

FREE ASSATA SHAKUR

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

Assata Shakur

Assata Shakur (slave name Joanne Chesimard) is an imprisoned Black revolutionary. Assata continues to be a target of COINTELPRO, the U.S. government's domestic counter-intelligence program that aims to subvert and destroy the just struggle of Black people for their liberation.

Assata is a fighter against the daily genocidal conditions which Black people face. She has taken a stand against the heroin and methadone that saturate the Black community; against the stealing of the lives of Black youth; against indecent medical care and inadequate food; and against the state of martial law in Black communities.

Assata stands in a long line of Black women - from Harriet Tubman and Sojourner Truth to Rosa Parks, to Joan Little and Dessie Woods and the Sisters at Bedford Hills Prison - who, from the first days of kidnap and slavery, have fought for the survival and liberation of their people. They have built movements to fight against the white supremacist terror of lynching and rape, for the right to education, against sterilization; for basic human and civil rights, and they have always participated in armed resistance.

Many people heard about Assata Shakur in the early 1970's when the state escalated its military, political and propaganda war against the Black Liberation Movement. COINTELPRO had been instituted against the Black Liberation Movement in the mid-sixties, as the domestic war-time strategy of U.S. imperialism. Vietnam was leading the anti-imperialist struggle internationally, as movements for national liberation of Native Americans, Puerto Ricans, Chicano-Mexicanos and particularly of Black people were growing from within.

The conspiracy against Assata Shakur is part of this overall war. The deadly effects of COINTELPRO have taken their toll in the assassinations of leaders such as Malcolm X, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., George Jackson and Fred Hampton. The government paid thousands of people small amounts of money to inform on community activities as part of the "Ghetto Information Project." Agents infiltrated organizations to sow divisions and distrust and to disrupt and destroy the movement. Black revolutionary organizations such as the Black Panther Party were under massive attack, resulting in thousands of jailings and hundreds of murders. Workers of the Provisional Government of the Republic of New Africa were attacked by state police, the National Guard, and the F.B.I. in Mississippi after they had begun to organize a plebescite among Black people to vote on their citizenship as New Africans.

In the face of these massive attacks, Assata Shakur and other Black revolutionaries refused to stop fighting. This heightened resistance became identified with what is known as the Black Liberation Army. The B.L.A. represents the continuing history - from Nat Turner and the slave revolts, to the Deacons for Justice - of Black people's struggle to win liberation by any means necessary. As such, the B.L.A. represents the struggle to maintain the leadership of revolutionary Black nationalism in the face of a counterintelligence war.

Crucial to the U.S. government's strategy to "neutralize" the Black Liberation Movement is the campaign, carried out by the F.B.I., local police agencies, the courts, and the media to "criminalize" the leadership of the Movement. While alleged members of the B.L.A. were murdered, tortured, and imprisoned, Assata was the focus of an onslaught of fabricated charges... for attempted murder, kidnap and bank robbery. She was the object of an intense police hunt, and \$50,000 was offered for her capture and orders were issued to police to shoot her on sight.

This is what led up to the police ambush of Assata and two comrades, Zayd Malik Shakur and Sundiata Acoli on the New Jersey Turnpike in 1973. Zayd Shakur was murdered, Assata seriously wounded, and both Assata and Sundiata were captured, to be later framed in racist trials and sentenced to life.

Since her capture, and throughout the long years of her imprisonment, Assata has proclaimed her innocence. In the face of beatings, denial of visitors, and years spent in solitary confinement, often the only woman in men's prisons, Assata Shakur has continued her struggle to expose the real criminals. In all of the charges brought against her in New York State, the charges the state used to justify its hunt for her in the first place, she has proven her innocence. In March 1978 the last outstanding charges were dropped and Assata filed suit in Federal Court, charging the U.S. government, F.B.I., Secret Service with massive misconduct in her case. Although the government finally admits the existence of voluminous files on her, it continues its refusal to release them.

The Black Liberation Movement is succeeding in reclaiming the offensive, determined to put the state on trial. In an effort to crush these developments, and in particular sabotage Assata's struggle to open up the issue of conspiracy against her and to win an appeal of the New Jersey conviction, the government immediately transferred her to the maximum security Federal Penitentiary for Women in Alderson, West Virginia. Called Davis Hall, it was especially built to imprison political prisoners. Isolated from the rest of the prison, where there are many Third World women, Assata is the only Black woman in Davis Hall, and the state has surrounded her with several white prisoners who are Nazis.

We must fight to end the attacks of Assata Shakur and all Black prisoners of war. It is particularly important to expose COINTELPRO now because the government is mounting a new wave of repression in response to the success of national liberation struggles throughout the world and the resurgence of national liberation movements within the U.S.

To support Assata Shakur is to support the struggle of Black people to win liberation. It is a leading part of the fight to defeat U.S. imperialism. Now we must fight to overturn the racist convictions of Assata Shakur and Sundiata Acoli and expose the COINTELPRO attacks against them.



FREE ASSATA SHAKUR & SUNDIATA ACOLI
FREE ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS
VICTORY TO THE BLACK LIBERATION STRUGGLE
DEFEAT U.S. IMPERIALISM

Contributions can be sent to: Assata's Cell, 20 Ave. A, #2C, New York, N.Y. 10009

May 19 Communist Organization, P.O. Box 613, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11215