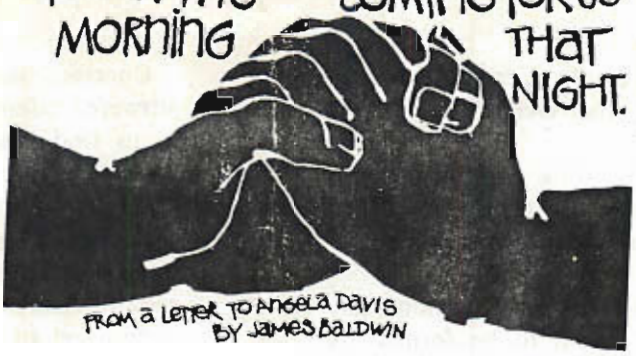

MAY-JUNE 1982 VOLUME 1/ISSUE 1

THE COMING OF THE TROOPS

On Oct. 20, 1981 in Nanuet New York during the attempted expropriation of a Brinks armored truck, a guard and two police officers were shot and killed. The four people arrested at that time—two white women, a white man and one black man, have been indicted by a Rockland County grand jury and will eventually be tried.

Since Oct. 1981 at least twenty black people have been either arrested or are sought for arrest. One is Panamanian, two are Puerto Rican, eight are women and two are pregnant. At least forty black children are facing the grim realities of having their parents snatched from them and being either jailed, killed or leading the life of a fugitive. For them slavery and the fugitive slave laws live in america. Some of their fathers have sustained severe and permanent damages to vital organs as a result of sustained beatings by law enforcement agents.

IF THEY TAKE YOU IN THE MORNING THEY WILL BE COMING FOR US THAT NIGHT

One black man was arrested on Oct. 20th in Nyack, but soon after that, the Southern District of New York commenced its own investigation. And on Oct. 23rd they came for Sekou Odinga (Nathaniel Burns) and Mtyari Sundiata (Samuel Smith). The two men were riding thru a Queens street when they were chased by members of the newly-formed New York City Police Joint Terrorist Task Force.

Sekou, a member of the originally charged NY Panther 21, had never been apprehended by police and had been a fugitive since the original 1969 indictment.

At the end of the chase Mtyari was shot dead and Sekou was arrested and systematically beaten by trained inquisitioners. (Sekou was beaten again on May 13, 1982 by Rockland County officials as a result of a court order to use "reasonable restraint" to force him to submit to wholesale lineups. He was beaten in the knees and chained to a chair, all in the name of justice.)

On Oct. 27th 1981 they came to Mississippi from the air and the ground with armored tanks. They handcuffed eleven children and arrested Fulani Sunni-Ali (Cynthia Boston) mother of five and Jerry Gaines mother of eight, to appear before the Southern District's New York grand jury. The grand jury was convened to investigate so called "Terrorist" organizations (including the Black Panther Party, Republic of New Africa, Black Liberation Army, Weather Underground) and their links with the Oct. 20th expropriation and other related (but unspecified) offenses.

The only true common thread running through this so-called conspiracy, is the commonality of purpose with which each of these twenty folks live their politically active lives.

Fulani Sunni-Ali is the daughter of Alajo, former Minister of Defense and Vice President of the RNA. Raised in an active revolutionary nationalist home, Fulani is a mother, a wife and coordinator of a summer camp for children. Her husband, Bilal Sunni-Ali, a leading jazz saxophonist who formerly wrote and performed with Gil Scott Heron & the Midnight Band, was declared a participant in the Brinks robbery and sought for arrest.

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EDITORIAL NOTES

Many of us have recently been affected by the repercussions of the October 20, 1981 Brinks incident.

Many of us have strong opinions about various issues raised by the arrests in Nyack and subsequent arrests in both Mississippi and New York.

Our opinions are not always harmoniously expressed but they all seem to be formed by both political organizations, and personal observations over a period of years while we watched and/or participated in the rekindling of our movement from about 1971 until today.

Our dissatisfaction with the actions of certain elements of our movement has been an internal question which many of us sought to resolve utilizing various forums over the past few years. Oftimes these efforts were frustrated by the inability of some of our comrades to acknowledge legitimate apprehension over planned activities or positions. When some of us voiced our disapproval over trends in our movement, we were scorned, isolated and branded as being anti armed struggle, counter-revolutionaries or told we were unable to follow leadership.

These continuing disagreements continued until October 20, 1981 when subsequent to the Nyack arrests of three Weatherpeople and a black man, local police and FBI members stepped up their attacks against our movement unmindful of any of our personal opinions or positions.

Contradictions are basically unresolved, unanswered questions are left dangling and many of us find it difficult or impossible to accept the role white women/men seem to have been given in our movement. We reject arguments that seek to place blame or guilt on black women/men as unresponsive to the needs of certain elements of our struggle. We nevertheless feel an unwavering responsibility to support those black men and women affected by the October Brinks incident. This responsibility is based upon a solid belief that an attack upon one of us is indeed an attack against us all. We dedicate this newsletter to a spirit which we won't let die.

We paraphrase a few lines from a poem by a Third World poet which grand jury subpoenaee Asha Thornton read to the grand jury in answer to their demand that she testify:

"Our forefathers broke their backs to give us freedom & dignity
And we break their hearts by wasting their sacrifices."

We remember our forefathers—Sojourner, Harriet, Nat, Denmark, Fannie Lou, David Walker, Malcolm, Bobby Hutton, Bunchy Carter, Mark Clark, Fred Hampton, Ron Carter, Zayd Shakur, Twyman Myers, Featherstone, Che, George Jackson, Jonathan Jackson, Woody Greene, Bro. L.D. Barkley....

THE SILENCE IS BROKEN!

Note from the Editors:

If you want to help alleviate our printing costs please send money to:

c/o NTCLR
POB 65
Box 10073
New York, NY

We also need your comments, suggestions, criticism and other constructive input—We'll be looking to hear from you.

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On Nov. 4, 1981 they came to serve Yaasmyn Fula with a subpoena to present hand writing, hair, fingerprints, photographs and testimony. Yaasmyn, mother of a four-year-old, is a working single parent. At the time of her subpoena and arrest she worked eight hours a day at Bronx Legal Services as a legal assistant and an additional eight hours as a word processor for the law firm of Roseman, Cohen, Freund, Lewis and Cohen.

They they came for Ivette Alfonso, a Puerto Rican woman active in her community and a member of the Puerto Rican Socialist Party. Ms. Alfonso was subpoenaed but there has been no activity on her subpoena. On Jan. 7, 1982 they came to Philadelphia for Abdul Majid (Anthony Laborde). Abdul had been hunted since April 1980, for allegedly killing PO Scarangella and wounding another PO in Queens. At subsequent pretrial hearings, neither the police officer nor any other eyewitnesses have identified Abdul as a participant. It is clear only that he has a long history in the black liberation movement and that he knew Jimmy York, who had been arrested previously. The media has convicted Abdul before he has even come to trial.

Very shortly thereafter they came to the Bronx and got Kwesi Bulagoon, another member of the originally indicted NY Panther 21.

The criminal culpability of the NYC Police Dept. in the affairs of the Black liberation movement was well documented in the New York Panther 21 trial. There we learned of the agent Gene Roberts' presence as an undercover policeman as Malcolm X's body guard, even at his murder, attempting to give Malcolm mouth to mouth resuscitation. Gene went on to become a leading member of the security force of the New York Black Panther Party office.

On March 26, 1982 at 5:30 a.m. the Anti-Terrorist joint task force, FBI agents and heavily armed SWAT teams converged on the Harlem clinic of the Black Acupuncture Advisory Association of North America. The BAAANA clinic is located on the block in Harlem known as strivers row or doctors row. Its presence there is testimony to the determination of its founders to provide a drug free alternative to the black community. Its history is one deeply rooted in the fight against drug abuse among black people. In 1970 a group of black and Puerto Rican health workers and community activists including the Young Lords Party and the Black Panther Party, successfully took over a portion of Lincoln Hospital demanding adequate health care and facilities to addicts wishing to detox. Inherent in the Lincoln detox approach was the belief in the right of heroin addicts to refuse chemical treatment with methadone. However once addicted to methadone (and the thousands and one companion pills taken by methadone addicts such as valium), withdrawal was dangerous unless done over prolonged periods with gradual reduction of intake. By 1972 the workers of Lincoln Detox led by Mutulu Shakur, a founding member of the Republic of New Africa and long time anti drug activist, initiated an acupuncture research program at Lincoln Detox. Using primarily ear acupuncture, they treated thousands of drug victims from the South Bronx and all over the city. Eventually their research and acupuncture treatment program rivaled any in the world. Not satisfied with learning acupuncture, they freely passed on their knowledge, eventually opening a school In 1977, four Black and Puerto Rican leaders of the clinic received Doctor of Acupuncture degrees from the Quebec Association of Acupuncture. In 1977 Dr. Mutulu Shakur and Dr. Richard Delaney traveled to China representing BAAANA.

The agents who came to BAAANA on March 26th claimed to be looking for Dr. Mutulu Shakur. He was not there, but those who were there received subpoenas to appear before the grand jury. They are Dr. Richard Delaney, Dr. Kama Beyete, James Wilson, Makini Shakur, all staff members of the clinic. Eventually all of the subpoenas growing out of this assault were quashed by a federal judge because they so blatantly violated the constitutional rights of the subpoenaes.

On March 26th they also came to West 110th St. for Cecilio Ferguson El and his wife Nacawe Cueves.

They came to 14th St. for Jamal Josephs and his pregnant wife, sitting on her prone body to serve their subpoena. The men were charged with federal bank robbery and conspiracy and violations of the Rico Statute. Jamal is also one of the original indictees in the NY Panther 21 trial. Jamal was 16 at the time of that arrest.

After twenty five months in the NY Panther 21 trial (April 1969-May 1971) a jury took ninety minutes in deliberating and reaching a not guilty verdict on all charges. Yet the State of New York spent over one and a half million dollars trying to link twenty one persons in a conspiracy which existed in the minds of the FBI and NYC police department personnel. A conspiracy fanned by the media as a terrorist plot.

The Rico grand jury and this entire investigative farce is a repeat performance. We need to repeat our victories black people! □

A BLACK MOTHER SPEAKS TO THE GRAND JURY

On April 21 Asha Thornton left the Black Acupuncture Advisory Association of North America building at 245 West 139th Street between 7th and 8th Avenues. While awaiting a public bus, carrying the eleven-month-old daughter of Makini and Dr. Mutulu Shakur and her own 3-year-old son, a number of cars converged on her ordering her to "freeze." She was placed under arrest and told to call someone from BAAANA to get the children or they would be handed over to BCW (Bureau of Child Welfare). Asha was not charged with any crime but was held as a material witness to the federal grand jury. Later she was taken before a magistrate and given $25,000 bail. Ironically, her arrest warrant had been signed March 26th though she was not arrested until April. US Attorney Stacey Moritz justified her "arrest by subpoena" by saying Asha had not been seen near the clinic for weeks, and it was therefore assumed that she was preparing to flee their jurisdiction.

On May 10, 1982 Asha was served with a subpoena, given immunity and commanded to testify and give fingerprints and hair samples to the grand jury. What follows is Asha's response to that grand jury.

I have been subpoenaed before this grand jury to provide to you a hand writing sample. After much thought, consultation, soul searching and prayer, I am electing not to provide the hand writing sample. My reason for taking this position shall be expressed in this brief address. I only ask that you remain receptive to my words as I say them with sincerity and integrity and that you not allow one sided presentation of the facts to taint the responsibilities that you all have assumed as members of this panel.

I am a single Black woman and proud mother of a three year old boy. I have been incarcerated in the Metropolitan Correctional Center for almost three weeks since being arrested by the FBI while waiting for a bus with my son and another infant. I have not been charged with any criminal wrongdoing.

I like many other Black people in our community have encountered the harsh realities that plague our communities nationwide such as drug addition, alcoholism, hypertension and sickle cell anemia. Towards eradication of these afflictions and the up-lifting of my community I have chosen to dedicate my life. I believe that my people have a human right to quality health care that provides them with reasonable alternatives to eliminating the existence of squalor and perpetual sickness. Towards this end there has been alternative natural medicines such as herbs, proper dieting, acupuncture, acupressure, vitamin therapy, proper balance of physical and mental attitude and having a knowledge of chemical additives and preservatives in food and legal pharmaceutical drugs. As an independent body you are supposed to represent the community of which I am a member. I have a vested interest in seeing you asserting your independence here today just as you should all have a measure of concern that our communities are respected and uplifted through the delivery of qualitative health care options.

The grand jury is supposed to be an independent panel of citizens to protect the rights of the accused against unwarranted arrest and investigation. Though I have not been accused of a crime I have been treated like a criminal since my arrest. My rights supposedly protected by the First, Fourth, Fifth and Eighth Amendments to the Constituion have been violated from the outset. I have been dealt with, in my judgment, in a dishonest manner by the FBI which leads me to believe that if I provide to you a hand writing sample it likewise will be used unjustly and dishonestly. I do not trust the intentions of the government investigation as being conducted by the United States Attorney nor do I believe that providing to you a hand writing sample to be a proper response to my having been arrested, improperly detained, in my judgment, and punished without having been accused of any wrong-doing. I do not wish to compromise my principles and convictions nor do I seek participation in inflicting further unjust and unwarranted mistreatment of myself.

As grand jurors you were charged with the responsibilities of protecting citizens from unwarranted and politically motivated persecutions. You must be vigilant in your inquiry ever mindful of your duties to check prosecutorial misconduct. You as grand jurors should control the grand jury process and understand the historical function of the grand jury. The grand jury will operate most effectively only when its independence is maintained. When you do that ladies and gentlemen you will understand that my compulsory appearance before you is a violation of the very laws you are sworn to uphold. I hope that you have the courage and wisdom to be open minded and impartial during the remainder of the investigation. I ask that you drop this subpoena against me and consider my contribution to the community and the importance of my message today. I love my son and I miss him tremendously. □