1962, *Studies on the Left*, a radical quarterly, published Harold Cruse's article "Revolutionary Nationalism and the Afro-American." Freeman wrote a letter to Challenge cadre telling them to seriously study the article. He also said Black radicals elsewhere were studying the article and that a movement had to be created in the North similar to the NOI, using the tactics of SNCC but outside of the NAACP and CORE.

After much discussion, the cadre decided to form a broad coalition to take over student government at Central State. Meetings were held with representatives from each class, fraternity, and sorority. A slate was drafted and a name for the party was selected. It was called "RAM," later to be known as the Revolutionary Action Movement. The Challenge cadre met and decided to dissolve itself into RAM and become the RAM leadership. RAM won all student government offices. After the election, the inner RAM core discussed what to do next. Some said that all that could be done at Central State had

already been done, while other disagreed. Some of the inner core decided to stay at Central State and run the student government, while a few decided to return to their communities and attempt to organize around Freeman's basic outline. Two of the returning students were Wanda Marshall and Max Stanford, now named Akbar Muhammad Ahmad, who transplanted RAM from Cleveland to the ghettos of Philadelphia, New York, and other urban areas.

The March on Washington

In 1963, Malcolm X openly called the March on Washington a farce. He explained that the desire for a mass march on the nation's capital originally sprang from the Black grassroots: the average Black man and woman in the streets. It was their way of demonstrating a mass Black demand for jobs and freedom. As momentum grew for the march, President Kennedy called a meeting of the leaders of the six largest civil rights organizations, dubbed the "Big Six"—NAACP, SCLC, CORE, National Urban League (NUL), SNCC, and the National Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (NBSCP)—asking them to stop the proposed march. They answered that they couldn't stop it because they weren't leading it, didn't start it, and that it had sprung from the masses of Black people.

Since they weren't leading the march, the president decided to make them the leaders by distributing huge sums of money to each of the Big Six, publicizing their leading roles in the mass media, and providing them with a script to follow regarding the staging of the event. The script planned the march down to the smallest detail. Malcolm explained that government officials told the Big Six what time to begin the march, where to march, who could speak at the march and who could not, generally what could be said and what could not, what signs to carry, where to go to the toilets (provided by the government), and what time to end—and most of the 200,000 marchers were never the wiser. By then SNCC's membership was also criticizing the march as too moderate and decrying the violence sweeping the South. History ultimately proved Malcolm's claim of "farce" correct, through books published by participants in the planning of the march and through exposure of government documents on the matter.

Origin of the Five Percenters

Clarence 13X (Clarence Smith) was expelled from Harlem's Nation of Islam Temple No. 7 in 1963 because he wouldn't conform to NOI practices. He frequently associated with the numerous street gangs that abounded in New York City at the time and felt that the NOI didn't put enough effort into recruiting

taken hundreds of years. Since America's original colonial times. The '60s were the transition decade of white flight that saw a significant decrease in both prison population and white prisoners. And since the total Black prison population increased only slightly or changed insignificantly over the decade of the insurgent '60s through 1973, it indicates that New Afrikans are imprisoned least when they fight hardest.

The decade ended on a masterstroke by the BLA's Multinational Task Force, with the November 2, 1979, prison liberation of Assata Shakur—"Soul of the BLA" and preeminent political prisoner of the era. The Task Force then whisked her away to the safety of political asylum in Cuba where she remains to date.

The Decade of the '80s

In June 1980, Ali Hassan was released after sixteen years in the New Jersey state prisons. Two months later, five New World Nation of Islam (NWI) members were arrested after a North Brunswick, New Jersey, bank robbery in a car with stolen plates. The car belonged to the recently released Ali Hassan, who had loaned it to a friend. Ali Hassan and fifteen other NWI members refused to participate in the resulting mass trial, which charged them in a Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organization (RICO) indictment with conspiracy to rob banks for the purpose of financing various NWI enterprises in the furtherance of creating an independent Black Nation. All defendants were convicted and sent behind the walls.

The '80s brought another round of BLA freedom fighters behind walls—Bashir Hameed and Abdul Majid in 1980; Sekou Odinga, Kuwasi Balagoon, Chui Ferguson-El, Jamal Joseph again, Mutulu Shakur, and numerous BLA Multinational Task Force supporters in 1981; and Terry Khalid Long, Leroy Ojore Bunting, and others in 1982. The government's sweep left Mtyari Sundiata dead, Kuwasi Balagoon subsequently dead in prison from AIDS, and Sekou Odinga brutally tortured upon capture—torture that included pulling out his toenails and rupturing his pancreas during long sadistic beatings that left him hospitalized for six months. But this second round of captured BLA freedom fighters brought forth, perhaps for the first time, a battery of young, politically astute New Afrikan lawyers: Chokwe Lumumba, Jill Soffiyah Elijah, Nkechi Taifa, Adjoa Aiyetoro, Ashanti Chimurenga, Michael Tarif Warren, and others. They are not only skilled in representing New Afrikan POWs but the New Afrikan Independence Movement too, all of which added to the further development of the New Afrikan liberation struggle behind the walls.

sion. This approach originated with Jalil Muntaqim, and was spearheaded by him and attorney Kathryn Burke on the West Coast and by Sundiata Acoli and attorney Lennox Hinds of the National Conference of Black Lawyers on the East Coast. This petition sought relief from human rights violations in U.S. prisons and subsequently asserted a colonized people's right to fight against alien domination and racist regimes as codified in the Geneva Convention.

Fourth, it intensified, clarified, and broke new ground on political issues and debates of particular concern to the New Afrikan community, i.e., the "national question," spearheaded by Atiba Shanna in the Midwest. All these struggles, plus those already in process, were carried out with the combination in one form or another of resolute prisoners and community-legal support. Community support when present came from various sources—family, comrades, friends; political, student, religious, and prisoner rights groups; workers, professionals, and progressive newspapers and radio stations. Some of those involved over the years were or are: the National Committee for Defense of Political Prisoners, the Black Community News Service, the African Peoples Party, the Republic of New Afrika, the African Peoples Socialist Party, The East, the Bliss Chord Communication Network, Liberation Book Store, WDAS Radio Philadelphia, WBLS Radio New York, Radio New York, Third World Newsreel, *Libertad* (political journal of the Puerto Rican Movimiento de Liberación Nacional [MLN]), the Prairie Fire Organizing Committee, the May 19th Communist Organization, the Madame Binh Graphics Collective, The Midnight Express, the Northwest Iowa Socialist Party, the National Black United Front, the Nation of Islam, *Arm the Spirit*, *Black News*, International Class Labor Defense, the Real Dragon Project, the John Brown Anti-Klan Committee, the National Prison Project, the House of the Lord Church, the American Friends Service Committee, attorneys Chuck Jones and Harold Ferguson of Rutgers Legal Clinic, the *Jackson Advocate* newspaper, Rutgers law students, the Committee to End the Marion Lockdown, the American Indian Movement, and others.

The End of the '70s

As the decade wound down, the late '70s saw the demise of the NOI following the death of Elijah Muhammad and the rise of orthodox Islam among significant segments of New Afrikans on both sides of the wall. By 1979, the prison population stood at 300,000, a whopping 100,000 increase within a single decade. The previous 100,000 increase—from 100,000 to 200,000—had taken thirty-one years, from 1927 to 1958. The initial increase to 100,000 had

among these street gangs and other wayward youth. By '64 he had established his own "movement" called the "Five Percenters." The name comes from their belief that 85 percent of Black people are like cattle, who continue to eat the poisoned animal (the pig), are blind to the truth of God, and continue to give their allegiance to people who don't have their best interests at heart; that 10 percent of Black people are bloodsuckers—the politicians, preachers, and other parasitic individuals who get rich off the labor and ignorance of the docile exploited 85 percent; and that the remaining 5 percent are the poor righteous teachers of freedom, justice, and equality who know the truth of the "Black" God and are not deceived by the practices of the bloodsucking 10 percent. The Five Percenters movement spread throughout the New York State prison system and the Black ghettos of the New York metropolitan area. Meanwhile the New York City Police Department's Bureau of Special Services (BSS), who kept their eyes on radicals and dissidents, put Clarence 13X at the top of their list of "Black militants."

Origin of the New World Nation of Islam

In December 1965, Newark's Mayor Hugh Addonizio witnessed a getaway car pulling away from a bank robbery and ordered his chauffeur to follow with siren blasting. The fleeing robbers crashed into a telephone pole, sprang from their car and fired a shot through the mayor's windshield. He screeched to a halt, and police cars racing to the scene captured Muhammad Ali Hassan (known as Albert Dickens) and James Washington. Both were regular attendees of Newark's NOI Temple No. 25, headed by Minister James 3X Shabazz. Ali Hassan and Washington were members of the New World Nation of Islam (NWI). Ali Hassan, its leader and Supreme Field Commander, dates the birth of the New World Nation of Islam as February 26, 1960. He states that on that date Elijah Muhammad authorized the New World Nation of Islam under the leadership of Field Supreme Minister Fard Savior and declared that the Field Minister had authority over all the NOI Muslims. Ali Hassan and Washington were convicted for the bank robbery and sent to Trenton State Prison.

The NWI's belief in the supreme authority of Fard Savior was rejected by NOI Minister Shabazz, and thereafter an uneasy peace prevailed between the followers of Shabazz, who remained in control of Newark's NOI Temple No. 25, and the followers the NWI who sought to gain control of it.

Meanwhile, Ali Hassan published a book titled *Uncle Yah Yah* and ran the NWI from his prison cell. Along with the more established and influential NOI, the influence of the NWI spread throughout the New Jersey state prison system and the metropolitan Jersey ghettos. The NWI began setting up food

co-ops, barbershops, houses to teach Islam, and printing presses; and purchased land in South Carolina, all in furtherance of creating an independent Black nation.

The Black Liberation Era

Black Power

James Meredith was shot on June 6, 1966, while on his march against fear in Mississippi. A civil rights group decided to complete the march. One night during a rally connected to the march, SNCC organizer Willie Ricks ("Mukassa") raised the cry of "Black Power." Stokely Carmichael, SNCC chairman, repeated the slogan the next night at a mass rally and the Black Power movement began to sweep the country.

Black Panthers Usher in the Black Liberation Movement

Midstride the '60s, on February 21, 1965, Malcolm was assassinated, but his star continued to rise and his seeds fell on fertile soil. The following year, October 1966, in Oakland, California, Huey P. Newton and a handful of armed youths founded the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense on principles that Malcolm had preached—and the Black Liberation Movement (BLM) was born. Subsequently the name was shortened to the Black Panther Party (BPP) and a 10-Point Program was created which stated:

1. We want freedom. We want power to determine the destiny of our Black community.
2. We want full employment for our people.
3. We want an end to the robbery by the CAPITALISTS of our Black community.
4. We want decent housing, fit for the shelter of human beings.
5. We want education for our people that exposes the true nature of this decadent American society. We want education that teaches us our true history and our role in the present-day society.
6. We want all Black men to be exempt from military service.
7. We want an immediate end to POLICE BRUTALITY and MURDER of Black people.
8. We want freedom for all Black men held in federal, state, county and city prisons and jails.
9. We want all Black people when brought to trial to be tried in court by a jury of their peer group or people from their Black

publicity blitz was designed to guarantee a conviction, smokescreen the real issues involved, and justify immediate placement in the harshest prison conditions possible. For men this usually means the federal penitentiary at Marion, Illinois. For women it has meant the control unit in the federal penitentiary at Alderson, West Virginia, or Lexington, Kentucky.

Effect of Captured Freedom Fighters on Prisons

In 1988 political prisoners Silvia Baraldini, Alejandrina Torres, and Susan Rosenberg won a D.C. District Court lawsuit brought by attorneys Adjoa Aiyetoro, Jan Susler, and others. The legal victory temporarily halted the practice of sending prisoners to control units strictly because of their political status. The ruling was reversed by the D.C. Appellate Court a year later. Those political prisoners not sent to Marion, Alderson, or Lexington control units are sent to other control units modeled after Marion/Lexington but located within maximum security state prisons. Normally this means twenty-three-hour-a-day lockdown in long-term units located in remote hinterlands far from family, friends, and attorneys, with heavy censorship and restrictions on communications, visits, and outside contacts, combined with constant harassment, provocation, and brutality by prison guards.

The influx of so many captured freedom fighters (i.e., prisoners of war—POWs) with varying degrees of guerrilla experience added a valuable dimension to the New Afrikan liberation struggle behind the walls. In the first place it accelerated the prison struggles already in process, particularly the attack on control units. One attack was spearheaded by Michael Deutsch and Jeffrey Haas of the People's Law Office, Chicago, which challenged Marion's H-Unit boxcar cells. Another was spearheaded by Assata Shakur and the Center for Constitutional Rights, which challenged her out-of-state placement in the Alderson, West Virginia control unit.

Second, it stimulated a thoroughgoing investigation and exposure of COINTELPRO's hand in waging low intensity warfare on New Afrikan and Third World nationalities in the U.S. This was spearheaded by Geronimo ji Jaga with Stuart Hanlon's law office in the West and by Dhoruba Bin Wahad with attorneys Liz Fink, Robert Boyle, and Jonathan Lubell in the East. These COINTELPRO investigations resulted in the overturn of Bin Wahad's conviction and his release from prison in March 1990 after he had been imprisoned nineteen years for a crime he did not commit.

Third, it broadened the scope of the prison movement to the international arena by producing the initial presentation of the U.S. political prisoner and prisoner of war (PP/POW) issue before the UN's Human Rights Commis-

and destroy missions were Sandra Pratt (wife of Geronimo ji Jaga, assassinated while visibly pregnant), Mark Essex, Woody Changa Green, Twyman Kakuyan Olugbala Meyers, Frank "Heavy" Fields, Anthony Kimu White, Zayd Shakur, Melvin Rema Kerney, Alfred Kambui Butler, Ron Carter, Rory Hithe, and John Thomas, among others. Red Adams, left paralyzed from the neck down by police bullets, would die from the effects a few years later.

Other New Afrikan freedom fighters, not directly a part of BLA, were also attacked, hounded, and captured during the same general era. These included Imari Obadele and the RNA-11 in Jackson, Mississippi; Don Taylor and De Mau Mau of Chicago; Hanif Shabazz, Abdul Aziz, and the VI-5 in the Virgin Islands; Mark Cook of the George Jackson Brigade (GJB) in Seattle; Ahmed Obafemi of the RNA in Florida; Atiba Shanna in Chicago; Mafundi Lake in Alabama; Sekou Kambui and Imani Harris in Alabama; Robert Aswad Duren in California; Kojo Bomani Sababu and Dharuba Cinque in Trenton; John Partee and Tommie Lee Hodges of Alkebulan in Memphis; Gary Tyler in Los Angeles; Kareem Saif Allah and the Five Percenter–BLA–Islamic Brothers in New York; Ben Chavis and the Wilmington 10 in North Carolina; Delbert Africa and MOVE members in Philadelphia; and others doubtless too numerous to name.

Political Converts in Prison

Not everyone was political before incarceration. John Andaliwa Clark became so, and a freedom fighter par excellence, only after being sent behind the walls. He paid the supreme sacrifice during a hail of gunfire from Trenton State Prison guards. Hugo Dahariki Pinell also became political after being sent behind the California walls in 1964. He has been in prison ever since. [Pinell was murdered in California State Prison–Sacramento in 2015. —Ed.] Joan Little took an ice pick from a white North Carolina guard who had used it to force her to perform oral sex on him. She killed him, escaped to New York, was captured and forced to return to the same North Carolina camp where she feared for her life. Massive public vigilance and support enabled her to complete the sentence in relative safety and obtain her release.

Dessie Woods and Cheryl Todd, hitchhiking through Georgia, were given a ride by a white man who tried to rape them. Woods took his gun, killed him, and was sent to prison where officials drugged and brutalized her. Todd was also imprisoned and subsequently released upon completion of the sentence. Woods was denied parole several times then finally released.

Political or not, each arrest was met with highly sensationalized prejudicial publicity that continued unabated to and throughout the trial. The negative

communities, as defined by the Constitution of the United States.

10. We want land, bread, housing, education, clothing, justice and peace. And as our major political objective, a United Nations–supervised plebiscite to be held throughout the Black colony in which only Black colonial subjects will be allowed to participate for the purpose of determining the will of Black people as to their national destiny.

(See full 10-Point Program later in this volume, pp. 603–606)

The Panthers established numerous programs to serve the Oakland ghetto—free breakfasts for children, free health care, free daycare, and free political education classes. The program that riveted the ghetto's attention was their campaign to "stop police murder of and brutality against Blacks." Huey, a community college pre-law student, discovered that it was legal for citizens to openly carry arms in California. With that assurance, the Black Panther Party began armed car patrols of the police cruisers that patrolled Oakland's Black colony. When a cruiser stopped to make an arrest, the Panther car stopped. They fanned out around the scene, arms at the ready, and observed, tape recorded, and recommended a lawyer to the arrest victim. It didn't take long for the police to retaliate. They confronted Huey late one night near his home. Gunfire erupted, leaving Huey critically wounded, a policeman dead, and another wounded. The Panthers and the Oakland/Bay community responded with a massive campaign to save Huey from the gas chamber. The California Senate began a hearing to rescind the law permitting citizens to openly carry arms within city limits. The Panthers staged an armed demonstration during the hearing at the Sacramento Capitol to protest the Senate's action, which gained national publicity. That publicity, together with the Panthers' philosophy of revolutionary nationalism and self-defense combined with the "Free Huey" campaign, catapulted the BPP to nationwide prominence.

But it was not without cost. On August 25, 1967, J. Edgar Hoover issued his infamous Counter Intelligence Program (COINTELPRO) memorandum, which directed the FBI (and local police officials) to disrupt specified Black organizations and neutralize their leaders so as to prevent "the rise of a Black messiah."

Attacks Increase on Revolutionaries

The Panthers rolled eastward, establishing offices in each major northern ghetto. As they went, they set up revolutionary programs in each community that were geared to provide community control of schools, tenant control of

slum housing, free breakfast for schoolchildren, free health care, daycare, and legal clinics, and free political education classes for the community. They also initiated campaigns to drive dope pushers and drugs from the community, and campaigns to stop police murder and brutalization of Blacks. As they went about the community organizing these various programs they were frequently confronted, attacked, or arrested by the police, and some were even killed during these encounters.

Other revolutionary organizers suffered similar entrapments. The Revolutionary Action Movement's Herman Ferguson and Max Stanford were arrested in 1967 on spurious charges of conspiring to kill civil rights leaders. In the same year the poet and playwright Amiri Baraka—aka LeRoi Jones—was arrested for transporting weapons in a van during the Newark riots and did a brief stint in Trenton State Prison until a successful appeal overturned his conviction. SNCC's Rap Brown, Stokely Carmichael, and other orators were constantly threatened or charged with "inciting to riot" as they crisscrossed the country speaking to mass audiences. Congress passed "Rap Brown laws" to deter speakers from crossing state lines to address mass audiences lest a disturbance break out leaving them vulnerable to federal charges and imprisonment. And numerous revolutionary organizers and orators *were* being imprisoned.

This initial flow of revolutionaries into the jails and prisons began to spread a revolutionary nationalist buzz through New Afrikans behind the walls. New Afrikan prisoners were also influenced by the domestic revolutionary atmosphere and the liberation struggles in Afrika, Asia, and South America. Small groups began studying on their own, or in collectives, the works of Malcolm X, Huey P. Newton, *The Black Panther* newspaper, *The Militant* newspaper, contemporary national liberation struggle leaders Kwame Nkrumah, Jomo Kenyatta, Frantz Fanon, Che Guevara, Fidel Castro, Ho Chi Minh, and Mao Tse-tung, plus Marx, Lenin, and Bakunin too. The numbers of New Afrikan and Third World prisoners increased while the number of white prisoners decreased throughout U.S. prisons. Under this onslaught of rising national liberation consciousness, increased percentages of New Afrikan and Third World prisoners, and decreased numbers of white prisoners, the last of the prisons' overt segregation policies fell by the wayside.

The New Afrikan Independence Movement

The seeds of Malcolm took further root on March 29, 1968. On that date the Provisional Government of the Republic of New Afrika (RNA) was founded at a convention held at the Black-owned Twenty Grand Motel in Detroit. Over five hundred grassroots activists came together to issue a Declaration of

negotiation between prisoners and state and prison officials. At Attica Black, brown, white, red, and yellow prisoners took over one block of the prison and stood together for five days seeking to negotiate an end to their inhumane conditions. Their now-famous dictum declared: "We are men, not beasts, and will not be driven as such." But Rockefeller had presidential ambitions. The rebelling prisoners' demands included a political request for asylum in a non-imperialistic country. Rockefeller's refusal to negotiate foreshadowed a macabre replay of his father John D.'s slaughter of striking Colorado miners and their families decades earlier. Altogether forty-three people died at Attica. New York State troopers' bullets killed thirty-nine people—twenty-nine prisoners and ten guards—in retaking Attica and shocked the world by the naked barbarity of the U.S. prison system. Yet the Attica rebellion too remains a milestone in the development of the New Afrikan liberation struggle behind the walls, a symbol of the highest development of prisoner multinational solidarity to date.

New World Clashes with the Nation of Islam

In 1973, the simmering struggle for control of Newark's NOI Temple No. 25 erupted into the open. Warren Marcello, a New World member, assassinated NOI Temple No. 25 Minister Shabazz. In retaliation several NWI members were attacked and killed within the confines of the New Jersey prison system, and before the year was out the bodies of Marcello and a companion were found beheaded In Newark's Weequahic Park. Ali Hassan, still in prison, was tried as one of the coconspirators in the death of Shabazz and was found innocent.

The Black Liberation Army

COINTELPRO's destruction of the BPP forced many members underground and gave rise to the Black Liberation Army (BLA)—a New Afrikan guerrilla organization. The BLA continued the struggle by waging urban guerrilla war across the U.S. through highly mobile strike teams. The government's intensified search for the BLA during the early 1970s resulted in the capture of Geronimo ji Jaga in Dallas, Dhoruba Bin Wahad and Jamal Joseph in New York, Sha Sha Brown and Blood McCreary in St. Louis, Nuh Washington and Jalil Muntaqim in Los Angeles, Herman Bell in New Orleans, Francisco and Gabriel Torres in New York, Russell Maroon Shoatz in Philadelphia, Chango Monges, Mark Holder, and Kamau Hilton in New York, Assata Shakur and Sundiata Acoli in New Jersey, Ashanti Alston, Tarik, and Walid in New Haven, Safiya Bukhari and Masai Gibson in Virginia, and others. Left dead during the government's search

communities. Most of those functioning today came from splinter groups of the BPP after it broke up.

In Oakland, the 69th Street Mob, founded by Felix Mitchell in the early 1970s, still exists despite the government's best efforts to derail it. In East Oakland the Rolling 20s and the 700 Club, along with the Acorn Gang in West Oakland, are the powerhouse cliques on the streets.

In San Francisco, there is Sunnydale and Hunters Point, the city's largest street gang which is divided into several cliques—Oakdale, Harbor Road, West Point, etc. East Palo Alto is the home of the Professional Low Riders (PLR), who are a major influence in the South Bay Area—and in Vallejo there are the North Bay Gangsters and Crestview. Most Bay Area gangs don't have colors but align primarily on the basis of money and hustling endeavors. Many are associated with the rap music industry and with various prison groups—the 415 Kumi, BGF, or Ansar El Muhammed Muslims.

Growth of the Gangster Disciples

In 1970, Gangster Disciple (GD) Larry Hoover was convicted for a gang-related murder and sentenced to a 150 to 200–year state sentence. He's the current leader of the GDs and runs the syndicate from an Illinois prison cell.

As drugs flooded into the Chicago ghettos, young black men flooded into the Illinois prisons where they were given GD application forms to fill out. If their references proved solid, they were indoctrinated into the gang. Everyone who joined had to memorize the GD's sixteen-rule code. The GDs spread throughout the Illinois and Midwest prison systems. The flow of GDs back into the streets enabled them to expand their street network which is an intricate command and control structure, similar to a military organization.

Comrade George Assassinated

On August 21, 1971, a guard shot and killed George Jackson as he bolted from a control unit and ran for the San Quentin wall. Inside the unit lay three guards and two trustees dead. The circumstances surrounding George Jackson's legendary life and death, and the astuteness of his published writings, left a legacy that inspires and instructs the New Afrikan liberation struggle on both sides of the wall even today, and will for years to come. September 13, 1971, became the bloodiest day in U.S. prison history when New York's Governor Nelson Rockefeller ordered the retaking of Attica prison. The previous several years had seen a number of prison rebellions flare up across the country as prisoners protested widespread maltreatment and inhumane conditions. Most had been settled peaceably with little or no loss of human life after face-to-face

Independence on behalf of the oppressed Black nation inside North America, and the New Afrikan Independence Movement (NAIM) was born. Since then Blacks desiring an independent Black nation have referred to themselves and other Blacks in the U.S. as "New Afrikans."

That same month, March '68, during Martin Luther King's march in Memphis, angry youths on the fringes of the march broke away and began breaking store windows, looting, and firebombing. A sixteen-year-old-boy was killed and fifty people were injured in the ensuing violence. This left Martin profoundly shaken and questioning whether his philosophy was still able to hold the youth to a nonviolent commitment. On April 4th, he returned to Memphis, seeking the answer through one more march, and found an assassin's bullet. Ghettos exploded in flames one after another across the face of America. The philosophy of Black liberation surged to the forefront among the youth.

But not the youth alone; following a series of police provocations in Cleveland, on July 23, 1968, New Libya Movement activists there set an ambush that killed several policemen. A "fortyish" Ahmed Evans was convicted of the killings and died of "cancer" in prison ten years later.

More CIA dope surged into the ghettos from the Golden Triangle of Southeast Asia. Revolutionaries stepped up their organizing activities on both sides of the walls. Behind the walls the New Afrikan percentage steadily increased.

The Street Gangs

There were numerous Black, white, Puerto Ricans, and Asian street organizations, i.e., "gangs," in New York City during the 1950s. Among the more notorious Black street gangs of the era were the Chaplains, Bishops, Sinners, and Corsair Lords; also there were the equally violent Puerto Rican Dragons. All warred against each other and any gangs that crossed their paths.

By the 1960s, the post–World War II heroin influx had taken its toll. Most of the New York street gangs faded away. Their youthful members had succumbed to drugs, either through death by overdose, by ceasing gang activities in order to pursue full-time criminal activities to feed their drug habits, or because they were in prison for drug crimes or youth-gang assaults and killings.

Lumumba Shakur, warlord of the Bishops, and Sekou Odinga, leader of the Sinners, were two such youths who had been sent to the reformatory for youth-gang assaults. They graduated up through the "Gladiator Prisons"—Woodburn and Comstock—to mainline Attica, became politicized by the stark brutal racism in each prison, and at age twenty-one were spit back upon the streets. When the Panthers reached the East Coast in 1968, Lumumba and

Sekou were among the first youths to sign up. Lumumba opened the Harlem chapter of the Black Panther Party as its Defense Captain. Sekou opened the Queens chapter as a lieutenant and later transferred to Harlem to co-head it with his boyhood pal, Lumumba.

Origin of the Gangster Disciples Street Gang

The Gangster Disciples were founded in the 1960s in Chicago by the late David Barksdale, known historically in gang circles as "King David," under the name "Black Disciples." The group's name was later changed to "Black Gangster Disciples," and later still the name was shortened to "Gangster Disciples," or simply "GD." Its gang colors are blue and black.

COINTELPRO Attacks

In 1969, COINTELPRO launched its main attack on the Black Liberation Movement in earnest. It began with the mass arrest of Lumumba Shakur and the New York Panther 21. It followed with a series of military raids on Black Panther Party offices in Philadelphia, Baltimore, New Haven, Jersey City, Detroit, Chicago, Denver, Omaha, Sacramento, and San Diego, and was capped off with an early-morning four-hour siege that poured thousands of rounds into the Los Angeles BPP office. By mid-morning, hundreds of angry Black residents gathered at the scene and demanded that the police cease-fire. Fortunately, Geronimo ji Jaga, decorated Vietnam vet, had earlier fortified the office to withstand an assault and no Panthers were seriously injured. However, repercussions from the outcome eventually drove him underground. The widespread attacks left Panthers dead all across the country—Fred Hampton, Mark Clark, Bunchy Carter, John Huggins, John Savage, Walter Toure Pope, Bobby Hutton, Sylvester Bell, Frank "Capt. Franco" Diggs, Fred Bennett, James Carr, Larry Robeson, Spurgeon "Jake" Winters, Alex Rackley, Arthur Morris, Steve Bartholomew, Robert Lawrence, Tommy Lewis, Nathaniel Clark, Welton Armstead, Sidney Miller, Sterling Jones, Babatunde Omawali, Samuel Napier, Harold Russell, and Robert Webb, among others. In the three years after J. Edgar Hoover's infamous COINTELPRO memorandum, [two dozen —Ed] members of the BPP were killed. Nearly a thousand were arrested and key leaders were sent to jail. Others were driven underground. Still others, like BPP field marshal Donald "DC" Cox, were driven into exile overseas.

The RNA was similarly attacked that year. During its second annual convention in March '69, held at Reverend C.L. Franklin's New Bethel Church in Detroit, a police provocation sparked a siege that poured 800 rounds into the church. Several convention participants were wounded; one policeman was

Among those gang leaders resisting the CRIP invasion were Peabody of the Denver Lanes, Puddin of the Westside Pirus, Rooster of the 30 Pirus, and the Westside Brims—perhaps the most well-known and respected of the lot, although their leader is unknown today. The Brims families used their prestige and influence to recruit other sets to join their side in opposition to the CRIPs. As the various sets began hooking up with each other to start other Brim families and to recruit other sets to join their side in opposition to the CRIPs in the early 1970s, the federation solidified and formally united into the citywide Bloods. They adopted the color red as their banner; they also use the colors green or brown.

Prison is a normal next stop for many gang members. The first Bloods sent to Chino, a mainline California prison, are commonly referred to in Blood circles as the "First Bloods to walk the line at Chino." To increase their prison membership and recruitment, they created a "Bloodline (BL) Constitution" patterned after the constitution of the BGF: a Panther-influenced group already established in the California prison system at the time. The BL Constitution contained the Blood's code of conduct, history, and bylaws and was required reading for each new recruit. To speed up recruitment, the older "First Bloods" made reading the constitution an automatic induction into their ranks and thereafter began tricking young prisoners into reading it. Once read, the new recruit could only reject membership at the risk of serious bodily harm.

The press-ganging of young recruits at Chino set off ripples of dissatisfaction and breakaways among Bloods in other California prisons. Those disaffected centered around Peabody at Old Folsom Prison who took parts from the BL and the BGF constitutions and created a new United Blood Nation (UBN) Constitution designed to unify all Bloods in prison. Since then, Bloods have chosen which constitution they would come under. If they choose either the BL or UBN Constitution they are held to a higher standard than other members; they hold positions and are similar to the officers' corps of a military organization. Those Bloods not under a constitution are the foot soldiers. The BL and UBN organization spread throughout the California prison system, and they are strictly prison organizations. Once a Blood leaves prison he returns to his old neighborhood set. From South Central the Bloods spread to Pasadena, Gardenia, San Diego, Sacramento, Bakersfield, and throughout the state and its prison system.

San Francisco Bay Area Gangs

San Francisco Bay Area gangs or "cliques" can be traced back to the early 1960s and are usually identified by, or named after, their neighborhoods or

lying where they fell until it was too late for them to be saved by medical treatment. Nolen, in particular, had been instrumental in organizing recent demonstrations at Soledad Prison in protest of killings by guards of two other Black prisoners—Clarence Causey and William Powell. He was consequently both a thorn in the side of prison officials and a hero to the Black prison populations. When the guard was exonerated two weeks later of the triple killings of Nolen and two others, the prisoners retaliated by throwing a guard off the tier.

George Jackson, Fleeta Drumgo, and John Clutchette were charged with the guard's death and came to be known as the Soledad Brothers. California's Black prisoners solidified around the Soledad Brothers case and the chain of events led to the formation of the Black Guerrilla Family (BGF). The Panthers spearheaded a massive campaign to save the Soledad Brothers from the gas chamber. The nationwide coalescence of prisoners and support groups around the case converted the scattered, disparate prison struggles into a national prison movement.

On August 7, 1970, Jonathan Jackson, younger brother of George, attempted to liberate Ruchell Cinque Magee, William Christmas, and James McClain from the Marin County courthouse in California. Jonathan, McClain, Christmas, and the trial judge were killed by SWAT teams, who also wounded the prosecutor and paralyzed him for life. Miraculously, Ruchell and three wounded jurors survived the fusillade. Jonathan frequently served as Angela Davis's bodyguard. She had purchased weapons for that purpose, but Jonathan used those same weapons in the breakout attempt. Immediately afterward she became the object of an international "woman hunt." On October 13, Angela was captured in New York City and was subsequently returned to California to undergo a very acrimonious trial with Magee. She was acquitted on all charges. Magee was tried separately and convicted on lesser charges. He remains imprisoned to date—over three decades in all [four decades at the time of publication of this edition —Ed.]—and is our longest-held political prisoner.

Origin of the Bloods

Most South Central street organizations, commonly called "gangs," "sets," or "orgs," take their names from prominent streets: Slauson, Denver Lane, Piru, Hoover, etc., that run through their neighborhood. The CRIPs had already formed, were massed up and rolling together. Their strength attracted other sets to become CRIPs. As they moved into territories occupied by other South Central organizations they met stiff resistance from those neighborhood sets who did not want to align with or be taken over by them.

killed, another wounded, and the entire convention (140 people) arrested en masse. When Reverend Franklin (father of "The Queen of Soul" singer Aretha Franklin) and Black state representative James Del Rio were informed of the incident they called Black judge George Crockett, who proceeded to the police station where he found total legal chaos. Almost 150 people were being held incommunicado. They were being questioned, fingerprinted, and given nitrate tests to determine if they had fired guns—in total disregard of fundamental constitutional procedures. Hours after the roundup, there wasn't so much as a list of persons being held and no one had been formally arrested. An indignant Judge Crockett set up court right in the station house and demanded that the police either press charges or release their captives. He had handled about fifty cases when the Wayne County prosecutor, called in by the police, intervened. The prosecutor promised that the use of all irregular methods would be halted. Crockett adjourned the impromptu court and by noon the following day the police had released all but a few individuals who were held on specific charges. Chaka Fuller, Rafael Vierra, and Alfred Hibbit (Alfred 2X)were charged with the killing of the police officer. All three were subsequently tried and acquitted. Chaka Fuller was mysteriously assassinated a few months afterwards.

On Friday, the 13th of June 1969, Clarence 13X , founder of the Five Percenters, was mysteriously assassinated in the elevator of a Harlem project building by three male Negroes. His killers were never discovered but his adherents suspect government complicity in his death. News reports at the time hinted that BSS instigated the assassination to try to foment a war between the NOI and the Five Percenters. Revolutionaries nationwide were attacked and/or arrested—Tyari Uhuru, Maka, Askufo, and the Smyrna Brothers in Delaware; JoJo Muhammad Bowens and Fred Burton in Philadelphia; and Panthers Mondo we Langa, Ed Poindexter, and Veronza Daoud Bowers Jr. in Omaha.

Police mounted an assault on the Panther office in the Desiree Projects of New Orleans, which resulted in several arrests. A similar attack was made on the People's Party office in Houston. One of their leaders, Carl Hampton, was killed by the police, and another, Lee Otis Johnson, was arrested later on an unrelated charge and sentenced to forty-one years in prison for alleged possession of one marijuana cigarette.

The Rise of Prison Struggles

Like the Panthers, most of those arrested brought their philosophies with them into the prisons. Likewise, most had outside support committees to one degree or another so that this influx of political prisoners linked the struggle

behind the walls with the struggles in local communities on the outside. The combination set off a beehive of political activity behind the walls, and prisoners stepped up their struggle for political, Afrikan, Islamic, and academic studies, access to political literature, community access to prisons, an end to arbitrary punishments, access to attorneys, adequate law libraries, relevant vocational training, contact visits, better food, health care, housing, and a myriad of other struggles. The forms of prison struggle ranged from face-to-face negotiations to mass petitioning, letter writing, and call-in campaigns, outside demonstrations, class-action lawsuits, hunger strikes, work strikes, rebellions, and more drastic actions. Overall, all forms of struggle served to roll back draconian prison policies that had stood for centuries, and to further the development of the New Afrikan liberation struggle behind the walls.

These struggles would not have been as successful, or would have been much more costly in terms of lives lost or brutality endured, had it not been for the links to the community and the community support—and legal support—that political prisoners brought with them into the prisons. Although that support was not always sufficient in quantity or quality, and was sometimes nonexistent or came with hidden agendas, or was marked by frequent conflicts, on the whole it was this combination of resolute prisoners, community support, and legal support which was most often successful in prison struggles.

The Changing Complexion of Prisons

As the ’60s drew to a close New Afrikan and Third World nationalities made up nearly 50 percent of the prison population. National liberation consciousness became the dominant influence behind the walls as the overall complexion neared the changeover from white to Black, brown, and red. The decade-long general decrease in prisoners, particularly whites, brought a drop of between 16,000 and 23,000, while the total number of New Afrikan prisoners increased slightly or changed insignificantly over the same period. Yet the next decade would begin the period of unprecedented new prison construction, as the primary role of U.S. prisons changed from “suppression of the working classes” to suppression of domestic Black and Third World liberation struggles inside the U.S.

Origin of CRIP

There existed street organizations in South Central Los Angeles before the rise of the Black Panther Party. These groups, criminal in essence, were indeed the wells from which the Panthers would recruit their most stalwart members. Alprentice “Bunchy” Carter, who chartered the first L.A. chapter of the Party,

was the leader of perhaps the most violent street organization of that time—The Slausons. James Carr, former cellmate of comrade George Jackson and author of *BAD*, was a member of the Farmers. There were the Gladiators, the Businessmen, the Avenues, Blood Alley, and the Rebel Rousers, to name but a few.

After the 1965 rebellion in Watts, there came an unsteady truce of sorts that caused the street organizations to focus on a larger, more deadly enemy—the Los Angeles Police Department. So, by the time the Black Panther Party came to L.A. in 1968 a shaky peace existed among them in which they could vent their anger, respond to injustice, and represent their neighborhoods.

By and large, the Party usurped the youthful rage and brought the street organizations of that time to an end. Of course, the U.S. government also did its share by drafting young brothers into the Vietnam War.

These, however, were the storm years of COINTELPRO, and the Party was the focal point. Thus, by late ’69, the aboveground infrastructure of the BPP was in shambles due to its own internal contradictions and the weight of the state. Confusion set in among the people, creating, if you will, a window of opportunity—of which both the criminals and the counterrevolutionists in the government took advantage.

Community Relations for an Independent People (CRIP) was a city-funded team post (meeting place) on the east side of L.A. that played host to some of the area’s most rowdy youth. One such brother was Raymond Washington, who at the time belonged to a young upstart clique called the Baby Avenues. The team post became center ground to an ever-widening group of youth who eventually took its title, CRIP, as a name and moved westward with it. With the vanguard in shambles and the local pigs turning a deliberate deaf ear, the CRIPs flourished rapidly. In its formative years, the Party’s influence was evident within it, for the same uniform/dress code of the Party’s was that of the CRIPs. Yet a sinister twist developed in which New Afrikan people became targets of the young hoodlums. And with no vanguard forces readily available to teach and train these youth, they spiraled out of control, taking as their nemesis the Brims, who later developed into the citywide Bloods. The founding of the CRIPs is established as 1969. Their gang color is blue, and sometimes also the color white.

Enter the ’70s

A California guard, rated as an expert marksman, opened the decade of the ’70s with the January 13th shooting at close range of W.L. Nolen, Cleveland Edwards, and Alvin “Jug” Miller in the Soledad prison yard. They were left