

Tonight we are here in solidarity with courageous African national freedom fighters, with Dessie Woods, Assata Shakur, Sundiata Acoli, Gerónimo Pratt, the RNA-11, Ernest Graham, Eugene Allen, and countless others. Supporting these fighters means struggling against colonialism, the total domination of a people by foreigners for the sake of profit. Support for African national freedom fighters means defending the right of African people in the U.S. to struggle by any means necessary for political independence through self-liberation.

The U.S. state is moving with all its genocidal force to smash the rising tide of black liberation. Over the summer, police murdered black people in city after city. In Hunters Point in San Francisco, police murdered 66-year old Charles "Poppa" James. In Brooklyn, New York, white police strangled black community leader Arthur Miller, and then beat his dead body in front of a crowd of enraged black people. In St. Petersburg, Florida, a white policeman murdered Willie James Daniels, an unarmed 20-year old African youth. In Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Mayor Rizzo sent his fascist police in an armed invasion on MOVE, a mostly African back-to-nature group. When one of his officers ^{was} killed ^{by} another cop, Rizzo said he would like to pull the electric chair switch himself on MOVE members. In San Quentin prison in California, the death penalty was applied to Khatari Gauden, black freedom fighter. He was left untreated to die a slow death after an injury in the prison yard. And now there is the Briggs Initiative #7, the death penalty initiative, aimed at legally lynching even more African people. All this adds up to a state strategy of colonial terror and genocide.

But African people are fighting back and the movement for African independence is growing. In black communities from Tupelo, Mississippi, to St. Petersburg, Florida, to Brooklyn and Philadelphia, masses of black people are demanding an end to police terror and collaboration with the KKK. In prisons across the country, black prisoners are leading rebellions against inhuman conditions, lockdowns, and colonial assaults by white guards and white prisoner groups. Conscious pro-independence African formations are providing leadership in this escalating resistance to colonialism. An example of this is the July 4th, 1978 mobilization to smash colonial violence and to free Dessie Woods. Under the leadership of the National Committee to Defend Dessie Woods, over a thousand people marched in Plains, Georgia, and in San Francisco, California.

This is a time when white people are confronted with a clear choice: we can continue the long violent history of opposition to black liberation, or we can actively support the black pro-independence movement. Right now, the state is mobilizing white people to actively support colonial attacks. And that support is there...in the massive white vote in favor of Proposition 13, which lowered white homeowners' taxes by cutting the few survival services black and other colonized people had. That support is there in the growth of the KKK, in the rise of white vigilante terror in New York, Louisville, Kentucky, Chicago, Illinois, Boston, Massachusetts, and Columbus, Georgia. And that support is there for the Briggs death penalty proposition #7, which is the most popular proposition in California today.

During the height of black revolutionary movement in the 60's, when the state escalated its attacks on African people, the white left and women's movement overwhelmingly abandoned solidarity. Now the struggle for African independence is building again, and state assaults on the black community and its revolutionary leadership are escalating. Our solidarity is critical now. As Afeni Shakur of the National Task Force for COINTELPRO Litigation and Research said: "It's coming around again; you've got to be there this time."

If we are going to be there this time, we have to support the anti-colonial struggle inside U.S. borders as firmly as we do the struggle in Zimbabwe, Azania, Namibia. We can't support the armed struggle in Zimbabwe, then turn around and condemn the actions of the Black Liberation Army as terrorist or adventurist. We have to see the current borders of the U.S. for what they really are: the bloody fruits of colonial wars waged against the Native and Mexicano nations, an empire built off the lives and labor of kidnapped and enslaved African people. We have to expose the U.S. as an illegal colonial state with no right to try any colonized person for anything. It has no right to try Dessie Woods for defending herself against the colonial violence of a rape attack by a white man. It has no right to put her on trial for dealing out justice to a criminal who would never have been brought to justice any other way. Our support for all African freedom fighters must be based on our solidarity with the struggle of African people against U.S. domestic colonialism.

If we're going to be there this time, we have to openly confront the lines and practice in our movements which work against African independence. We have to challenge the opportunist politics which says "No on 6: Stop the Briggs Initiative", but refuses to take on Briggs Initiative #7,

or places it as a small item on the agenda. Any organizing against Briggs that does not target Proposition 7 as well as Proposition 6 aids the state in its attempts to expand the legal murder of African people. We must mount a militant and sustained campaign this month to expose the Briggs death penalty initiative for what it is - a lynch law. We must target the death penalty as a weapon of genocide against African people.

Imperialism is being defeated around the world, as it already has been in Vietnam, Angola, and Mozambique. Throughout Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America, colonized people are taking back control of their lands and lives. Inside the U.S., the African liberation movement is leading in the fight to destroy U.S. imperialism. If we're going to be there this time we must follow this leadership, and commit ourselves to organizing support for the struggles of African and other colonized peoples. This is the only basis for building real revolutionary struggle among white people.

Right now, in San Quentin, Geronimo Pratt faces constant danger of being murdered on the mainline, and Ernest Graham and Eugene Allen are in isolation on death row. Assata Shakur is in federal prison in Alderson, West Virginia, surrounded by prisoners and guards who are members of the American Nazi Party. The state of New Jersey has expressed intent to ship Sundiata Acoli to the federal penitentiary in Kansas where he would be totally isolated and much more easily set up by the state to be murdered. The RNA-11 have been denied an appeal by the U.S. colonial courts. Dessie Woods has also been denied an appeal. If we're going to be there this time, we have to give ongoing political and material support to the defense efforts for all these freedom fighters. We have to support the struggles of black prisoners, and the building of the African National Prison Organization. We have to openly defend the comrades of the African Peoples Socialist Party who have been under increasing attack in this period. We must organize to smash the death penalty. Anyone who is not already in a solidarity organization should join one. Anyone interested in helping or in joining the Dessie Woods Support Coalition should sign up with us tonight. We need people's work and donations. We are planning fundraisers for the national defense efforts, demonstrations, on-going mass leafleting, and getting the word out. We hope you will join us in working under the leadership of the National Committee to Defend Dessie Woods to smash colonial violence and to free Dessie Woods.

FREE DESSIE WOODS!

FREE ASSATA SHAKUR!

FREE SUNDIATA ACOLI!

FREE GERONIMO PRATT!

FREE THE RNA-11!

FREE GRAHAM AND ALLEN!

FREE ALL AFRICAN NATIONAL FREEDOM FIGHTERS!

KILL THE DEATH PENALTY!

SMASH COLONIAL VIOLENCE!

FREE DESSIE WOODS!

SMASH COLONIAL VIOLENCE!