

THE BLACK PANTHER

Black Community News Service

MEMORIAL ISSUE: SPRING, 1991 VOL. 1 NO. 1 \$1.00



THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES

EDITORIAL STATEMENT

DEDICATION

This issue of the *Black Panther*, *Black Community News Service* is respectfully dedicated to those who made the ultimate sacrifice and gave their lives or in other ways made supreme sacrifices in the cause of Afrikan-Amerikkkan national liberation. To our fallen comrades and the survivors, we, the editors, salute you!

WHO ARE WE?

The members of the Black Panther Newspaper Committee are located in many cities and states. We all were members of the Black Panther Party who participated in the formation, organization, and day to day operations of Black Panther Party activities in offices, branches, and chapters across this country. We participated in capacities from Central Committee Members to Rank-and-File Panthers. We fed children, clothed families, opened free health clinics, educated children about their history and the true nature of this society, protected senior citizens and helped to organize our communities.

Because of our uncompromising work to build a strong Afrikan-Amerikkkan nation, we were labeled as the number one threat to U.S. domestic tranquility and were attacked by the local, state, and federal police agencies. Many of us were forced into exile, or underground, or were imprisoned by the U.S. government during its COINTELPRO war to stamp out a rising Afrikan-Amerikkkan national liberation struggle. We saw our offices bombed and burned, comrades framed, imprisoned and murdered, and consoled the families of our friends and loved ones who were killed in illegal attacks on the Panthers and the Afrikan-Amerikkkan community by government agents in an attempt to stop our liberation movement. Many of us have been imprisoned for our political beliefs and activities. Some of us are currently political prisoners and prisoners of war who have been imprisoned for our participation in the Afrikan-Amerikkkan struggle for national liberation for nearly twenty years. We announce to you that we are back!

WHAT IS OUR GOAL?

We have come together because of a compelling need we feel to address the critical issues facing the Afrikan-Amerikkkan community. In the cities where we live, the Afrikan-Amerikkkan community is being destroyed by the plagues of drugs, unemployment, poor, inadequate, or non existent

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PUBLISHED AND EDITED BY:
THE BLACK PANTHER NEWSPAPER COMMITTEE
P.O. BOX 519, BERKELEY, CA 94701-519

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

August 26, 1990

Greetings Comrade:

This is to let you know that as a political prisoner I both support and endorse the restarting of the Black Panther Party Paper. It is needed for the education and organizing of the Black Community against the problems plaguing us as a people. InshAllah the paper will become a reality.

Dare to Struggle Dare to Win
Al Nuh Washington
Political Prisoner

August 21, 1990

Revolutionary Greetings and Solidarity:

I am extremely pleased to learn of this effort to reintroduce and produce the Black Panther Black Community News Service publication. With the reintroduction of the Black Panther Black Community News Service, I am confident of the existence of Political Prisoners of War in the U.S. will again become an important issue in the oppressed communities. I also anticipate the BCNS publication will forge and deepen the level of political consciousness amongst Black people

on the condition of their national oppression.

Therefore, I endorse this endeavor with the hope the distribution of this Black Panther publication will resurrect the network of support BCNS-Bureaus across the country, and eventually grow into a nationally recognized Black Community newspaper.

Dare to Struggle Dare to Win
A. Jail Bottom
Endorsed on the 19th Anniversary of Comrade George Jackson's assassination!

August 21, 1990

Greetings:

I trust that you and the 'rades there are doing extremely well. Rec'd your letter requesting that we political prisoners and prisoners of war send letters of endorsement in support of rebuilding the Black Community News Service. I strongly support this effort and I will contact other 'rades in my area urging them to send in similar letters of support and endorsement.

During election time, the people will know who to vote for, because

the party paper will have covered the issues as they relate to our interest and with endorsement from the people's newspaper, there can be no doubt about who is and who is not our candidate. The people's newspaper will serve to inform the community about what goes on in the community such as the drug infestation, decent housing, health care, education, family counseling and the like. We can no longer afford, if we ever could, to rely on information put out by sources outside of our community. Take good care and my comradely greetings to the folks out there.

Sincerely
Herman Bell

Bismillah ir Rahman ir Rahim

"Up you mighty Race, you can do what you will" Peace.

It was really heartwarming to hear of your efforts to rekindle the black Panther Black Community News Service there....

COINTELPRO and opportunism did a real job on the Black community. What one did not do the other managed to do in effectively seeing, that the truth of the plight of the Black masses was not told. May Allah the most high bless, guide and reward you all and if at any time can be of some service in your effort please call on me.

In struggle and peace
Bashir A. Hameed
s/n Jimmy York 82A6313
Shawangunk Prison
Box 700
Walkkill, N.Y. 12589

Jan. 5, 1991

To the BPNC:

Yes, I want to become involved with whatever struggles you are currently involved with-I am a black woman living in Venice, California and I have been struggling for the last 6 years to save our homes here-the police dept. along with the city attorney's office and an abatement team from west side police have targeted our apartment. They (the sick) want our neighborhood. We are a beach community and this community was predominantly Black and Hispanic when I moved in. In the last 5 years the rich yuppies have bought up a lot of property and raised the rents beyond the pockets of the poor Blacks here-I live in a government subsidized privately owned apartment complex. I now am a target but I will continue to stand up for my rights and the right of my people. From Dec. 1988 to June 1990 we had stopped drug traffic in or around our buildings through meeting and trust of the younger Brothers and Sisters who did not understand our struggle. Here is my donation of \$20 to further (the) cause. I will send articles I have written and articles on our tenant organization soon.

Your Sister in Struggle
Regina Hyman



Photo © Jeffrey Blankfort 1968

Editorial Statement, continued from page 1

housing, miseducation, legalized police terror and murder, and systematic and pervasive institutional racism designed to destroy our community.

In the past the Black Panther, Black Community News Service was an uncompromising voice for exposing these attacks on the Afrikan-Amerikkkan community and for advocating an implacable stand to redress them.

Our goal is to help keep our community informed and thinking about the issues which impact us and strategies and tactics for liberation. We are once again publishing the *Black Panther, Black Community News Service*, and we are proud to announce to you that uncompromising voice has returned!

HOW CAN YOU ASSIST US?

The Black Panther Newspaper Committee

news affecting your community. We also need your financial contributions to help us publish the Black Community News Service. To contribute articles, donations or to request information on how to become affiliated with the Black Panther Newspaper Committee, contact the office nearest you, or the Central Office, BPNC, P.O. Box 519, Berkeley, CA 94701-0519. Make all checks and money orders payable to "Black Panther Newspaper Committee."

The Black Panther Party Newspaper Committee is registered as a non-profit corporation with the California Secretary of State. All donations contributed to us to publish the Black Panther, Black Community News Service will be used solely for that purpose. We will publish a financial statement in each issue of the Newspaper!

WHAT IF WE HAVEN'T

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

August 1990-January 1991

The following is a financial statement of donations and grant funds received to help publish the Black Panther, Black Community News Service and expenses paid from those funds. It does not reflect funds received after January 1, 1991. We certify that it is true and correct: BPNC Editors.

REVENUES:

Individual Donations	\$2,083
John Brown Education Fund	250
Total	2,333

EXPENSES

Legal Filing	55
Mail (Permits, PO Box, Postage)	407
Photocopy	298



Black Community News

BOYCOTT OF THE COLGATE-PALMOLIVE COMPANY

reprinted from Black Community News Service; Jersey City, New Jersey

The decision of the Jersey City Municipal Council to give the Colgate-Palmolive Company a Tax Abatement, is but one more example of its disgraceful, reactionary, backwards and racist thoughts and actions. Realizing Colgates' historical policy of doing business with the racist illegal government of South Africa, such actions of J.C.'s City Council only serves to strengthen the system of apartheid. This system continues daily to oppress, restrict and murder. Colgate and other companies (also city councils who support them) which "shack up" with apartheid are enemies of all people everywhere who are against injustice anywhere.

Colgates' historical policy of doing business with the racist illegal government of South Africa, such actions of J.C.'s City Council only serves to strengthen the system of apartheid.

Those who reside in America, who are of African descent have a moral and political responsibility to support by all means necessary, our brothers and sisters in Azania (South Africa). They are not asking us for guns or manpower, but just for the continuation of sanctions to KEEP THE PRESSURE ON. This call is not made just by the Nelson Mandela's and the "militants" but the entire African spectrum, trade unionists, workers, students, and the masses of people who support progressive causes.

KEEP THE PRESSURE ON stores which continue to stock and sell Colgate products. KEEP THE PRESSURE ON Jersey City's Mayor Gerald McCann's coalition of council people. Make them feel uncomfortable about their decision to support racism.

For further information on other companies such as National Westminster Bank which are partners with apartheid, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to:

BCNS
P.O. Box 16330
Jersey City, New Jersey 07306 ■

BLACK COMMUNITY NEWS

Continued on page 4

BLACK COMMUNITY RESPONSE TO JERSEY CITY POLICE RIOT

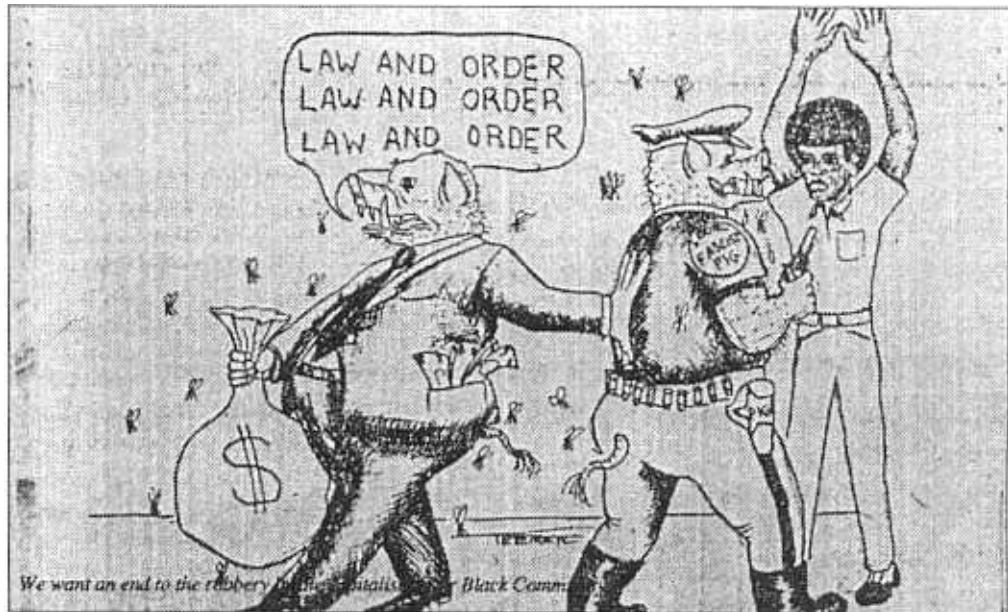
reprint from Black Community News Service Jersey City N.J. Press Release: Aug 1990

On Memorial Day 1990, while the community was winding down from a day of cook-outs, family gatherings, and folks just hanging out, masses of youth rose up in rebellion following a riot started by the Jersey City Police Department.

The incident started (according to accounts of independent

through grass root organizing.

The coalition also met with Gerald McCann, Mayor (who is the enemy of the poor, working class and people of color), and came away with empty promises and no results. In fact, McCann set up a commission made up of his loyalist on city,



witnesses) over the brutalizing of a youth for drinking beer in public. The community responded spontaneously by demonstrating down the street from the West District Police Station. After the confrontation was over, three New African youth were arrested and numerous civilians along with a few police were injured. On Sunday, June 3rd, a meeting was held at the Metropolitan A.M.E. Church consisting of a panel with representatives from All People's Congress, The Community Awareness Series, Islamic Community, City-Wide Parents Council, The NAACP, PUSH, Impact (negro police), Rev. Maize (pastor of the host church), and the politicians, Assemblyman Joe Charles, Freeholder Bill Braker (a cop), and Councilman Dan Wiley. With a few notable exceptions, the panel was made up of the traditional petty bourgeois organizations and negro opportunist politicians. Comments from the panel ran the gamut from calling for prosecuting the police and setting up a Civilian Complaint Review Board to purely reactionary positions of blaming the victims. There were also calls for recreational activities, jobs and training for youths. From the floor some of these comments were echoed, however the additional comments from the public were, in general, more progressive than the panel. Ali Lumumba (Black Community News Service), and Brother David (Nation of Islam) called for establishing a legal defense committee for those arrested. There was unity toward developing an ongoing progressive coalition to address the needs of the community

county payrolls to investigate the Memorial Day Rebellion.

Also in response to the Memorial Day rebellion, on June 13, 1990, the All People's Congress organized a march and motorcade to city hall against police brutality and racism. Over 300 people gathered on Martin Luther King Drive and Myrtle Ave., (the heart of the New African Community) and proceeded along a 3 1/2 mile route to City Hall. With militant chants and strong discipline, the marchers converged on City Hall, there John Jones (spokesperson All People's Congress), put forth before the city council the following list of demands:

1. The prosecutor's office immediately drop the charges against the victims of police brutality (those arrested on May 31) and prosecute the police.
2. Form a Community Review Board with powers to discipline police who use excessive force.
3. Create jobs, recreation and parks for our youth; not police brutality and jails.

After much debate Councilman William O'Dea offered a resolution asking the prosecutor to drop all charges against the defendants. The resolution passed with a vote of 6 - 3. The people went away with a symbolic victory, since the resolution was non-binding. The next day the County Prosecutor, DePascale (who has been accused of racism by more than one) reacted to the council's action in anger stating he would not drop the charges.

Mr. Charles Stansfield from the State Attorney General's office, Division of Civil Rights held a meeting to ascertain information on police/community relations. Present at the meeting was Councilman Wiley, John Jones, APC, Ralph Cole and Elizabeth Crooks of the NAACP, Viola Richardson of Impact, and Breeze Barrow of BCNS. The NAACP and Impact took the position that the Memorial Day incident was simply an isolated occurrence, however, Breeze raised the historical perspective of police terror enforced on the community and sighted examples of police brutality after the Memorial Day Riot. Also John Jones of the APC expressed concern about the role of police and Mayor McCann's attitude which fosters racism in Jersey City. As of this date no public report has been forwarded by Mr. Stansfield which is not unexpected since he is a tool of the state.

As of this date, the issue of the Memorial Day Riot has been put on the back burner by the bourgeois of the black community, but efforts of the new progressive alignment of members of the Islamic Community, Black Community News Service, All People's Congress, and other individuals intend to keep the

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JERSEY CITY POLITICS, BLACK BOURGEOIS POLITICIANS

November 1990

There has never been any illusion of Black elected officials in Jersey City, providing leadership for the Black community and recent developments are a continuation of the backwardness of the Black bourgeois.

The following are examples of these actions. In the not too distant past, Freeholder Bill Braker and Ward F Councilperson Dan Wiley spoke about Plantation Politics in relation to Mayor Gerald McCann's statement regarding Glenn Cunningham looking for a gentler and kinder slave master. However now Bill Braker has crawled back on the plantation, running for Freeholder on McCann's slate and of course with his blessing. Consider this, Bill Braker is the incumbent, however because of his insecurity and failure to effectively organize the community, with the exception of the regular political hacks, into independent political support from the masses. This has caused Mr. Braker to sleaze his way back to Gerry's arms. This was not unexpected of Mr. Braker due to his political past.

Then you have Ms. Willie Flood, a nice hard working sister. Ms. Flood campaigned vigorously for Cunningham and Wiley against the McCannites. Now sister Flood is running for the vacant at-large council seat, as Gerald McCann's choice.

Remember McCann's demand was loyalty, this in itself brings up a major concern, can and why should Black folks support a person whose candidacy is based on being loyal to McCann? Can the Black community afford to give another council vote to McCann and in effect endorse what McCann has been doing? It is distressing with sister Willie since she is a likeable and concerned person, but in analyzing her council votes, she has supported the administration 90% of the time.

Of course we can not leave out the only present Black municipal elected official, Dan Wiley, Ward F Councilman, who ran and won on Cunningham's ticket. During the run off with then Councilperson Frances Thompson, one of the elements which contributed to Wiley's victory were the allegations of deals and money exchanged between Frances and Gerry. Now Mr. Wiley has endorsed both Mr. Braker and Ms. Flood. The surface reasons were: Braker "supported me" and Flood "for unity" the former being unprincipled and the latter being unreal. This is even more disturbing than the others because I worked for Mr. Wiley in an advisory role and still consider myself a friend (obviously he hasn't listened to my advice), but my commitment to the people supersedes personalities.

Supporters of Ms. Flood and Mr. Braker were asked their position on all of this. Some

of these folks are political hacks and opportunists who are only concerned with their jobs and have no problem prostituting themselves without any principles. However, there are some honest, dedicated righteous folks who are doing what they sincerely think is correct, they must become more dialectical in their methods.

Electoral politics with Black Bourgeois politicians will not independently address the true needs and concerns of the people (even if they want to) unless the progressive and radical elements of the community effectively organize to make Black politicians accountable to the people. There is enough fault to spread around, the preachers with pimp mentalities, the "civil rights" organizations who whimper for a piece of the pie, so called progressives who become silenced by city hall monies and revolutionaries who forgot how to be a vanguard and winding up as the rearguard. This piece is written in the spirit of true, principled community unity and constructive criticism to move forward our community. Truth like medicine can be bitter to the taste but it can cure what ails you.

In Struggle

Aki Lumumba
aka Breeze
Black Community News Service
New Jersey Office ■

BLACK ARTISTS AND CRAFTSPEOPLE RALLY TO RESCUE EBONY MUSEUM

Fourteen months after the Loma Prieta Earthquake the black community suffered yet another devastating blow in West Oakland, the destruction of the *Ebony Museum*. In response to the cold weather, museum curator, Assatoui Ayola Vernita lit a fire in a fireplace damaged by the October '89 quake. Altho inspected, cracks in the fireplace masonry had not been detected. The ten and one-half year old *Ebony Museum of African Art and Culture* was destroyed as a result.

During the decade the *Ebony Museum* served the black community of Oakland, California it was visited by over 12,000 people. Vernita is one of very few museum directors to place African-American contemporary art in the continua of African artistic traditions. Many bay area artists have responded to the call of the African Universal Library, an organization which provided books to prisoners of African descent, and was housed for many years in the *Ebony Museum*, by donating sculpture, prints, books and ethnic clothing to be sold at auction in a benefit planned for Saturday, March 23, 1991, at THE LOFT, 3212 San Pablo Avenue, Oakland, CA, from noon 'til midnight. Speakers and entertainment will also be featured at this event. In addition to sculpture, prints, books and ethnic clothing, the museum is also seeking donations of art, African and African-American artifacts, ephemera, periodicals, jewelry, money and fabric. For more information, contact the *Ebony Museum* at (415) 763-0141, or the African Universal Library at (415) 832-1648.

DRUGS, RACISM AND THE DESTRUCTION OF COMMUNITIES

By Dennis Desmond and Clarence Lusane

The drug problem is a reflection of the continuing racial divide in America. W.E.B. DuBois is as prophetic in death as he was in life when he stated that "The problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line."

Perhaps no episode demonstrates the racial edge of the drug war more than the story of Keith Jackson. When President Bush gave his drug address in September 1989, he held up a bag of crack that he stated had been bought by government agents in a park across from the White House. His point was that the drug epidemic is so pervasive that crack can be bought anywhere, even in front of the White House.

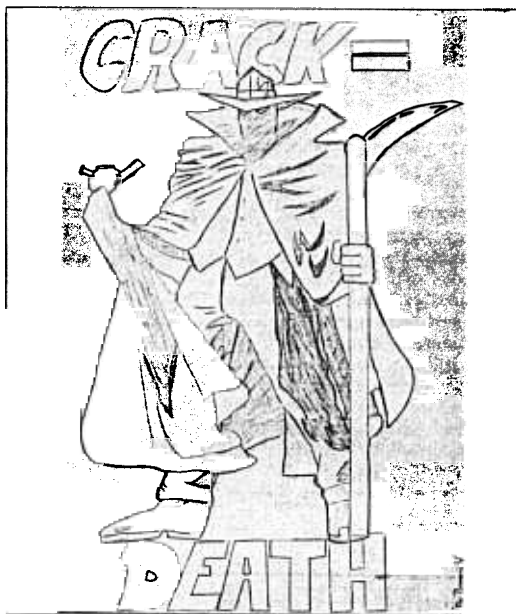
This was not the whole story. Bush did not mention that Keith Jackson, the 18-year-old black youth who sold the crack, had never heard of the park and had to be given written directions. Bush also did not mention that crack nor any other drugs had ever been bought in the park before until the U.S. government bought them.

He also did not mention that this staged event was so poorly organized that they had to lure Jackson to the park twice because the first try fell apart when the government agent who was filming the transaction was attacked by a homeless person.

Why go through so much trouble and put out so much disinformation? Why not hold up a bag of laundered money or a jar of ether? In the aftermath of Bush's speech, it was important that Keith Jackson become a symbol. Jackson became Willie Horton.

The scene is from the movie, "The Godfather." It is the late 1940s. The Dons sit around the table and debate the morals versus the profits of entering into the drug trade full-scale. A compromise is reached: Organized crime will move into drug trafficking, but will only sell to blacks.

In real life, this scene was more or less the beginning of the illegal narcotics crisis in Black America. Prior to the 40s, illegal light drug use (smoking marijuana) and hard drug use (heroin) was restricted to a small segment of the general society and of the African-



American community. There were a few publicly known cases of addiction, such as jazz great Charlie Parker and Billie Holiday, but for the most part, drug abuse was small. By 1951, due to Mafia intervention, there were over 100,000 addicts in the U.S. many of them Black.

Another jump in black drug addiction occurred during the Vietnam War. Many Black soldiers took easily available drugs to ease the pain of war and racism that dominated their lives. Many came home addicts and had no trouble finding heroin as the inner cities were flooded with it.

The destructive impact of illegal narcotics on Blacks, Hispanics, the poor and their families has always been devastating but in today's crisis, it has become murderous. Indeed, whole communities are being destroyed from top to bottom as children take over the

role of breadwinner, mothers become addicts who barter sex for drugs, and drug-addicted, abandoned babies strain already over-burdened city hospital services.

At the same time, solutions to the drug crisis more and more resemble back door attacks on the Black community. Plans to build more prisons, calls for limits on civil liberties and efforts to do random drug testing all have the familiar ring of racism.

In the black community the "war on drugs" has raised the question of war against who? One ominous sign is the Federal Bureau of Prisons announcement that it plans to

build 20,000 new prisons over the next 15 years. For many Blacks, it is obvious who is expected to fill those jails. African-Americans are almost half of the prison population. The prison population of the U.S., partly as a result of increased Black incarceration, has nearly doubled in the last 10 years.

The Black community is also the first victim of the growing suspension of civil liberties due to the Bush drug war. In Washington, nearly 200 evictions of mostly Black citizens took place on the word of landlords who claimed that these residents were dealing drugs. Although few drugs were found, using warrantless searches, it turns out that most of these tenants were in rent disputes with their landlords.



BLACK HISTORY MONTH AND BEYOND

The Black Panther Newspaper Committee in conjunction with the Graduate Students of African Descent, the Graduate Student Assembly and the Law Students of African Descent of U.C. Berkeley, will sponsor a two-day forum, entitled "AMERIKKA MAKES WAR ON ITS CITIZENS; Political Prisoners and Prisoners of War in the United States" Feb. 28, 1991 and March 1, 1991.

This event is a panel discussion, panelists include former members of the Black Panther Party nationally, Chicano, Native American, Puerto Rican political activists and former political prisoners and prisoners of war. The first day of panel discussion focuses on the political climate in which COINTELPRO (the FBI's Counter Intelligence Program) was born and flourished to the detriment of the Black Panther Party, other People of Color Liberation organizations and the anti-war movements, as well as individual histories of political prisoners/POW's who remain incarcerated two decades later.

Day two of panel discussion centers on developing strategies for the release of political prisoners/POW'S and the return of exiles. Campus and community screenings of three excellent videos which provide background information are scheduled to precede the panel discussions during the holiday weekend of Feb. 16-18.

For further information and a schedule of video showings, please write: THE BLACK PANTHER NEWSPAPER COMMITTEE,

HOMELESSNESS IN OAKLAND IN THE 1990s

by Zenobia Embry-Nimmer

Zenobia Embry-Nimmer, then known as Kathy Embry, was a community activist who worked closely with the BPP at the 99th Avenue Headquarters, Central Headquarters when it was on 85th & E. 14th Street, and the Party's Oakland Community School. Today she continues to work for the community.

In October, 1966 point number "Four" of The Black Panther Party Platform and Program stated: We want decent housing, fit for shelter of human beings. It was relevant then, and is definitely relevant now.

We do not have a shortage of housing, but, a shortage of affordable housing.

There is an estimated minimum of 8,000 homeless people in Alameda County, with approximately 5,000 of them in Oakland. According to the Emergency Services Network of Alameda County's 1990 Report on Homelessness in the City of Oakland, 84.5% of them are African-Americans and 39% of them are under the age of 12 years old. Further, ESN's 1990 Report on Homelessness in Alameda County identifies 59% of the homeless county-wide are African American, an outrageous reality, for we are only 18% of the total county-wide population!

The Bay Area is especially hard hit because of the cost of housing. We do not have a shortage of housing, but, a shortage of affordable housing. The Center for Budget Policy Priorities recently released a study, *A Place to Call Home*, which identified the typical Oakland renter household had an annual income of just \$13,825, with at least 26% of all renter households paying at least half of their income on housing. And, there are at least 27,000 identified as "eligible" people on the Oakland Housing Authority's waiting list for low-income housing.

Homelessness is the end result of many things gone wrong - there is no one thing that causes it and there will be no one thing that corrects it. While there is no one single factor causing homelessness, there is one factor that is a primary cause. Since 1980, federal low-income housing has been cut by 80% nation-wide. 80%! It's even more mind-boggling to consider when you realize that in the last decade, incomes of the richest 1% of the U.S. households grew more than 87%, while incomes of the poorest households dropped more than 5%. Same old story, the rich get richer and the poor get poorer.

It used to be the poorest of our poor were trapped in apartments in the "projects", but not today. Rent in run down rat-hole single occupancy hotel rooms start at \$350 a month. Desperate mothers and fathers crowd their families in one room in SROs not built to accommodate the needs of children. Relatives double-up until the breaking point is reached. While waiting for a minimum of five years on the low-income housing waiting list, today's poorest of the poor end up homeless. Today, in the richest county in the world, men, women, and children live in bushes, doorways, under freeways, and in parks.

Although I know the work of the past twenty-five years was not in vain, the good cannot be taken back. I am haunted as I work throughout Oakland and the rest of this county and see the faces of homeless people. The very young, the very old, and yes, those who are my age. I even see those who were strong comrades in our midst. In the City of Oakland alone, during one week last February, 1,510 different homeless men, women and children sought shelter, but there were only 204 shelter beds and most of them were already full.

There is nothing on the horizon to suggest that the federal, state, or any other part of the government is going to restore housing to our people, much less address the underlying cases: racism, sexism, classism, and economic rape. It is clear we have only ourselves to look to; who will take corrective action if we do not?

Food and shelter are rights, not privileges. They are the most basic needs of all human



Homeless demonstration in Oakland, Calif.

Photo: Scott Brailey

beings. Those of us who can must work with (not for or down to) our brothers and sisters who are homeless or at risk of being homeless and rebuild our community to its 'natural state,' one that nurtures, encourages, and supports its own.

If we fail to act swiftly and effectively now, the ranks of homeless people will grow and grow until, with great desperation and nothing to loose, they revolt, and destroy everything that they can. How will they view you? ■

DRUGS, RACISM AND THE DESTRUCTION OF COMMUNITIES

continued from page 4

By mainly going after street level dealers, the myth is perpetuated that the majority of traffickers and users are minority. However, nationally, it is estimated that whites are 76 percent of all illegal drug users. In New York, Whites are 47 percent of the clients in state-funded centers, but less than 10 percent of those committed to prison.

The current upsurge in drug trafficking and abuse in the Black community has mainly been driven by a complex web of economic need meeting economic opportunity. Black males, particularly young ones, have been trapped in an entrenched cycle of poverty and unemployment. A 1985 Field Foundation study asserts that one-half of all Black men (16-65) are chronically unemployed. Black youth unemployment has officially hovered around 35 percent for the last decade, but in reality is much higher.

Cuts in aid for higher education in the past 10 years blocked one more avenue out of poverty. At the high school level, the drop out rate for young Black men is well above 50 percent.

During this period, the coca leaf production glut made cocaine plentiful and therefore cheaper. A kilogram that sold for \$50-60,000, in 1980 goes for \$10-12,000 today. The development of crack cocaine, which sells for

made distribution network of existing or easily created street gangs of unemployed youth who could retail crack and other drugs. These communities also had consumers who would purchase the cheap, but potent product. It's no accident that Los Angeles, Miami, Chicago and New York, cities that have historically had large Black Street gangs, are the major points of drug distribution in the U.S.

The current upsurge in drug trafficking and abuse in the Black community is driven by a complex web of economic need meeting economic opportunity.

life is materially better for many due to income derived from drug trafficking. Black youth can easily make \$100 a day or more simply watching for the police or steering customers in the right direction. A study by the Urban Institute underscores the economic imperative for many young people. The study indicates that more than two-thirds of those who sell drugs don't use drugs.

Blacks are spending between \$16 and \$20 billion a year on illegal drugs according to Ebony. In every area of Black America, drug abuse is growing.

The impact of these developments have been staggering and deadly. The drug epidemic has initiated a wave of violence and an internal health crisis of genocidal proportions. One in 30 Black males will be a murder victim. The accidental murder of citizens caught in the crossfire of drug deals gone sour has shocked communities across the country.

The drug crisis in the Black community has been labeled by some as "chemical warfare" against black people. Blacks make up 50 percent of those admitted to emergency rooms for heroin, 55 percent of those for cocaine and 60 percent of those for PCP. Blacks were 31 percent of all drug emergencies in 1985 and made up 25 percent of those in treatment for drugs in 1987.

ners who use dirty needles. This accounts to a great degree why Blacks are 25 percent of all AIDS victims while 52 percent of a women with AIDS are black.

The drug crisis in the Black community has been labeled by some as "chemical warfare" against black people.

Women, particularly minority women, are disproportionately victimized by the drug epidemic. For the first time, health officials see more women drug users than men. New York, D.C., Kansas City and Portland women outnumber men in drug abuse. Girls as young as 12 trade sex for crack as prostitutes in crack houses. Even all-girl crack gangs have been formed.

This has led directly to the rise in abandoned babies, i.e., abandoned babies born of ad

FALLEN COMRADES



Arthur Morris, 28



Bobby Hutton, 17



Tommy Lewis, 18



Robert Lawrence, 22



Steve Bartholemew, 21



Welton Armstead, 17



Sidney Miller, 21



Frank Diggs, 40



Alprentice Carter, 26



John Huggins, 23

ARTHUR MORRIS

Assassinated: March, 1968

Comrade Arthur Morris worked diligently to build the Los Angeles (Southern California Chapter) Party structure. The brother of Alprentice "Bunchy" Carter, who was then the coordinator of the Southern California Chapter (Deputy Minister of Defense), Arthur was shot and killed by agents of the U.S. government. Arthur was the first member of our Party to be killed.

BOBBY JAMES HUTTON

Assassinated: April 6, 1968

Born on April 25, 1950, "L'il" Bobby was one of the first members of the Black Panther Party. He joined Huey and Bobby at the age of 14, when the Party was founded in 1966. L'il Bobby struggled to advance the early development of the Party's daily organizing tasks by serving as finance coordinator. Bobby went to many "Free Huey" rallies around Oakland's Alameda County Courthouse as part of his participation in the movement to release our BPP co-founder Huey P. Newton. And he was one of those arrested on May 2, 1967, at the infamous Sacramento legislature protest where Bobby Seale read the Party's position on self defense for oppressed people (Executive Mandate No. 1) after shocking the nation by showing up with Panther troops openly bearing arms.

When Bobby James Hutton was murdered two days after the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. by dozens of Oakland police, he was blinded by teargas and armed only with tremendous courage.

STEVE BARTHOLEMEW

Assassinated: August 25, 1968

Riding in a car with Robert Lawrence and Tommy Lewis, Steve Bartholemew, 21, noticed that suddenly, out of nowhere, a Los Angeles police squad car was on their tail. Since they had been followed for some time before that same day

at a gas station, and the squad car stopped behind them. As Steve Bartholemew was getting out of the car, a volley of police gunfire killed him instantly.

ROBERT LAWRENCE

Assassinated: August 25, 1968

Brother Robert Lawrence, 22, was killed as he got out of the car to ask why Steve Bartholemew was shot. A quick, second wave of police bullets took his life as unexpectedly as the shots that claimed the life of his comrade, Steve.

TOMMY LEWIS

Assassinated: August 25, 1968

The youngest of the three, Tommy Lewis, 18, having seen Steve and Robert shot in cold blood, was severely wounded as he left the car to defend his life by firing back at the police.

Bleeding profusely, yet still alive, upon arrival at Los Angeles' Central Receiving Hospital, Tommy was left unattended for more than two hours. The autopsy showed that he died from peritonitis (severe intestinal inflammation) caused by stomach wounds and loss of blood.

NATHANIEL CLARK

Assassinated: September 12, 1969

Nathaniel Clark had been a member of the Los Angeles Chapter of the Black Panther Party. A former UCLA student, Nathaniel heard the words of Bunchy Carter and John Huggins and heeded their call. Killed as he slept, Nathaniel Clark's life was snuffed out by the forces of reaction and oppression which beset our lives and our communities, just as those same forces, in a different way, killed Bunchy and John.

WELTON ARMSTEAD

Assassinated: October 15, 1968

Welton Armstead, like "L'il

friend's backyard as he tried to escape from a police manhunt. When Welton saw the police converging on his home he ran to his friend's house. When they came there too, he borrowed his friend's rifle and attempted to evade the officers through the back yard. However, the net was too tight and Brother Armstead was cut down as he tried to defend himself. The police had no warrant or cause to arrest or chase him. The fact that Welton Armstead was a well-known member of the Black Panther Party and a threat then to the Seattle power structure provoked this fatal attack.

SIDNEY MILLER

Assassinated: November 7, 1968

Twenty-two days after the Seattle police murdered Welton Armstead, a racist Seattle businessman murdered another Black Panther Party member, Sidney Miller, 21. Brother Miller was shot point blank in the head as he was leaving a West Seattle grocery store. The murderer said he thought Brother Sidney was about to rob the store.

FRANK DIGGS

Assassinated: December 30, 1968

The last member of the Black Panther Party to be killed in 1968 was also the eighth member. "Franko" Diggs had seen 40 years of America's oppression before his life was taken by the gun of an unknown reactionary agent. His body was found in an alley on the outskirts of Los Angeles, after he'd been missing for a period of time. The autopsy report revealed Franko has been shot to death.

ALPRENTICE "BUNCHY" CARTER

Assassinated: January 17, 1969

Alprentice "Bunchy" Carter came from the streets of Los Angeles. He would tell you that he was "the Mayor of the Ghetto," and he became the prime organizer and

the Party outside of the Bay Area. Before Bunchy organized the Southern California Chapter in 1968, he had been a member of the Slausons, one of the largest gangs in Los Angeles, had spent four years of his life at Soledad Prison. Bunchy's life experiences had tempered him with a rare and unique, revolutionary determination and commitment to his people. Bunchy himself expressed this drive in words of his own:

"...for a slave of natural death who dies can't balance out to two dead flies. I'd rather live without the shame a bullet lodged within my brain. If I were not to reach our goal Let bleeding cancer torment my soul."

Bunchy had a special quality about him, an understanding that led him to do what must be done, and the ability to instill that understanding, dignity, and strength in others. On January 17, 1969, mindless followers of Ron Karenga and his US organization assassinated Bunchy and John Huggins on the campus of UCLA, while both were organizing and educating Black students to the ideas of self-determination and student control for eventual community control. (It was later learned that the FBI's COINTELPRO had orchestrated this enmity and applauded the fatal results.)

ALEX RACKLEY

Assassinated: May 21, 1969

Alex Rackley, a member of the New York State Chapter, killed in Connecticut as a result of the paranoid atmosphere engendered by COINTELPRO. To this date Bro. Rackley's death remains a matter of controversy. The editors feel the loss of this brother keenly.

LARRY ROBERSON

Assassinated: September 4, 1969

On the morning of July 14, 1969, Larry Roberson 20 and Grady

FALLEN COMRADES



Alex Rackley, 24



John Savage, 21



Sylvester Bell, 34



Larry Roberson, 20



Nathaniel Clark, 19



Walter Pope, 20



Spurgeon Winters, 19



Fred Hampton, 21



Mark Clark, 22



Sterling Jones, 17

erly black men, forcing them to line up against a wall. Investigating what the police are doing has always been a courageous act in the city of Chicago. This incident proved no different. An argument arose, and without hesitation, the police pulled their guns and started shooting. They critically wounded Larry in the stomach, thigh and leg. (Grady Moore escaped injury.) Larry also managed to wound two of his assailants. Taken to Cook County Hospital and placed under police guard, Larry was harassed, threatened, and periodically beaten until he died, September 4. Larry had placed himself between the oppressor and his people without thought of his own life. Brother Fred Hampton once remarked that "Larry Roberson was too revolutionary proletarian intoxicated to be astronomically intimidated." His words are truly fitting.

WALTER "TOURE" POPE

Assassinated: October 18, 1969

As soon as Walter "Toure" Pope was released from the California Youth Authority at Tracy, he joined the Party.

Toure, only 20, was singled out for special and constant harassment by Los Angeles police.

His effectiveness as Distribution Manager of the Black Panther Intercommunal News Service in Southern California. In three months, Toure increased our newspaper's circulation in Southern California from 1,500 a week to over 7,000 a week.

A victim of three false arrests for suspicion of robbery and two false arrests for attempted murder, Toure's life became increasingly endangered.

On October 18, 1969, Toure was brutally gunned down by the L.A. Metro Squad in broad daylight as he left a store where he had just dropped off some newspapers. According to eyewitness reports, the police suddenly came upon him and opened fire.

RORY HITHE

Assassinated: November 13 1973

Rory Hithe joined the BPP in San Francisco in 1969. He was quickly elevated to the position of Aide to the Central Committee. In June 1969 he traveled across the country helping coordinate offices. He was falsely captured by police and the FBI and incarcerated along with 13 other Panthers in the New Haven case involving the murder of Alex Rackley. Upon his release from a Connecticut prison in 1971, he returned to San Francisco where he got involved in WAPAC. At one of their community meetings, Rory and his sister, Michelle were both shot. Michelle was wounded and Rory was killed. At the time of his death, Rory was a member of the BLA, and it was probably not coincidence that he was killed the same month and year as his comrades-in-arms, Twymon Myers. His assailant was released from prison in a matter of days.

ZAYD SHAKUR

Assassinated: May 2, 1973

Zayd Shakur was one of the older brothers in the Party who helped organize and lead the New York Chapter. Another Panther who went underground with the BLA, Zayd was killed in a police attack on the New Jersey Turnpike, while riding with comrades Assata Shakur. Assata survived the attack although wounded, and later escaped from a New Jersey prison to Cuba. Zayd had a long history of dedicated struggle in the Black Liberation Movement which suffered a tremendous loss when he was martyred.

ROBERT WEBB

Assassinated: March 8, 1971

Robert Webb joined the BPP in San Francisco. He and his family lived in Hunters Point, a Black community under siege in the Sixties. Robert had been to Vietnam where he had acquired considerable

He was sent to New York's Brooklyn Chapter and subsequently to New Haven where he worked around the Seale/Huggins trial. Robert was almost constantly harassed by police who knew his military history. Shortly after the "split," Robert like Fred Bennett became a victim of the FBI-orchestrated fratricide when he was shot to death on the Streets of Harlem, NY. He was 22 years old.

SPURGEON WINTERS

Assassinated: November 13, 1969

Spurgeon "Jake" Winters was an honor student in school, and having developed an understanding of world affairs, became a revolutionist. He worked on the Chicago Chapter's Free Breakfast Program, Free Health Clinic, and was part of the Education Cadre. He was killed when 100 policemen opened fire on him and Brother Lance Bell, who was wounded. Three policemen were killed and seven wounded in the attack on the deserted building where the two took refuge. Jake was 19 when his life was taken.

MARK CLARK

Assassinated: December 4, 1969

Mark Clark was a Defense Captain for the Peoria, Illinois Branch of the BPP. He made frequent trips to Chicago to confer with the leadership of the Party's Chapter there in order to help him organize in downstate Peoria. Mark made one such trip to Chicago in December, '69, and stayed, along with several other members of the Party, at Fred Hampton's apartment. Chicago police raided Fred's apartment on the morning of December 4; Clark was shot through his heart when police crashed into the apartment firing. Fred Hampton was also killed, and several other occupants were wounded. Mark was 22 years old.

FRED HAMPTON

annals of people's struggle because he was one of Black History's most dynamic leaders. A young, outspoken critic of America's treatment of Black and poor people, Fred's dedication to the cause of freedom led him and others to organize the BPP's Chicago Chapter. He soon captured national attention with his incredible organizational and speaking abilities that quickly mobilized Chicago's huge Black community. Political persecution of Fred Hampton included numerous false arrests and a 1969 conviction for a \$70 ice-cream-truck robbery. He was released from prison a short time later due to enormous community pressure. Such persecution culminated on December 4 at 4:00 a.m., with a premeditated, pre-dawn raid by Chicago police, who broke into his apartment and shot him as he slept (having been drugged the previous night by an infiltrated agent). Fred was only 21 years old. Although the Black community lost a beautiful warrior for human dignity, as Fred often said, "You can kill a revolutionary, but you can't kill the revolution."

Today, the Chicago's City Council is debating a proposal to honor Fred Hampton with a special holiday.

STERLING JONES

Assassinated: December 25, 1969

Brothers Fred Hampton and Mark Clark were only days in their graves when the Chicago police struck again. On Christmas Day, Sterling Jones, 17, a member of the Chicago Chapter, responded to a knock at his family's apartment door. As Sterling opened the door, he was shot directly in the face by an unknown assailant. The bullet killed Sterling, and his murderer fled into the night. ■



Fallen Comrades will be an ongoing feature of the Black Panther Newspaper. Due to limited space and the many comrades who

Huey's Funeral

WHY I MOURNED THE DEATH OF HUEY P. NEWTON

By Kiilu Nyasha (Pat Gallyot, New Haven Chapter)



When I first heard the news of Huey Newton's death, I thought of Malcolm X's statement following the death of John F. Kennedy, when he referred to it as a case of "the chickens coming home to roost." I shed no tears initially and remained as cool as if I'd just heard the news of some stranger's death. Then, a day or two later, I found myself crying in the middle of the night upon waking up from a vivid dream of Huey in Connecticut in 1970. Still, I couldn't believe I was really grieving for Huey — but there I was feeling the pain of loss in spite of myself.

You see, I'd fallen out with Huey nearly 20 years prior — before Huey left New Haven in the Winter of 1971. Weeks later, the Party split into two factions (See Nuh Washington's article on P. 22), and I became one of Huey's harshest critics, siding with the radical left and the BLA in opposition to Huey's "back to the church," and "back to capitalism" movement.

Before he was shot on August 22, 1989, ironically, just one day and 18 years after the murder of Panther leader George Jackson, no one could have told me that I would mourn for Huey P. Newton. Yet I felt compelled to attend his funeral; and as he lay there before me, still and lifeless, I flashed back on the Huey I first met in Connecticut about twenty years ago.

I recall being taken aback by Huey's mild, soft-spoken manner and shyness that seemed so incongruous with the gun-toting macho image of the media. In reality, there was an irresistible sweetness about him.

However, on this second visit, I couldn't help noticing a distinct change in Huey's manner and personality. I recall being puzzled as to why he was so nervous and jumpy, often springing to his feet and pacing the floor, agitated and given to sharp retorts in reaction

to questions or criticisms on Party affairs. In retrospect, I can only guess that Huey's chemical dependency had already begun, although I have no way of knowing for sure. But according to Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt), former Deputy Minister of Defense, who was in San Quentin when Huey was briefly incarcerated there last year, Huey explained how upon his release in August, 1970, he was showered with everything imaginable for his comfort and pleasure including drugs and Hollywood starlets — and confessed he found it all too much to resist. The two former comrades-in-arms and subsequent "enemies" also discussed the incredible havoc wreaked by the FBI's COINTELPRO, particularly its tactics of creating divisions between Party members and targeting individuals for "neutralization." In fact, since the 1973 Freedom of Information Act — it was learned that COINTELPRO was up to its usual "dirty tricks" when it concocted a split between Geronimo and Huey. Note the following FBI memo dated January 20, 1971, from the FBI Director, J. Edgar Hoover, approving a proposal to mail a forged letter to Eldridge Cleaver in Algeria from Connie Matthews (Huey's secretary) to cause "turmoil among top echelon" and cast suspicion on Pratt's Party Loyalty:

"...You may know the story about G and his gang. I believe that people like G have many sympathizers who are not yet under suspicion but who should be... I do not like the evidence of disloyalty I see... One of the two steps must be taken soon and both are drastic... I fear the only sensible course that the Party can take is to initiate strong and complete action against rebels, exposing their underhanded tricks to the communities."

Hoover approved this proposed letter with the following stipulation: "You must ensure that the mailing cannot be traced to the Bureau..."

Another memo took credit for Geronimo's subsequent expulsion from the BPP: "The present chaotic situation within the BPP must be exploited, and recipients [of FBI directives] must maintain the present chaotic situation within the BPP must be exploited, and recipients [of FBI directives] must maintain the present high level of counterintelligence activity... to further aggravate the dissension within the BPP leadership and to fan the apparent distress by Newton of anyone who questions his wishes."

"Huey P. Newton has recently exhibited paranoid-like reactions to anyone who questions his orders, policies, action or otherwise displeases him. His Hitler-like hysterical reaction which has very likely been aggravated by our present counterintelligence activity, has resulted in a number of suspensions of loyal BPP members. It appears that Newton may be on the brink of mental collapse, and we must intensify our counterintelligence."

Clearly, the FBI's COINTELPRO had targeted Huey as their number one public enemy, resorting to any and all means to "neutralize" him.

Since Huey's funeral and serious thought, I've come to the conclusion that we Panthers and Panther supporters (those who were serving the people not the FBI) must all share in the responsibility for Huey's ultimate demise. Had we diligently practiced our motto, "All for one and one for all," we would have used the power of our collective love to keep him healthy and strong; we would have provided him with better protection from his enemies (especially the sugar-coated bullets), constructively criticized him when he needed it, offered praise only when war-

REMEMBERING HUEY

The author is a former Party member who has requested anonymity

There it happened, on August 22, 1989, at about 5:30 in the morning, in West Oakland, California.

There it happened, in the same poor neighborhood where, 23 years earlier, the womb of Babylon opened up, spewing forth a revolutionary phenomenon called "The Black Panther Party for Self-Defense."

There it happened, on this quiet morning, that gunshots shattered the peaceful air and the Death Merchant claimed the life of one of the biddest revolutionaries in American-Babylonian history.

Pronounced dead at 6:12 a.m. at the Highland Hospital, was one, "HUEY P. NEWTON" co-founder and dynamic leader of the Black Panther Phenomenon.

THE FACTS:

Police get reports of gunshots at approximately 5:29 a.m. At the scene, Huey was found lying on his back in a 10 foot long pool of blood. He had multiple gunshot wounds, at least one to the head.

Suspect: A "Tyrone Robinson", 25, of Oakland. Suspected drug dealer, suspected member of the "Black Guerrilla Family", claimed it was self-defense. Police speculate that it was an attempt to make a name for himself in the B.G.F.

Those are the facts as far as we hear, and I stress... as we hear! Who knows. Huey's dead, that's for sure. The why's. I don't know if it's really that important. The young blood may well have acted in self-defense over a drug transaction gone bad. Or, as the police claim, it may well have been a rep booster for an aspiring young pusher, as in, "Man, I offed Huey Newton, I'm a bad mutha-fucka!"

Former Panther, Mumia Abu-Jamal, now on death row in Pennsylvania, writes on Huey: "At his best, he was a youth of rare brilliance, who molded mass militancy into a national Black political movement that marked an age."

As we all should remember, the BGF was George Jackson's revolutionary prison baby. But at some point around the mid-70s I believe, the BGF, as the embryonic revolutionary commune, according to George's vision, devolved into illegitimate capitalism, wholesale and retail. And Huey wasn't their only victim. They may also have been the trigger finger behind the assassination of attorney Fay Stender, and former George prison associates Fleeta Drumgo and Earl Satcher (also a former leader of the LA Black Panther chapter). This time it was Huey, for whatever reason.

It's not surprising at all that Huey's death caused certain emotions to stir in us. The feelings spanned the broad spectrum from honest grief and sorrow to elation. Former Panthers I'm talking about. But, regardless of how we might feel about Huey the Panther leader, I hope that we can still be objective and honest enough to appreciate Huey the Historical figure, the historical significance or symbol that he represented at a specific time and place in Babylonia history, and how that symbol impacted on our personal and political lives.

ship, of which Huey was at the helm. We raised drug and alcohol abuse charges then! We charged Huey with abuse then! Who listened? Yet, with all that and besides the fact that we, now, in '89, can say that we were right all along as unfolding events showed, THE HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF, AND SYMBOLIZED IN, A HUEY P. NEWTON IS A FACT, ONE THAT IMPACTED ON US ALL, AND ONE TO BE ACKNOWLEDGED.

Former Panther, Mumia Abu-Jamal, now on death row in the state of Pennsylvania, writes in a recent New York based news weekly The Black American, on Huey:

"At his best, he was a youth of rare brilliance, who molded mass militancy into a national Black political movement that marked an age."

Bobby Seale, who co-founded the Party with Huey says:

"It's a profound piece of history he and I represent."

Rev. Cecil Williams, Pastor of the Glide Memorial United Methodist Church, in San Francisco says:

"This is symbolic of Huey Newton. He fed people from the street. He started the free breakfast for kids. He placed great emphasis on feeding folks and educating folks, especially Black people."

U.S. Representative Ron Dellums, a long time supporter of the Panther programs says:

"The Black Panther Party that he helped to found and which he led for so many years represented a significant state in the development of the movement for Black political empowerment..."

Activist and feminist Angela Davis, whatever we may feel about her personally or politically, still puts out sharp analysis and clear perspective. On Huey, she says:

"...if he had not had a vision of new forms of protest and new forms of movement for the Black community in the late psi his death would not be significant today. So, I think the posture to assume is to pay tribute to him for the role that he played in ushering in a new era of the Black Liberation Movement in the late '60s." Angela went on to say:

"I will remember him for what he did for Black people. I'm not concerned about how he died and what the circumstances, so much as I am concerned about his meaning, his meaning for history of the quest for Black equality and that can never be denied..."

You see, this is where I think we need to be in accepting, understanding and reclaiming Huey P. Newton, which is the same thing as saying that we need to "reclaim" a part of us, a significant patch in the quilt of our lives. Especially those of us who had the courage "way-back-when" to criticize and finally disassociate ourselves from his leadership. It is an important reclamation demonstrating one's honesty or integrity. Now, I don't doubt that that's hard or maybe even impossible for some of us to do. To ever do, but it's before us, unavoidably.

Personal integrity or personal resolution from the pain and scars of perceived wrong-doings of a seemingly unrepentant, once loved leader — that's the challenge, isn't it? Yet, it's definitely a quite personal thing on how each of us chooses to deal with and I have learned to accept the things I cannot change, and attitudes are definitely of that category.

For the most part, those who are closest to Huey have admitted, publicly, what we've known or assumed privately, for years about his drug and alcohol abuse. His brother Melvin and his wife admitted. This is good, this is honest. And as you know, Kathleen (Cleaver) don't bite her tongue. She says:

"he was a very troubled person who was not able to ever come his problems with drugs and alcohol."

Then Charles Garry, Huey's long time attorney, adds this about the man and his death:

"I expected it. The [FBI] killed the Black Panther Party, and they made him so paranoid that it's a wonder he was able to be alive. As far as I'm

RON DELLUMS AT NEWTON'S FUNERAL

(Editor's note: The members of the Black Panther Party played an important part in getting Representative Dellums elected to Congress in 19—. Throughout the campaign, BPP members canvassed the minority neighborhoods of Oakland and Berkeley registering voters and asking people to support and vote for Ron.)

I just briefly want to say that, remember, in 1966, Huey Newton and Bobby Seale and others tried to remind America of its violence, the violence of war, the violence of police brutality, the violence of poverty, racism, sexism, chauvinism, and all forms of oppression. ... And it's ironic, tragically ironic, that the very same streets that Huey tried to

Black Community News

AFRIKAN AMERIKAN STAKE IN A MIDEAST WAR

Landon R. Williams

Landon R. Williams was a member of the BPP Central Committee, and is on the Black Panther Newspaper Committee Editorial Team. Here he presents his thoughts on the Mid East war.

IN THE EARLY MORNING HOURS OF JANUARY 16, 1991, the government of the United States of Amerikkka used stealth bombers, cruise missiles, laser guided bombs, and other high technology weapons to launch a sudden and massive attack on Iraq. When the U.S. attacked Iraq, it marked the fifth time in recent years that the industrial democracies have used high tech weapons developed to combat the specter of Russian communism to viciously attack third world people of color. The racist Amerikkkan government invaded Grenada to "rescue" Amerikkkan college students; destroyed the presidential Palace in Tripoli, Libya in an attempted assassination of General Kadafi; and invaded Panama to capture Oliver North's and George Bush's drug running partner, General Noriega. The British, trying to hold on to one of the last vestiges of its colonial empire, used its high technology arsenal to attack the Argentine forces in the "Falkland Islands" with U.S. tactical and logistical support. While the suddenness and the ferocity of the U.S. attack caught many by surprise, it is no surprise to those who follow and understand the racist nature of Amerikkkan and European history, that these weapons of mass terror have never been fired in anger except at people of color.

Within the next few hours, the United States and its allies flew literally thousands of air sorties (missions) against targets inside Iraq and Kuwait. The planes dropped thousands of tons of bombs on Arabmen, women,



Elementary School children in Berkeley, Calif. protest the war.

and children. Vivid video tape recordings and live pictures of the devastation caused by the initial raids were shot by the CNN news crew still inside Baghdad. The videos were beamed live via satellite from Baghdad direct into homes across Amerikkka and the world. The scenes which filled TV screens unendingly across Amerikkka showed bombs exploding in the air and on the ground with smoke and fire everywhere. Through the medium of television, the carnage of the war was sterilized and the television scenes became reminiscent of the savage devastating attacks by the Empire against the rebels in the Star Wars trilogy - only here, the blood is real; men, women and children, not actors, were really dying.

In the days and now weeks following the initial attacks, the Amerikkkan public and Afrikan American community have been subjected to an almost endless display of video graphics on the evening news and in

"specials" which reminds one of a visit to a video arcade. Night after night, generals in freshly starched uniforms hold press briefings showing "smart bombs" and cruise missiles finding targets and exploding into what are described as military significant targets as the press applauds. The parade of generals, and applause for the war, however, have not been without dissent. Gigantic peace demonstrations began before the first bomb exploded and continue to take place across the land. As the assault continues with out letup and the Generals prepare for a bloody ground war, Amerikkans are drawing upsides and trying to decide if they should support or oppose the war. For some the rallying cry is "No War for Big Oil". In the Afrikan American community the rallying cry must be "Not With Our Sons and Daughters!" For the Afrikan American community has an awful lot to lose as the war continues. It is the duty of all of us to inform the debate and force the issue. The Afrikan American community must ask itself, what's at stake in this war. Who are the winners who have the most to gain. And, more importantly to us, who are the losers and what will they lose.

War is uncertain and the MidEast war is no exception. One thing however is certain no matter how the war goes. In any war that is fought, we Afrikan Amerikkans will fall in numbers greater than our proportion in the general population. The lesson of Vietnam is that Afrikan Amerikkans are not only disproportionately represented in the armed services, but that they are also concentrated more heavily in the combat arms, that is front line troops. In almost every battle, we are at greater risk. The same is true for other ethnic minority soldiers. The old saying goes "if you're Black, get Back!". In the Amerikkkan army the saying has been changed to, "if you're Black, go to the Front... and walk point!"

Our community will lose many of our brightest and bravest members fighting not to uphold and spread democracy and freedom, but instead to restore a despotic monarchy. A monarchy complete with harems, eunuchs, slaves, and a complete lack of rights for women and Black people. In Saudi Arabia women are not allowed to even drive automobiles. One of the royal princesses was publicly stoned to death for having an affair. A husband has the RIGHT to do literally anything to his wife or wives if it upholds his "manhood". Afrikan Amerikkans will be fighting and dying to restore a society dominated by a few rich families who control their country's wealth. We must ask ourselves the question, "is there

was taken in 1759, by the Ottoman Turks, who were allies of the British. The royal family suspended its constitution and abolished its parliament in 1986, and has suppressed its democratic movements since then.

And oil? If Kuwaiti oil is so important, why aren't the Japanese who get 75% of their oil from the MidEast fighting on the front lines?

In his message to the nation Bush justified the attack on Iraq, by stating that the New World Order cannot afford to reward aggression. Yet Bush stands firmly by Israel which invaded and has occupied Arab land on the West Bank of the Jordan River (Jordan), the Golan Heights (Syria), and the Gaza Strip (Egypt) for over twenty years. Daily, Israel expels the Arab inhabitants. Not only does Bush stand by a country which has been condemned by the United Nations for brutally suppressing the rights of the Palestinians living there; his administration uses Amerikkkan tax dollars to build housing for the Israelis on occupied land. If invading and occupying another country is so bad, then the U.S. and its allies should most certainly should have first attacked Israel. But we know it will not happen. Perhaps it is because the invading and occupying country is European and the countries being occupied are people of color. Israel is being rewarded with money, arms, and other support paid for by U.S. taxpayers. Israel also wins from the war by having one less powerful Arab country to face, less economic competition, and increased U.S. and European aid.

As the war in the MidEast goes on, Afrikan Amerikkkan sons and daughters, husbands, wives and friends will be wounded, killed, and incapacitated. Losing them will rob our community of their love, their vision, and the future they might have created. Our community will also lose as precious material resources are drained away from needed domestic programs like affordable housing, schools, healthcare, and other domestic needs to feed an ever hungry war industry. When will the inner cities be revitalized? What are the damn priorities? A house can be built for less than \$100,000 but we are told there is no money. Yet there is no shortage of money to buy Patriot missiles, planes and bullets. Each Patriot missile which is fired costs over \$1 million. A Bradley armored vehicle costs several million more and gets less than 1 mile to the gallon of fuel. It all adds up and our community pays the bill. Estimated to be over one billion per day. The Afrikan American community gains nothing from an arms build up. Few if any businesses which get the enormous war related munitions, materials,

REMEMBERING HUEY

continued from previous page

concerned, Huey died over 10 years ago, and he's just as dead today."

It's important to be real, honest, truthful. The historic symbol of a Huey P. must not be denied, nor must we deny or hide the fact of a "human" Huey who had to deal with this crazy world. And, in a humbling gesture, let me say this: "As of this moment, some of us still ain't handling the business of living, of surviving well. Former Panthers, some of us are long time surviving well. Former Panthers, some of us are long time alcoholics, drug addicts camouflaging as recreational users, and some of us are "crack heads". This is to say that were all human, and that we respond or react to oppression in different decision-making ways.

Sometimes we're weak, sometimes we fail, sometimes we succeed. That at some point in space and time Huey gave in, got weak, failed and made a conscious decision to escape the misery and pain by abusing alcohol and cocaine and crack, is a human experience we all know and have known personally at some level. Falling short of the mark... no one ever has who is reading this??? Understanding, compassion, introspection, resolution. It doesn't mean we have to forget a damn thing, but to accept that it identifies, at some level, all of us, is important.

So Huey is all of us! And that's the truth. He was different maybe, in degree, in that he was "The Leader". We should realize now that no one is carrying a heavier weight than the "Leader". There is a tremendous sense of pressure. The pressure, constant and urgent, to perform. Knowing that one is now projected onto the turbulent, violent state of Revolution, a role model for literally millions at home and abroad, challenging the very citadel of the pigocracy and its right to exist, being shot, imprisoned, witnessing the assassination of comrade after comrade, the imprisonment of comrade after comrade, yet a man-child still trying to lead

OF US. And he, like us, did the best he could with what he understood about the "Revolution" and "counter-revolution" and about himself.

Again, his story is, largely, the story of us all because, largely, except for a few, we all gave up, gave in and just went back to basic survival, jungle survival, plantation survival, etc. There are, indeed, lessons prompted by the murder of Huey. We need to identify with the Huey in any human being, meaning the possibility of falling short of the mark, of giving up, and of struggling to overcome.

What might be most thought provoking for us former Panthers, because we share it, is what City Sun reporter Frank Harris II wrote about Huey in the August 30-Sept. 5, 1989 issue, "He lived beyond his movement."

It happened just before the turn of the century when the British colonial forces had finally defeated the Ashanti nation. They made the Ashanti and Queen prostrate themselves as their people were forced to witness this humiliation. It happened again with Marcus Garvey after his frameup and deportation. It is still happening to we who are Panther survivors. Do you understand? Like post-Vietnam war/soldier syndromes. Huey is all of us. How do we or will we deal with it, this living or surviving beyond our Panther movement, our '60's movement, and with having been on display BY THE VICTORS as the losers?

I said before that I'd chosen the side of those Panthers who criticized and disassociated from Huey and the West coast based leadership. Some righteous Panthers died needlessly in that factional war. Needlessly, I say. Yet, it happened.

But, in spite of it all, I reclaim Huey P. Newton, as several years ago (!) I reclaimed Comrade Sam Napier, for Huey! the Panther symbol, is RIGHT ON, FOREVERMORE!! This I feel and hold to in all honesty. And we who still live beyond the movement we gave spunk and power to, what

THE AFRIKAN-AMERIKAN STAKE IN KUWAIT?



and supply production, distribution, and transportation contracts being made to support the war effort are Afrikan American or employ many of our people— except the combat soldiers. Afrikan American businesses and workers continue to be illegally kept from participating in the country's economic wealth through ingrained and pervasive racist practices and discrimination.

Internationally, Afrikans everywhere lose as the world turns its attention away from the

THE BLACK PANTHER PARTY AND THE DEATH OF HUEY P. NEWTON



By Kit Kim Holder (Harlem Branch)

With the death of Huey P. Newton, there has been a renewed interest in the activities of the Black Panther Party (BPP). In order to understand how and why Newton died, one must examine the conditions which the BPP struggled against and which still afflict our people today.

Many people have been devastated by the circumstances of Newton's death. Some have even uncritically placed complete blame on the government. While the government has used force and fraud to combat almost every progressive movement and individual fighting for Afrikan-American liberation, it would be a mistake to automatically pinpoint the government as being responsible in this case. Under the pretense of the FBI-led, secret Counter Intelligence Program (COINTEL-PRO) against the Afrikan-American liberation movement, the BPP and Newton in particular were targeted for a massive, ille-

gal, and often deadly campaign of destruction.

It must be pointed out that during the late 1960s and early 1970s, Newton and the BPP were the main targets of every domestic intelligence and law enforcement agency in the United States. The years of dirty tricks, arrests, shootouts, prison terms, etc., did take their toll on Dr. Newton.

It was the chant of "Free Huey" that swept across this country in the late 1960s. The Party used Huey's incarceration as a major rallying point of the Afrikan-American liberation movement of that era. It created an image of Newton as the baddest revolutionary in history. Party members quoted Newton constantly, often as if he could say no wrong. Newton's picture appeared on the front page of every issue of the Panthers' newspaper, and he was heralded as THE great revolutionary leader.

These tactics proved useful in attracting people to the Party. Thousands and thousands of people throughout the world rallied

in support for Newton and the BPP. And the Free-Huey Movement ultimately proved successful when in August, 1970, Newton was released from jail.

By the time of Newton's release, the BPP had long been transformed from a "Free Huey" organization into a political party with extensive community programs — from community self-defense to free health clinics and food programs that served thousands of people on a daily basis. For many Panthers, the focus of the revolution was not Newton, but the people — especially the Afrikan-American community. The long efforts and focus on Newton and his release, however, were hard to change. The same actions which worked to build the Party subsequently inhibited its development.

The realization that Newton was no super-revolutionary is one that many Panthers came to over 16 years ago. In fact, many ex-Panthers say that Newton left the revolution a long time ago, and that the manner of his death was tragic but not surprising. Furthermore, through their struggle and interaction over 20-plus years, they have come to understand that projecting the people's power onto one individual is counterproductive to the ideas and actions of the struggle.

What is of concern is that with the passing of Huey, many will dismiss the great contributions that the BPP made to the struggle for Afrikan-American liberation. The ideas of the BPP did not die with Huey on that Oakland street last August because the ideas of the Party were never the sole possession of Newton.

The lesson of Newton's death is twofold: First, the Afrikan-American community is involved in a war of destruction, and the principle tool at the moment happens to be crack cocaine. Drugs are destroying our youth

and our communities as they took the life of Huey P. Newton and have Tyrone Robinson (Newton's 25-year-old accused Killer) facing life in prison. There go two strong, Afrikan-American brothers whose lives have been taken from us because drugs are brought whose lives have been taken from us because drugs are brought into our communities and we can do nothing to stop them.

The second lesson of Newton's life and death is that Afrikan-Americans must stop looking for a messiah who is going to lead us to the promised land. As the poet and musician, Gil Scott Heron, once reminded us, "There ain't no such thing as a superman." We as Black people must realize that one man or one woman is and always will be unable to lead us. We must realize that leadership will only come from the hard work and struggle of thousands of so-called ordinary people. There are no secrets to our freedom; so we had better wake up and understand that it is we who will change our conditions.

The only thing that separated Newton and the Panthers from anyone else was the fact that they were willing to take the first step, to be up front. They dared to struggle and "Seize the Time."

It is not from a sense of nostalgia that we should mourn or remember Newton's death and the Black Panther Party. Rather, we must analyze the work of the BPP within the context of searching for solutions to contemporary problems. The questions of today should not be focused on Newton, the man, but rather on the Party.

Editor's Note: Kit Kim Holder, a former Black Panther, is a Ph.D. candidate from the School of Education University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

"A MESSAGE TO MY SISTERS" FROM ASSATA SHAKUR

(We reprint this message from Assata because it is just as relevant today as it was 10 years ago (1980). We hope to have more words and pictures from our comrade-sister very soon.)

At this time I'd like to say a few words especially to my sisters: Sisters, Black people will never be free unless Black women participate in every aspect of our struggle, on every level of our struggle, I think that Black women, more than anybody on the face of this earth, recognize the urgency of our situation. Because it is We who come face to face daily with the institutions of our oppression. And because it is We who have borne the major responsibility of raising our children. And it is We, who have to deal with the welfare systems that do not care about our welfare or the welfare of our children. And it is We who have to deal with the school systems that do not educate our children. It is We who have to deal with the racist teachers who teach our children to hate themselves. It is We who have seen the terrible effect of racism on our children.



Assata Shakur in Cuba

have seen the sick, trapped look on the faces of our children when they come to fully realize what it means to be Black in Amerikkka. And we know what deprivation is. How many times have We run out of bus fare, rent money, food money and how many times have our children gone to school in hand-me-downs, with holes in their shoes. We know what a hell-hole Amerikkka is.

We're afraid to let our children go out to play. We're afraid to walk the streets at night. We sisters, We have seen our young, the babies that We brought into this world with such great hopes for, We have seen their bodies bloated and aching from drugs, scarred and deformed by bullet holes.

We know what oppression is. We have been abused in every way imaginable. We have been abused economically, politically, We have been abused physically, and We

on this land/planet. Afrikan women were strong and courageous warriors long before We came to this country in chains. And here in Amerikkka, our sisters have always been on the front lines. Sister Harriet Tubman led the underground railroad. And sisters like Rosa Parks, Fannie Lou Hamer, Sandra Pratt, and Queen Mother Moore have carried it on. Sisters, We have been the backbone of our communities, and We will be the backbone of our nation. We have got to build strong family units, based on love and struggle. We don't have no time to play around.

A revolutionary woman can't have no reactionary man. If he's not about liberation, if he's not about struggle, if he ain't about building a strong Black family, if he ain't about building a strong Black nation then he ain't about nothing. We know how to struggle. We know how to struggle and finagle to survive. We know what it means, sisters, to struggle tooth and nail. We know what it means to struggle with love. We know what unity is. We know what sisterhood is. We have always been kind to each other, brought each other hot soup and biscuits. We have always helped each other through the hard times. Sisters, We must celebrate Afrikan womanhood. We don't want to be like Miss Ann. She can keep her false eyelashes and her false, despoiled image of womanhood. She can keep her mink stole and her French provincial furniture. We will define for ourselves what womanhood is. And We will create our own style and our own ways of dress. We can't have no white man in France telling Afrikan women what to look like. We will create our own New Afrikan way of living. We will create our own way of being and living our own New Afrikan culture, taking the best of the old and mixing it with the new.

Sisters, We have got to take control of our lives and our future wherever We are, and We have got to organize ourselves into

We've got to take responsibility for educating our children. We can't leave the job of teaching our young, our futures, in the hands of teachers who don't care about our children; in the hands of teachers who don't understand the history, the culture and the language of our children. We have got to teach them ourselves, and in order to do that We have got to start teaching ourselves.

We have got to build survival collectives, We've got to open up liberation schools, We've got to open up our own child care centers, We've got to pool our resources to survive. We've got to use the resources in our community. Sisters, We've got to take control of our lives, We've got an enormous job ahead. We've got to rebuild our communities, We've got to build an underground railroad, We've got to build a nation.

I just want to take a moment out to express my love to all of you who risk your lives daily struggling out here on the front lines. And I'd like to express my gratitude and my love for the many sisters and brothers who have opened their doors and their hearts to me. The sisters and brothers who risk their lives daily to feed and house me and to help me build our underground railroad. Sisters and brothers,

WE WILL WIN!!

FREE GERONIMO PRATT

SUNDIATA ACOLI

MUTULU SHAKUR

FREE ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS

FREE THE PUERTO RICAN PRISONERS OF WAR

UHURU, SISTERS AND BROTHERS.

I just want to take a moment out to express my love to all of you who risk your lives daily struggling out here on the front lines

We who have watched our young grow too old, too soon. We who have watched our children come home angry and frustrated and

Political Prisoners & Prisoners of War

EDITOR'S STATEMENT:

This issue of the "Black Panther" is respectfully dedicated to the Soldiers of the Black Panther Party and the countless others who participated and continue to participate in the righteous struggle for Black/African self-determination. Specifically it is dedicated to those, killed and/or captured in the cause of Black/African Liberation. This memorial issue is dedicated to fallen comrades and to African Political Prisoners

#1 and #2, and by the United Nations Resolution #1514 which states that "Colonialism is a Crime against Humanity and those captured fighting against colonialism are in fact Prisoners of War."

As the reader can see, these differences are often expressed in differences of ideology/philosophy. One aspect of the definition of Political Prisoners is that they view themselves as waging a struggle to win political power within the geographic confines of North Amerikkka; they often define their objective as the creation of a multi-racial (often Socialist) society with some form of autonomy for oppressed Nationalities. On the other hand, those who define themselves as P.O.W.s view themselves as waging a National Liberation Struggle with the objective of creating an independent (Black) nation/State in North Amerikkka or elsewhere. These two definitions and positions are not necessarily mutually exclusive, and definitely are not

antagonistic. The question of who is correct should, and must be answered by the masses of African people in Amerikkka. These are extremely important questions for the future.

Our immediate discussion is the burning issue of the unjust imprisonment of our freedom fighters.

There are over one hundred (100) Political Prisoners in the United States of Amerikkka. All made sacrifices in the struggle to achieve Freedom, Justice, and Equality in American society in general and Liberation of oppressed Nationalities, in particular. The limited space does not allow us to cover all of them -and to give inadequate coverage of others. We are publishing a list of many not included and their mailing addresses.

The general issue of political prisoners in the United States of Amerikkka is one that must be exposed and addressed now.

Some individuals will receive more coverage than others because of the blatant injustices and the urgency of their particular situation. The general issue of political prisoners in the United States of Amerikkka is one that must be exposed and addressed now. Most of the following articles were written by these prisoners themselves. We wish to thank the editors of the excellent book, "You can't Jail the Spirit." for permission to quote from their work.

LET THE HEROES SPEAK!!! ■

THE B.P.P AND POLITICAL PRISONERS

By Herman Bell

Because the Black Panther Party (BPP) was young and its leadership politically inexperienced, Party members were exposed to attacks from local and national police agencies, which in some instances, a politically more seasoned political party could have side stepped. A critical over-

sight in Party strategy was its failure to consolidate a strong base of support within the black community. Had it done so, it might have survived the suppressive police and FBI attacks and its own internal dissolution. That way, it would have had a powerful base of support to draw from. But this is hindsight. The political currents of the 60s and 70s can be viewed as the distillation of three distinct periods in African-American experience, each of which exhibits greater sophistication and complexity employed by the forces militating against the legitimate aspirations of the black community. One of the unique aspects of the latter i.e., the African-American experience is that its agenda and its demands were articulated by a young leadership. In and of itself, young leadership is commendable, since it is the young who are less covered by life experiences and it is they who will do, when in instances they have been advised not to do, or are advised that a thing cannot be done. Still, young leadership must be tempered by experience.

A young politically inexperienced leadership and its failure to consolidate its base of support, combined with a faint-hearted attempt to abide by the principles of democratic centralism within the hierarchy of Party leadership, ultimately led to policies and procedures being determined by a small inner-circle of top Party leaders. With growing internal contradictions within the Party itself, much of which is attributed to the F.B.I.'s Counter Intelligence Program (COINTELPRO) which among other things fabricated disinformation about the Party, leaders, and their political objectives, all to create an atmosphere of suspicion and mistrust between Party members and Party allies—this, in conjunction with the machinations of government agents in the guise of Party members who frequently initiated actions calculated to bring on swift and deadly reaction from local and national police agencies. Given the level of sophistication, unlimited man-power and resources available, what's remarkable is that the Party lasted as long as it did.

With the dissolution of the Party, those comrades who chose to

increasing danger. And because of their firm political commitment most of these comrades were railroaded to jail then and they remain in jail today and they have been there a long long time. A few of them have been released since then, but the majority remain where they are and they exist under the most trying of circumstances: in special housing units where conditions are primitive and every activity is severely limited. All reading material must meet a prescribed criteria, visiting conditions are strict, and closely monitored. The most obvious thing about their treatment is that they are treated different than those whose imprisonment is not directly related to political activity on the street.

These mini-jails-within-a-jail are designed to break the spirit and generate psychological stress and mental disintegration. The reader should bear in mind that this article is not meant to speak of specific horrors which find free expression in these special housing units. The aim of this article is to speak on how our political prisoners have become practically forgotten. Throughout the years of their interment, no concerted effort has been undertaken to organize a legal defense and family visitation fund for them. Buses and trains won't transport to prison without money and lawyers will do but so much without money. The few lawyers who provide legal service for 'rades generally bear the expense out of their own pockets. More often than not they are lawyers who have developed a personal relationship with one or several of our imprisoned 'rades.

The 'rades in jail still see themselves as part of a revolutionary movement that aims to abolish racism and class privilege and to create and safeguard a social order that will nourish freedom and justice for all. Meanwhile, they continue to display exemplary moral conduct under the most trying of circumstances. Most of them are well thought of by the prison population and even by some of their jailers. It ain't easy for them. Their children have now begun to have children of their own and practically all of them have become grandmas and grandpas of children they have yet to see or hold in their arms. And although no one talks about it, and this writer does not presume to speak for every imprisoned 'rade, something has to be done for them. It is mean-spirited and unkind to view their unvoiced concerns and criticisms of 'rades on the street as a response to pressures generated by constant abuse and long term confinement.

Against this bleak background, they read in the papers that in some foreign country a national liberation front avenged a wrongful death of a comrade or took measures to insure that a comrade would not be maltreated by the authorities, or liberated a comrade from the clutches of the authorities. It is not uncommon to read in the papers where members of the criminal



George Jackson

and Prisoners of War (POW) in Amerikkka.

If death is the Supreme Sacrifice one can give to the cause of freedom, imprisonment and torture must rank high on the list of things a freedom fighter must be willing to face, and high on the list of things the people respect.

We could easily make the argument that all Africans who are incarcerated are political prisoners because of the racist oppressive conditions in our society and the rampant injustices in the so-called legal justice system.

The majority of the United States prison population consists of members of the Black/African, Brown, Red and poor/working people. Currently, all prisoners on death row across the country come from poor families and are mostly high school drop-outs.* (U.S. Dept. of Justice, Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, "Survey of Inmate State Correctional Facilities.")

DEFINITION OF POLITICAL PRISONERS AND P.O.W.'S

All comrades in this issue define themselves as either political prisoners or prisoners of war (P.O.W.'s) We respect their right to define themselves. We do think it is necessary to briefly explain the difference between political prisoners and P.O.W.'s.

The definition of political prisoners is based on International Law which states that political prisoners are persons who are incarcerated because of their conscious political activity. This includes persons who are victims of deliberate political prosecution by the Government and Justice System.

Those who define themselves as prisoners of war (P.O.W.) view themselves as members of oppressed/colonized nations who were captured while engaged in a war of National Liberation against the U.S. Empire. They do not recognize the

MUMIA ABU-JAMAL: MOVE POLITICAL PRISONER

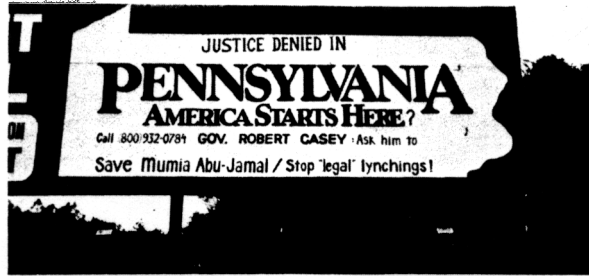
My name is Mumia Abu-Jamal. My background is in Radical/Revolutionary Media, Print, and Broadcast.

As a young activist in the Black Panther Party, I was taught graphic arts, newspaper layout and related propaganda skills by California Minister of Culture, Emory Douglass, his wife, BPP Editor, Judy Douglass, and Deputy Culture Minister, Brad Brewer, in the East Coast N.Y. Information Ministry headquarters in the Bronx.

Later, I expanded into a wide range of radio outlets for news and commentary, having done free-lance for the National Black Network, Mutual Black Network, and a host of regional radio stations, always with an anti-authoritarian, radical cast. My work has been aired on National Public Radio, and primarily Black-oriented stations nationally.

Such a stance in reportage hasn't always found favor among station ownership, so, with the

emergence of the MOVE Organization in Philadelphia, and my penchant for provocative pieces which challenged the status quo (and MOVE posed the most provocative challenge to Philadelphia's status quo



since the 1700s), I quickly became stigmatized as a threat to said status quo, and a target among city cops, but principally because of the ongoing, and utterly critical persecution of MOVE members and supporters.

While "colleagues" nicknamed me "Mumia Africa", in an attempt to disparage, the actual Africans were caught in a wicked web of a state set-up, that culminated in the infamous pre-dawn war waged against MOVE, which resulted in nine MOVE men and women being framed for the shooting death of a cop, and sentenced to a century each!

This raid, on August 8, 1978, was broadcast globally and illuminated the depth of corruption that city officials would stoop to, still the voice of the valiant Africans. 9 men and women (the women, incidentally, not even charged with weapons offenses, were given identical sentences as the men) sentenced to a total of 900 years in prison, for a crime that they (the state) knew they didn't commit!

The trial judge, in fact, told a regionally broadcast radio audience that he had "no idea" who shot the cop but... they were tried as a family, I sentenced them as a family" (Judge Edwin S. Talmed, Common Pleas Court Judge, speaking on the Frank Ford Show, WWDB-FM (96.5) radio, August 1978, Phila.) the day following the "trial."

As a reporter for a well-known public radio station, I covered this frame-up of MOVE, and instead of parroting the State prosecutor's rantings, I simply did what any so-called "objective" reporter was trained to do, i.e., I got both sides—the system's, and MOVE's.

This activity, undertaken in the spirit of fundamental fairness, and a sense of kinship with fellow radicals, marked me for legal extinction shortly thereafter. Another pre-dawn attack, on men wearing dreadlocks, resulted in my being shot and beaten, and a cop shot, on a central Philadelphia street, in December 1981.

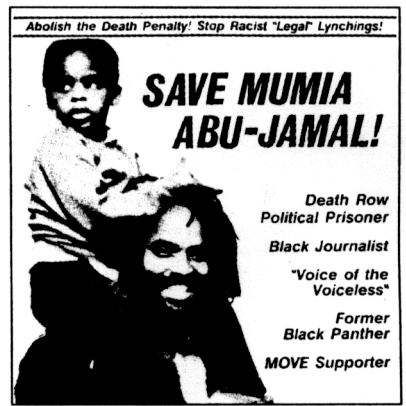
Despite my efforts to defend myself, to select a jury of my "peers", to give opening and closing arguments, cross-examine, I spent most of the "trial" out of the courtroom. On July 3, 1982, a jury, in rush so as not to spoil their 4th of July weekend, sentenced me to death.

In arguing for the death sentence, the state prosecutor drew on a published reports, over a decade old, detailing my Black Panther background. Though I was certainly not ashamed of it, its impact on a virtually all-white jury, middle class and over-aged, was a tactic designed to demand death.

Total sentence: Death + 2 1/2 to 5 years. Current legal status: direct appeal

Address:
Mumia Abu-Jamal, #M-8335
Drawer R
Huntingdon, PA 166652

Contact:
Partisan Defense Committee
c/o R. Wolkstein, Esq.
P.O. Box 99, Canal St. Station
New York, NY 10013 ■



Death Row
Political Prisoner
Black Journalist
"Voice of the
Voiceless"
Former
Black Panther
MOVE Supporter

SUNDIATA ACOLI: NEW AFRIKAN PRISONER OF WAR

Sundiata Acoli, a New Afrikan political prisoner of war, mathematician, and computer analyst, was born January 14, 1937, in Decatur, Texas, and raised in Vernon, Texas. He graduated from Prairie View A&M College of Texas in 1956 with a B.S. in mathematics and for the next 13 years worked for various computer-oriented firms, mostly in the New York area.

During the summer of 1964 he did voter registration work in Mississippi. In 1968, he joined the Harlem, New York, Black Panther Party and did community work around issues of schools, housing, jobs, child care, drugs, and police brutality.

In 1969 he and 13 others were arrested in the Panther 21 conspiracy case. He was held in jail without bail and on trial for two years before being acquitted, along with all other defendants, by a jury deliberating less than two hours.

Upon release, FBI intimidation of potential employers shot off all employment possibilities in the computer profession and stepped up COINTELPRO harassment, surveillance, and provocations soon drove him underground.

In May 1973, while driving the New Jersey Turnpike, he and his comrades were ambushed by N.J. state troopers. One companion, Zayd Shakur, was killed, another companion, Assata Shakur, was wounded and captured. One state trooper was killed and another wounded, and Sundiata was captured days later.

After a highly sensationalized and prejudicial trial he was convicted of the death of the state trooper and was sentenced to Trenton State Prison (TSP) for life plus 30 years consecutive.

Upon entering TSP he was subsequently confined to a new and specially created Management Control Unit (MCU) solely because of his political background. He remained in MCU almost five years in a stripped cell smaller than the SPCA's space requirement for a German shepherd dog. He was only let out of the cell ten minutes a day for showers and two hours twice a week for



SUNDIATA ACOLI AND SEKOU ODINGA

In September 1979, the International Jurist interviewed Sundiata and subsequently declared him a political prisoner. A few days later prison officials secretly transferred him during the middle of the night to the federal prison system and put him enroute to the infamous federal concentration camp at Marion, Illinois, although he had no federal charges or sentences. An entrance physical exam by federal medical personnel disclosed that he had been heavily exposed to tuberculosis while at Trenton State Prison.

Marion is the highest security prison in the U.S., also one of the harshest, and there Sundiata was locked down 23 hours a day in a stripped cell containing only a stone bed, toilet, wash bowl, and a few personal items. Brutal conditions and violence are epidemic at Marion where murders and assaults by guards and prisoners alike are common occurrences. During one turbulent period beginning in October 1983, Sundiata and all prisoners were confined to their cell blocks 24 hours a day for nine continuous months as wolf packs of guards roamed about the com-

at Leavenworth, Kansas, where he is presently confined,

Charges:

Sentenced to life plus 30 years, sentences to be served consecutively. Convicted of murder, armed robbery, assault, and weapons possession, arising from same incident.

Parole:

Presently eligible for parole on life sentence; if granted must begin doing time on the 30-year consecutive sentence. It is unclear whether a state prisoner confined in the federal system receives good time. Release date for full sentence unknown.

Current legal status:

No pending legal aspects of case exist.

Address:

Sundiata Acoli, #39794-066
P.O. Box 1000
Leavenworth, Kansas 66048 ■

MESSAGE FROM SEKOU MGOBOGI ABDULLAH ODINGA: NEW AFRICAN PRISONER OF WAR

My name is Sekou Mgbogi Abdullah Odinga. I am a Muslim and a P.O.W. I was born in Queens, NY on June 17, 1944. I was raised in a family of 9—Father, Mother, 3 brothers and 3 sisters. I was kicked out of school in the 10th grade for defending myself against an attack by a teacher.

In 1964, I became involved in the Cultural Nationalist movement. By 1965, I had joined the organization of African American Unity, founded by El Hajj Malik Shabazz (Malcolm X). I began to move with and among many young African Nationalists. My political consciousness was growing daily. I was reading and listening to many African Nationalists from Africa and the U.S., as a result, I became convinced that only after a successful armed struggle would New Afrikans gain freedom and self-determination. I also became

seemed to be going in the direction I desired. By late '65 or early '66 I hooked up with other young Revolutionary Nationalists to organized ourselves for the purpose of implementing what we felt was Malcolm's program. We organized the Grassroots Advisory Council, in South Jamaica, New York. We were all very young and inexperienced and got caught up in a local anti-poverty program.

By 1967, I was thoroughly disillusioned with that, when I heard about the Black Panther Party in Oakland, California. Myself, along with some of my closest comrades, decided this was the type of organization we wanted to be a part of. We decided that some of us would go to California, investigate, and join the B.P.P., if it was what it claimed to be.

By the spring of 1968, we heard that representatives from the B.P.P. were coming

WHY ARE BLACK/AFRICAN SOLDIERS FIGHTING FOR "FREEDOM AND JUSTICE" IN THE MIDDLE EAST, WHEN THERE IS NO FREEDOM AND JUSTICE FOR US IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERIKKKA???

THE CASE OF GERONIMO JI JAGA (PRATT)

Editor's note: Geronimo ji Jaga is a veteran of the Vietnam war (paratrooper). He served two tours, won the Silver Star, two Purple hearts, the Bronze Star, a Soldier's medal, and Air medal with clusters, an Army expedition medal with clusters, two accommodation medals, a Good Conduct Medal, Senior Jump wings, and a combat Infantry Badge with Star.

Yet, he has been unjustly incarcerated for the last 20 years for a crime the U.S government knows (by their own evidence) he did not commit. Geronimo case is a clear example of the TRADITION OF INJUSTICE and VIOLENCE TOWARD AFRICAN PEOPLES (AND OTHER PEOPLES OF COLOR) in the United States of Amerikkka.

Justice demands that these lies be removed from his files & that geronimo be released!

After 20 years, Amerikkka refuses to address the question of a fair trial and humane treatment for geronimo, and for African/Black people in racist Amerikkka in general.

Geronimo has been denied parole NINE consecutive times. In his absence, the parole board not only denied his release, but placed slanderous lies in his prison files. Geronimo is due to go before the parole board hearing

this year (1991). Justice demands that these lies be removed from his files AND that geronimo be released IMMEDIATELY!

STATEMENT BY GERONIMO JI JAGA August 22, 1989

The California State Parole Panel recently issued statements regarding my eligibility for release from prison. I repudiate those statements as untrue and slanderous. I hereby challenge the State Parole Panel to come forward and prove any and all allegations made while I was out of state on a federal subpoena on behalf of my brother Filiberto Ojeda-Rios.

The statements about my psychiatric evaluation are groundless and completely contradicted by all jail psychiatric reports from the first days of my imprisonment. I openly invite any and every person of good will to come forward and read these reports and see the yearly recommendations that have stated that I be released from prison and that I pose no threat and no danger to society.

Secondly, the State Parole Panel said they refused to parole me because, they claim, I am not educated enough. In fact, reflected within my prison file are numerous job offers to lecture and teach at the University of Atlanta, University of California at Berkeley and the University of Azania among others. Furthermore, I have more than 40 units in credits from UCLA and the College of Marin. I have completed with honors college courses

in Cultural Anthropology, Philosophy, Sociology, Oceanography, Afrikan History and Political Science. The fact that every day that same panel allows prisoners to go free who haven't even been to high school shows they are imposing a double standard in my case.

The most ludicrous of their wicked untruths accuses me of involvement with heroin. This is a sad joke given the many years of my strict discipline and firm position against drugs, as well as my known display of physical fitness. This was noted by an award from the Vietnam Veterans Group of San Quentin for my marathon run of 17 miles at the age of 41 and my weight lifting of 300 pounds regularly. The Parole Panel's latest attempt to vilify, defame and discredit me must be challenged because of the insidious image it portrays to our children in the midst of the genocidal drug war which is savagely being waged against our families and communities daily.

In closing, there is no basis in fact or reality for these statements that the Parole Panel has made. The aforementioned statements were made during a so-called parole hearing without me or



my attorney being present. Therefore, I hereby challenge any and all members of the Panel to face me with their baseless accusations in the open instead of hiding in the shadows with these deceitful and damaging lies.

This is similar and very much in line with the way COINTELPRO acted in the '60s and '70s to discredit and criminalize the people who were actively involved in the struggle for human rights.

I see it as a continuation of the COINTELPRO campaign against me which illegally put me in prison in the first place and now wants to keep me here for life. ■

RUCHELL CINQUE MAGEE: SOLE SURVIVOR OF THE COURTHOUSE REBELLION

by Kiilu Nyasha (aka Pat Gallyot, New Haven Chapter)

The news photos of the "Courthouse Slave Rebellion" of August 7, 1970, hit the front pages of practically every newspaper in and out of the country - sending shock waves around the world. Pictures of four black men emerging from Marin County Courthouse with guns and hostages and disarming guards provoked panic among some; but in others it inspired images of the pre-Civil War actions of John Brown and Harriet Tubman.

The sole survivor of this audacious revolt, Ruchell Cinque Magee (who took his middle name from the leader of an historic slaveship uprising), has now spent an additional 21 years in California's state prisons, the last 11 in solitary confinement.

Magee's life story is a classic example of the racist repression of African men throughout their nearly 400-year history on this land: Sentenced to "life" in a Louisiana state penitentiary (Angola) on a bogus "attempted" rape charge involving a white woman; framed, arrested, beaten by police and railroaded to "life" again at 23 — out of prison just five months — Magee has now spent 35 of his 51 years in the dungeons of Angola, San Quentin, Folsom, the new maximum-security prison at Corcoran (near the San Joaquin Valley), and



Oregon border where the isolation is extreme. Opened in 1989, its windowless, com-

pletely automated cells keep prisoners alone at all times allowing no access, no smoking, and absolutely no contact with other inmates or guards except when moved for showers and exercise — at which time they're shackled and flanked by two, club-wielding guards. The Chief Deputy Warden described Pelican Bay as the "country's most secure prison." A

vision that Magee appeared in court the morning of August 7th — his sole purpose to testify for his comrade, James McClain, defending himself against the charge of assaulting a guard.

Magee was on the witness stand when 17-year-old Jonathan Jackson, younger brother of George Jackson, burst into the courtroom armed to the teeth. Jackson's plan was to use the hostages to take over a radio station to expose virulent prison conditions and demand the immediate release of The Soledad Brothers (Fleeta Drumgo, John Clutchette, and George Jackson), accused of killing a guard after.

Not part of any plan, Magee agreed to go along only after being allowed to explain to the jurors the justification for such recourse. But this took nearly 15 precious minutes — long enough to give San Quentin sharpshooters time to arrive at the parking lot before Jackson's waiting van could leave.

Operating with courage and calm even their enemies had to respect, the four insurgents commandeered their hostages out of the courthouse and began their getaway without a hitch. What they failed to anticipate was the State's willingness to sacrifice one of its own judges and the lives of anyone else to stop the escape. In a barrage of gunfire, guards and police riddled the van with bullets that took the lives of Christmas, Jackson, McClain and Judge Harold Haley; and left the prosecutor critically wounded, a juror slightly wounded, and Magee seriously wounded and unconscious.

One of the guards who fired into the van testified as follows:

GUARD: "...we are under orders to prevent escapes at all costs."

hostages...[and] it would be necessary to kill all 20...to prevent that escape, that you would do so?"

GUARD: "Yes, sir, I would be under orders to."

Over the past two decades, Ruchell Cinque Magee has been directly or indirectly responsible for the release of over 40 fellow inmates. He has filed numerous class actions and civil suits he calls "guerrilla law," some of which were won by his withdrawal as either the plaintiff or the attorney of record. (Magee has been repeatedly told he has no legal "standing" in the courts.) No doubt, Magee's legal maneuvers are largely responsible for his removal from mainline prison population.

In his determined struggle to exonerate himself from this frame-up and subsequent denial of his rights, Magee developed consciousness not only of his own plight, but that of a whole class of people victimized by institutionalized, adjudicated racism. In his own words, "My fight is to expose the entire system, judicial and prison system, a system of slavery....This will cause benefit not just to myself but to all those who at this time are being criminally oppressed or enslaved by this system."

In recent years, we have witnessed the release or parole of countless violent convicts who committed heinous crimes — including premeditated double murder — as in the case of Dan White, who killed former San Francisco Mayor George Moscone and Supervisor Harvey Milk, after serving as little as five years.

Magee has spent about 35 years in prison; yet he has never personally injured or killed anyone. He has, it appears, been driven to paranoia by the relentless torture of his jailers.

This stand-up brother has been denied his most basic human rights, mentally and physically tortured, and in his daring bid for freedom — shot.

How much longer will we tolerate the "cruel and unusual punishment" of this heroic freedom fighter who has sacrificed