

WHO IS KAMAU SADIKI?

Kamau Sadiki is a former member of the Black Liberation Army (BLA) who is currently serving a life sentence for the killing of an Atlanta police officer in November of 1971. Sadiki's case was part of a renewed campaign during the early 2000s to target former revolutionaries from the 1960s and 70s.

B A C K G R O U N D

In 1969, at the young age of sixteen, Sadiki (known at the time as Freddy Hilton) joined the Black Panther Party, working out of the Jamaica office in Queens, New York. He worked primarily in the Free Breakfast Program, providing free meals to children in the community.

He has been described by those who knew him as a passionate young man who "internalized the 10 Point Program and Platform, the 3 Main Rules of Discipline and 8 Points of Attention of the Panther Party. When the Free Breakfast Program was over for the day, he reported to the office, gathered his papers and received his assignment for the day, and went out into the community to sell his papers. While selling his papers he continued to educate the people, while organizing tenants, welfare mothers, whomever he came in contact."

COINTELPRO and the BLA

As part of the ongoing FBI's Counter-Intelligence Program (COINTELPRO), the US government engaged in an offensive campaign to neutralize and destroy the Black Panther Party. In a 1968 memorandum, the FBI director had instructed agents to "submit imaginative and hard-hitting

counter-intelligence measures aimed at crippling the BPP" within a context of "gang warfare" and "attendant threats of murder and reprisal."

Many members of the Black Panther Party felt they had no choice but to go underground or risk imprisonment or death. Kamau Sadiki was one of those individuals. Before going underground, Sadiki had already been arrested twice for an alleged assault on a police officer and weapons possession. It was only a matter of time before he became a target. It was at this time he joined the ranks of the newly formed Black Liberation Army (BLA), an organization that engaged in a counter-offensive campaign against the State.

In August of 1971, Sadiki and a dozen other of the Black Liberation Army moved from New York to a house in DeKalb County, Georgia. The group allegedly underwent rigorous training in marksmanship, survival, first aid, map reading and perfecting plans for bank expropriations.

On November 3, 1971, shortly after midnight, Atlanta officer James Greene was shot three times and killed while sitting in a parked police van. His gun and badge were taken from the scene.

A week after Atlanta patrolman Greene was killed, police raided the group's house due to an investigation into a bank expropriation at the Fulton National Bank a month prior. Eight members of the Black Liberation Army were arrested. Sadiki was not present during the raid.

Around the same time of the raid, Sadiki was stopped with another Black Liberation Army member at a roadblock in North Carolina following the shooting of a Catawba County deputy sheriff. Two other BLA members (Robert Brown and William Owens) were convicted of that action. There was no indication of Sadiki's involvement but he and his co-defendant,

Avon White, were convicted on charges of carrying concealed weapons. They were both sentenced to a six-month prison term.

After his release, Sadiki went back underground and returned to New York. It would not take long before he came under the attention of law enforcement. In September of 1972, Samuel Cooper, arrested in the raid and later escaped from DeKalb County jail, was captured in Miami. While in custody, Cooper claimed that Sadiki and another BLA member, Twymon Meyers were responsible for the killing of Greene. Despite the information provided by Cooper, the District Attorney did not feel he had enough evidence to indict the two men.

In January of the following year, six members of the Black Liberation Army, including Kamau Sadiki, were indicted for various actions police claimed were connected to the organization. Sadiki was indicted on federal charges following the expropriation of funds from the Manufacturer's Hanover Trust Company in the Bronx in September of 1972. He managed to avoid arrest until he was captured on June 7, 1973, as part of a federal stakeout.

In December of that year, he and his co-defendant, Assata Shakur, stood trial for the bank expropriation. The case ended in a mistrial. They were tried a second time, but the jury acquitted the two BLA members. Both, however, remained in detention for additional charges relating to two separate incidents. Sadiki was charged with the shooting of two cops in March of 1973 and was acquitted. However, in July of 1974, Sadiki was tried in another bank expropriation that took place in Queen in April of 1973. This time he was found guilty and sentenced to five years in prison.

It is important to note that during these trials, Assata Shakur was pregnant with a child she shared with Sadiki, which she had while in custody. Assata would later escape to Cuba.

RELEASE & NEW CHARGES

Sadiki was released from prison in 1981, attempted to live a life of normalcy and stability, dedicated himself to Islam, and worked at the local telephone company for more than 18 years. During that time, he raised his two daughters, both of whom finished college and are now married with families of their own.

In the early 2000s, police agencies throughout the country began investigating old cases relating to the revolutionary movements of the 60s and 70s. In 2001, NYPD detectives investigating another matter discovered that Sadiki had once been associated with the Black Liberation Army and was a suspect in the killing of Officer Greene. The detectives contacted the Atlanta Police Department, which reopened the case. Using the statements from Samuel Cooper from 1972, the police were able to extradite Sadiki and charge him with the killing of Greene. Ronald Anderson, Malik Abdur-Razzaq (formerly Robert Brown) and Avon White, all former BLA members turned informants, stated they heard Sadiki and Twymon Myers admit to the killing and testified as much in court. Myers was no longer alive following a shootout with police in November of 1973.

Despite the government's case, Kamau Sadiki has claimed his innocence in Greene's killing. He states that the government has refused to allow testimony from witnesses that would exonerate him. An example of this is the testimony of Ignae Thomas. Thomas, the former spouse of the BLA

leader, John Leo Thomas, states that she heard both Twymon Myers and John Thomas admit to the killing. Ignae stated that John Thomas was guilt-ridden that he allowed others to think that Sadiki was responsible for the murder. The government claims their rejection of this testimony was due to Thomas' loyalty to Sadiki.

During the initial stages of the investigation, investigators told Sadiki that unless he helped the US government capture Assata Shakur, he would "die in prison." They told him that if he worked with them and "got Assata to leave Cuba" and go to some other country where they could apprehend her that they would not prosecute him on the killing of Greene.

Sadiki refused to participate in the government's plot against Assata and was subsequently convicted in October 2003 of Greene's murder. He was sentenced to life in prison plus ten years to run consecutively.

Sadiki suffers from several ailments, including Hepatitis C, Cirrhosis of the Liver and Sarcoidosis. Because of these conditions, his health has continued to deteriorate. In late 2018, doctors were looking to amputate Sadiki's foot rather than treat an infected wound. Thankfully, due to growing pressure from supporters, the doctors treated the wound instead of amputation. It is for this reason that support for his liberation is so critical.

WRITE TO KAMAU SADIKI:

Kamau Sadiki* #0001150688

Augusta State Medical Prison

3001 Gordon Highway

Grovetown, Georgia 30813

**Address envelope to Freddie Hilton.*

Local groups supporting Kamau Sadiki:

NYC Anarchist Black Cross (NYC ABC)

nycabc@riseup.net

FB/IG/TWITTER: @nycabc

KAMAU SADIKI

