

Shelley

**Why We Support the
“Stateville Four”:**

**A Political
Statement from the
Stateville
Prisoners Organization**



On January 10, 1977, two pigs were stabbed (one fatally) at Stateville Koncentration Kamp.

The state immediately began what they called an "investigation" into this action. In reality, this "investigation" was a reign of physical torture, intimidation and coercion carried out against Stateville prisoners.

After four months of "investigation," the state was forced to admit defeat, in-as-much as they couldn't determine what actually happened on Jan. 10th, or who was involved. They then choose to frame four of our Brothers.

In April, 1977, Charles Jennings was falsely indicted for murder; Thomas Blair, Andrew Craig and John Myles were falsely indicted for aggravated battery.

There is no question that these charges are without foundation, and that the state is trying to frame these Brothers in an effort to further intimidate prisoners—especially black prisoners—appease the deluded public, and otherwise preserve an image of themselves as unbeatable.

Therefore, this attempted frame-up of the Four by the state is the most immediate reason for SPO's support of them.

But we have other reasons for supporting these Brothers, and it's not

possible to present those reasons without placing them in a wider, political context. Because, on that bottom, ultimately determining line, the issue here is between black people and our enemy.

For SPO to talk about its support of the Four, is for it to talk about its involvement in the struggle to liberate our people. For SPO to talk about the threat being presented to the Four by their frame/trial, is for it to talk about an aspect of the genocide which every black person in amerikkka is a victim of.

SPO feels that no Afrikan person in amerikkka can talk about these four Brothers without, at the same time, talking about themselves. None of us can ignore these Brothers and their fight against racism and injustice, without at the same time ignoring ourselves as members of a people—a nation—struggling to free ourselves from the racism and exploitation of amerikkka.

The Genocide of Black People

The Four have been indicted by a so-called "grand jury" which sat behind closed doors and labeled these Brothers as "criminals." The reality is that the Four are VICTIMS, and the real criminals

(This STATEMENT expresses the views of SPO, and not necessarily those of the "Four" or anyone else not connected with SPO.)

are trying to frame them. The real criminals are the executive, legislative, judicial and corporate branches of the federal and state governments of amerikkka.

The real criminals were the kidnapers of our people; they are the ones responsible at this very moment for the total oppression of our people and the conditions under which we live.

The real criminals—the amerikkkan government—are guilty of the genocide of black people. Afrikan people have died at the hands of our oppressors for the more than three hundred years of our enslavement in this country. It was genocide in 1677, and it's genocide in 1977.

When our children get shot down in their playgrounds and out of the windows of their homes by blue-helmeted klansmen who call themselves police, that is genocide!

When our women are sterilized without their knowledge (or, when/if they chose to be sterilized because of the conditions that we face as a people) that is genocide!

When our children attend the schools controlled by our enemy and have their minds warped, have their creativity stifled, and generally have all motivation drained from them, that is genocide!

When we as a people are forced into the living/housing conditions in dilapidated, fire-trap, rat-infested and disease-ridden ghettos, that is genocide!

When we are forced to steal in order to survive; when our people are consciously herded into the prisons of the kountry, that is genocide!

It is genocide when we are forced to remain in a society which

systematically deprives us of jobs, of decent health care, of an education that instills into us a sense of our own history, heritage and which guides us into the future.

And its genocide when four of our Brothers are chosen by the enemy to be lynched under cover of his so-called "law". The purpose of the lynching of black folks in amerikkka has always been to "punish" those of us who dared seek freedom, who dared to strike out at the symbols and perpetrators of our oppression. Its purpose has always been to instill fear into black hearts, to paralyze black minds so that they wouldn't follow the logic of our degradation and begin to devise bold plans to end it.

The purpose of lynching black folks in amerikkka has been to maintain white supremacy and the domination of black people. The state's attempt to frame the Four has the same ultimate purpose. Therefore our support of the Four is a blow against white supremacy and a contribution to the liberation of our people.

Political Prisoners and Prisoners of war

Throughout the campaign to support and free the Four, the reality of prison will be exposed, and it will be emphasized that all of amerikkka is a prison for black people, Native Nation (Indian) people, for Mexican and Chicano people, for Puerto Rican people and for the oppressor's own people.

Prisons have become major focus of peoples' attention the past few years. More and more people have come to see the particular role that prisons play in capitalist society generally, and the particular role

they play in the enemy's attempt to contain the struggles of oppressed peoples inside his borders.

Support for the Four is concrete support for all black prisoners, Political Prisoners and Prisoners of War: Ahmed Evans; Geronimo Pratt; Assata Shakur, Sundiata Acoli and all captured B.L.A. Brothers and Sisters; Ruchell Magee; Johnny Spain; Dessie Woods; The North Caroline Sisters; Lance Bell; the Bedford Hills Sisters...The list could go on and on, but the absence of support for our captured Brothers & Sisters, the absence of support for the principles and cause for which they fought and continue to fight IN OUR INTERESTS, must not continue.

We must realize that these pigs have no right to "judge" us. These fools haven't the right to sit in "judgement" of any black or other oppressed person in amerikkka. This we must realize, and begin to act upon accordingly. The "authority" that amerikkka exercises over us is an illegitimate "authority".

We are in this kountry, but not of it. We are here against our wills, and our treatment at the hands of these pigs can be described in no other way than the treatment of a nation of people, oppressed, exploited and victims of genocide by the u.s. government.

Each time the Four enter the enemy's courtroom, they become symbols of our absence of the power to control our own lives.!

The courtrooms of amerikkka are not OUR courtrooms. WE did not sit in closed rooms and "indict" the Four or any of our other captured Brothers and Sisters. Their presence in the courtrooms of the enemy

must remind us that we do not control our lives, and that our lives are being "judged"—and TAKEN—by our enemy and the enemy of all righteousness, justice and peace.

The courtrooms of the enemy must become a front of battle for us; each time the Four or any of our people are inside them, WE must be there—demanding their freedom and doing whatever else is necessary to enforce our demands.

Support for Other National Liberation Struggles

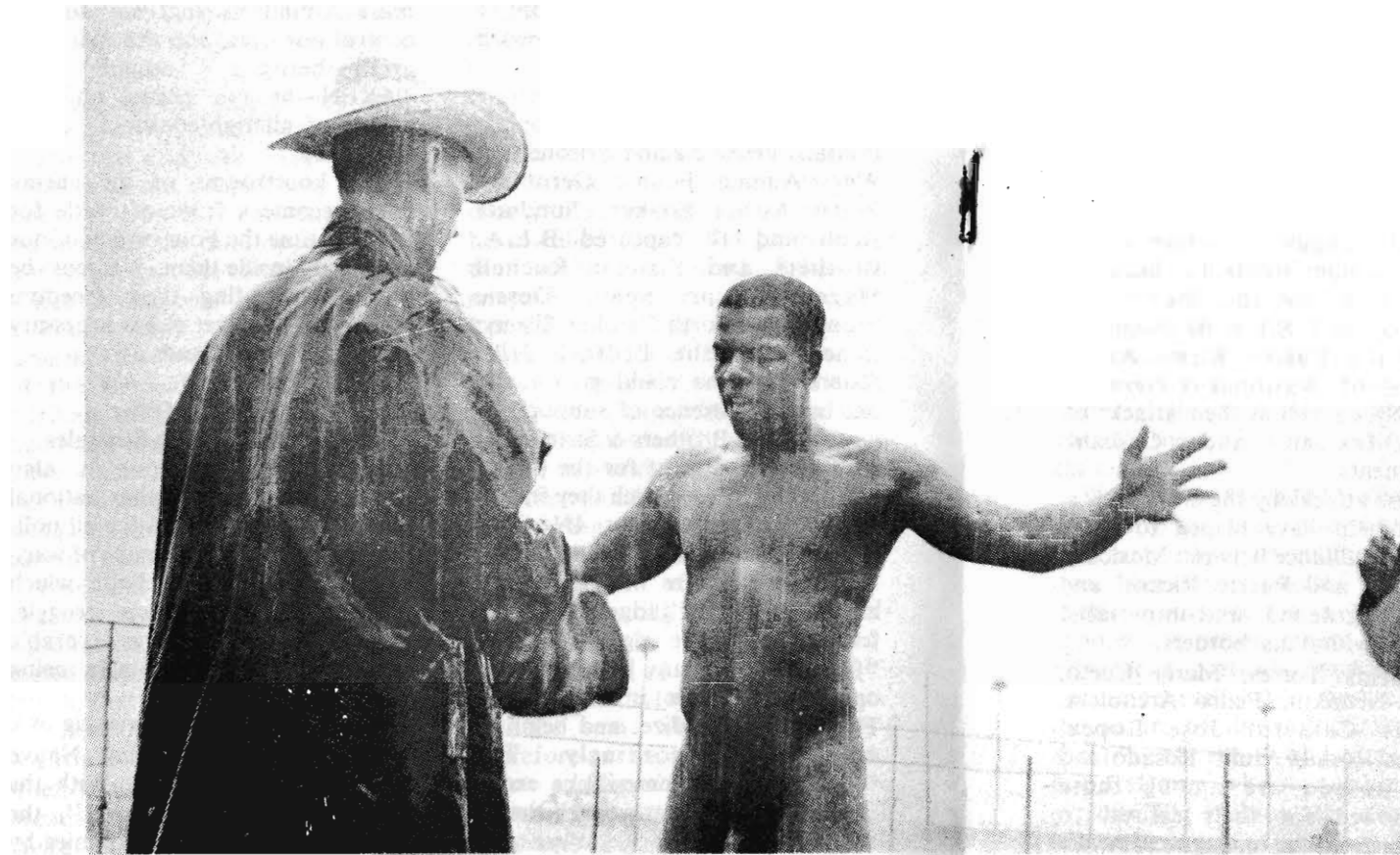
Support for the Four is also concrete support for other national liberation struggles and for all political prisoners and prisoners of war.

Our support for the Four, which intensifies our liberation struggle, also results in creating favorable conditions for the struggle being waged by our allies.

The same criminal oppressing us is oppressing and exploiting Native Nation (Indian) peoples. With the landing of the "Mayflower", the establishment of settler colonies by the so-called pilgrims, there began the criminal plunder of Native Nation people's land and resources.

The criminal appropriation of Native Nation peoples' land, the even more criminal genocidal war against them, reached its height in the 1890's in the southwestern u.s., as Native Nation peoples carried on a fierce struggle against extermination, for the preservation of their lands, and to maintain their sovereignty as nations.

The struggles of Native Nation peoples continue today. It is symbolized by the court battles for the return of Native Lands; by the escalating struggle on the



international level, as Native Nations seek recognition as sovereign nations, outside the "authority" of the u.s.

Their struggles are symbolized by the government attacks on Wounded Knee, Pine Ridge, and Native Nation organizations such as A.I.M. (American Indian Movement).

Support for the Four is concrete support for Leonard Peltier, Frank Blackhorse, Richard Mohawk, Herb Powless and Paul Skyhorse—only a few of the many fallen, imprisoned and hunted Native Nation Warriors—victims of

the criminal u.s. government in its panic-stricken attempt to crush the movement of Native Nation peoples.

Support of the Four is a concrete demonstration of solidarity with the struggles of Mexican and Chicano peoples. These peoples also struggle against the same criminal/enemy as we do, and the objective bonds which make us allies can be strengthened when the support of the Four is understood and carried out as concrete support of all prisoners, all Political Prisoners and Prisoners of War, and in the spirit of anti-imperialist solidarity.

the protection of u.s. "laws", police/outlaws and army troops, these 19th century colonizers seized land grant territories from the Mexican and Chicano peoples and drove the Native Nation peoples from their hunting lands and homes.

Today, over a century later, Mexican and Chicano people continue a heroic struggle for their right to land.

They now face the u.s. forest service, corporations and their criminal managers, the hired thugs who illegally acquired water rights in order to dry up Mexican/Chicano land so as to seize them. Mexicans/Chicanos have consistently resisted, and this has involved them in armed confrontations with so-called representatives of u.s. "law".

Today, one aspect of the Mexican/Chicano peoples' struggle has contributed to the formation of a united front with the Puerto Rican peoples and their national independence struggle.

In 1898, Puerto Rico was a self-governing country, having obtained its autonomy from Spain in February of that year, after a long and bitter struggle against Spanish imperialism.

But this was a short lived reality because in October of 1898, Puerto Rico was invaded by u.s. troops, under the direction of General Nelson Miles. Direct u.s. military rule remained in Puerto Rico until 1900, more than a year after the "Treaty of Paris" was signed between Spain and the u.s.

This "treaty" illegally made Puerto Rico a colony of the u.s. During WWI, u.s. corporate interests stepped up their criminal

The history of repression and oppression of the Mexican and Chicano peoples by the criminals who control the u.s. government began with the Mexican-American War of 1846. At that time, the entire southwest (Texas, New Mexico, Colorado, Arizona, Nevada, California and Utah) was seized by u.s. troops. There began a reign of terror, oppression and extermination of the Mexican and Chicano peoples as well as the Native Nation peoples of that area.

Wherever the u.s. troops established a fort, white settlers/colonizers followed. Under

communities are filled with misguided Brothers & Sisters who are otherwise known as agents, stool-pigeons, informers, beat representatives, etc.

Such people are victims of amerikkkanism, and we must eliminate their presense by eliminating the causes of our condition—we must liberate ourselves. To liberate ourselves means we must begin to protect ourselves, to shield each other from the enemy rather than inform on ourselves to him.

Officer Friendly is the enemy with a smile on his face—and we know about smiling faces. Officer Friendly stands and smiles as he shoots down our children in play—grounds and out of the windows of their homes. Officer Friendly is the same guy that beats our Brothers and Fathers then charges them with assault and resisting arrest. Officer Friendly is Gloves David, who shot Fred in his sleep! Officer Friendly was smiling as Marquette Park racists stoned our Mothers and as other racists insulted our Sisters in Beverly.

We must protect ourselves from these pigs, these mad gunslingers who serve and protect our enemies only. Any talk about self-determination for black folks in amerikkka without recognizing the necessity for revolutionary violence is lacking in sanity and principles. We put on a sham if we talk about black liberation with concretely supporting those who defend us from and retaliate against blue-helmeted pigs whose job it is to enforce the contemporary version of the Black Codes.

'These negroes don't want no nation; they trying to crawl back on the plantation.' That applies to us,

if we continue to revere Gabriel, Nat, and Denmark, but not support Assata Shakur. We admit that we accept the ideology of our enemy if we fail to support Sister Dessie Woods, and declare that any Sister has the *right* to take the life of an attempted rapist; or, if we fail to recognize that any of us are *justified* in doing *whatever we do* in our struggle to liberate ourselves.

To talk about genuine self-determination and the liberation of black people, is to talk about writing our own laws, our own codes of conduct towards each other and our communities. We must organize ourselves to enforce these laws and codes..

Liberation implies self-protection; it also means that any move on our part to truly liberate ourselves will be met with resistance from the enemy. History is our witness, and shows us that we must prepare for and accept the necessity for "correcting" any forces, any groups or individuals which attempt to prevent our progress.

"There are many thousands of ways to correct individuals. The best way is to send one armed expert. I don't mean to outshout him with logic, I mean correct him. Slay him, assassinate him with thuggee, by silenced pistol, shotun, with a high-powered rifle shooting from four hundred yards away and behind a rock. Suffocation, strangulation, crucifixion, burning with flame-thrower, dispatch by bomb. Auto accidents happen all day. People drown, get poleaxed, breathe noxious gasses, get stabbed, get poisoned with bad water, ratsbane, germicides, hemlock, arsenic, strychnine, L.S.D. 25 concentrate, cyanide, hydgrrcyanic acid, vitriol. A snake could bite him, nicotine oil

is deadly, an overdose of dope; there's deadly nightshade, belladonna, datura, wolfsbane, foxglove, aconite, ptomaine, optulism and the death of a thousand cuts. But a curse won't work." —George Jackson

In order to win we've got to destroy the prestige of the oppressor in our own minds, and we've got to have an adequate defensive/offen-

sive apparatus. Revolutionary violence is an instrument of People's Justice. Revolutionary violence is both a means of destroying the sense of legitimacy we hold towards the enemy, and of showing ourselves that we can govern and protect ourselves—and it's the best means of assuring that the enemy gives us enough room to do so.

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