Inside This Issue:

Seattle: A Brief History of Police Terrorism in Seattle.
Plus! Copwatch 206 reports.

New York: State Police attack Iroquois Nations.


Atlanta: Fighting Police Brutality and clueless Negro "leaders".


New Column by Political Prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal.

AND MORE...

"The masses of our people are ready for struggle, it's the intelligencia who are not ready."

Copwatch 206 at Evergreen State College,
by Greg Jackson; BAI-Seattle, WA.

On May 9-11, we participated in workshops at the "From the Ground Up" conference, organized by activists from the Evergreen Political Information Center (E.P.I.C.) and Love and Rage Revolutionary Anarchist Federation (L&R-RAF) at Evergreen State College in Olympia, Wa (the state capitol).

Myself, Bro. Nuru, and Bro. Merciful did our presentation to a capacity room. We explained how our program can into existence, the equipment we use in the field, and some of the key laws one needs to know to run a successful copwatch in the state of Washington.

Bro. Merciful then went into the history of police brutality in Seattle, and pointed out the international connections between capitalism, government, law-enforcement, and white supremacy; and how its going to require unity worldwide, especially amongst workers of color, to stop the harassment and murder of our peoples.

We then showed footage from the video Police Misconduct, put together by Bro. Diop Kemal from the Police Complaint Center in Tallahassee, Florida (see pg. 16 for website address—ed). Kemal was formerly a seargent in the Hawthorne County, California Sheriff's Department, but was forced out by racism in the department.

Another main point that all of us stressed was the importance of community involvement; how they are the 'guiding star' of the program and how people will support a program such as Copwatch 206 when they not only see organized, disciplined activists out on the streets doing work, but are also seeing qualitative changes in the community because of that work. Proof of this came from a group of brothers who were in attendance. They not only signed up (they're organizing a copwatch in Tacoma), but they also gave us the keys to their room at a local Best Western. They informed us that they were leaving that night and offered us the room. Sure beats sleeping in the car, like we did the night before.

The next morning, I gave a talk on prisons and prisoners; stressing the need for more committees to take on prison related work and for existing committees to assess if they can take on more work. The reactionaries are moving swiftly, we must also. I also gave a brief update on the situations being faced by various political prisoners from Mumia Abu-Jamal to Sekou Kambili.

Between sales of Black Autonomy and donations we made a little over $120.

We also did taped interviews with KAOS-FM, a campus radio station, and Love and Rage newspaper (watch for it).

Other groups representing at this event included Anti-Racist Action-Spokane, On Indian Land newspaper, Friends of

See page 3, first column.

Freaknik '97: KKKops put lie to “nice” image played up in mainstream media.

Atlanta, GA.

5/4/97. Police and federal authorities are investigating the police beating of a Black man during last April's Freaknik, part of which was captured on videotape by a passer-by.

Police claim that Timmie Sinclair, 27, ignored police and tried to drive through a traffic blockade April 20 during the annual springbreak festival of Black college students. Sinclair said he was trying to get to a pharmacy to get medication for his 1-year-old daughter and another officer told him he could pass. [See page 6 for more on this latest act of state terrorism against the people—ed.]

Five right-wing militia members arrested, hundreds of weapons seized

Los Angeles, CA.

5/9/97. Five reputed militia members who authorities said were planning terrorist acts in Southern California were arrested Friday as police seized enough weapons and ammunition to "wage war," as one officer put it. The investigation into the militia, allegedly led by a reserve police officer, began two years ago with the Okla-
St. Petersburg, Florida.

Paris, France.

Across amerikkkka and the world, people are organizing and fighting back against police brutality and murder.

Cuba, Nonviolent Action Community of Cascadia, Olympia copwatch, Portland copwatch, and many others.

For us, it was a successful event; we made contact with many serious activists and even was offered assistance via a fundraising concert, which was held on June 7 (with a turn out of 40-50, not including the people from pom that was going on in the building we were set up in front of. We raised a little over $70.00.

[See pg. 12 for important message—ed.]

Black Autonomy International Represents Worldwide.
by Lorenzo Komboa Ervin;
BAL-Chattanooga, TN.

[The following are two e-mails we received from Lorenzo Komboa Ervin on what he's been up to on his Westcoast U.S. and European speaking tours—ed.]:

San Francisco.

I went with the primary objective of obtaining the transmitter and other equipment. I had been told by some of Stephen Dunifer's people at Free Radio Berkeley that they would have stuff for me, and all I had to do was arrive and come up with the money, which could be raised while I was out there. Fine, so I spent a month preparing literature of all sorts for sale, along with my book ["Anarchism and The Black Revolution and Other Essays."]—ed.) which is already in print.

I was able to raise the money, but then got thrown a curveball by Stephen Dunifer of Free Radio Berkeley. I will deal with that later. So, when I arrived on March 14th, Food Not Bombs, the I.W.W. and Black folks from Free Radio Berkeley gave me a place to stay and looked out for me while I was there.

The second day I was in S.F., I got involved in a demonstration at the Mission Police Station (the Mission is an historically-Latino community in San Francisco) on behalf of several victims [Black and Latino] that had been killed by the racist cops out of that precinct.

The demo was sponsored by a coalition group called the October 22nd Coalition, made up of white radicals groups like the RCP, [SA, FNB, and others but also some grassroots community folks from the Black and Latino communities, and they are the ones who make it real, like Sis. Kilili. I also spoke against the cops, and got a favorable response. I was even included in the planning meetings for the next event in October, a national speakout against police brutality.

This March 15th demo was extremely important because it was called by an international coalition, based in Paris, and demos were held in 40 American cities and 10 foreign countries. It was the first time such a coordinated campaign was held by forces on a world-wide basis, and lays the foundation for other such work. In fact, the conference in Philadelphia on May 3rd, even though its primary focus is on the death penalty, also will deal with police brutality and prison issues. So it's an extension of our struggle, and a direct approach to recalling our struggle from white 'radical' led formations.

It's also why I'm going to England and Australia, to hook up with the Black, anti-racist and anti-police brutality forces in those countries. In England and Australia both, I will also try to reach the old Panthers, some of who had been in our prior group, FBCP (Federation of Black Community Partisans. —ed.) and to deal with the Aboriginals and Anarchists who had wanted me to come for years to Australia.

homa City bombing, authorities said.

Seized were .223-caliber rifles similar to the military's M-16; grenade launchers; thousands of rounds of ammunition; body armor; night vision goggles; and targets painted to resemble blacks, Asians and Latinos. Police also found camouflage suits, ballistic vests, a laser sight and rappelling gear.

All were charged with weapons violations. More arrests were expected, but police declined to elaborate. They also would not say whether the group had other members.

Revolutionary Groups get
Web Sites Courtesy of
U.S. Universities.

5/9/97. As the U.S. government fights against so-called "international terrorism", some rebel groups have found a safe niche at American taxpayer expense— in state university web sites.

In California and New York, South American left-wing guerrilla groups have found sympathetic students to get free space on university Web servers—prompting complaints from reactionary critics that public funds are being "misused". Two universities' sharply different views over whether to ban the sites have recently opened a new front in the fast-growing debate over censorship on the Internet.

Officials at the State University of New York at Binghamton shut down a Web site run by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), the hemisphere's largest guerrilla group. But at the University of California at San Diego, where a Tupac Amaru Web site has been operating since shortly after the Peruvian rebel hostage crisis began in December, ad...
continued from page 3.

We made a strong impression while in San Francisco among activists there, among Anarchists for sure, but even among Radicals of all sorts. I was on four free radio stations: Radio X, Free Radio Berkeley, Free Radio Santa Cruz, San Francisco Liberation Radio, and KPOO, the original Black radical station going back to the late 60's, and was taped for international shortwave broadcast and for re-broadcast on Zoom Black Magic Radio, one of the original stations which started with Manna Kantaki in the mid-1980's, when he started doing Black Liberation Radio in Springfield, IL.

I was part of community protests against police brutality in San Francisco and the Bay Area generally; when the community converged on the Police Commission and shook that sucker up, I was there. When protests went on at the bootlicking Mayor's office, I was there. When the Black community had its mass meetings to try to unify all the groups there, I was there.

Because of that presence of ours as an organization, even though I had no literature to hand out or recruitment stuff, people wanted to know more, that was how I met the Young Comrades representative.

My assessment of the situation is that no group has effectively been fighting the displacement of thousands of our people out of that city into Oakland, nor with cop terrorism, was borne out by the small size of the demo at the police commission when Blacks, Latinos and poor folks were fighting mad. Less than 600 folks showed up, of which 130 were cops! 500 folks is a big demo in Chattanooga, a small Southern city where folks are still afraid of the Klan and cops, not for S.F., which has a long history of radicalism and a fairly large progressive and ethnic community, but that's what showed up.

I say no one is "effectively" organizing because there are at least seven different groups which claim to be "monitoring" the cops, but none of them have a true mass base. They don't even have community based affiliates, they are advocacy groups, and in my opinion can only win reforms.

Yet even this limited fight led by them exposed the futility of any "citizens review boards" as any solution to police brutality, and that was extremely important.

It also let the people know that power was in the streets and that they had that power, not the cop, politician, preacher, lawyer, or other middle class spokespeople, and it put the killer cops on the defensive. It in fact has destabilized the entire government. Three members of the police commission quit in fear and disgust over the cops threats against even them, and over the community's demands for justice and no whitewash.

Now a big fight in San Francisco is brewing against erecting a new stadium to replace Candlestick Park. A referendum campaign is now going on to defeat it, but since it uses the state's own tools, instead of mass protest and insurrection, it's a loser in my opinion.

Electoralism is the weakest of all the tactics available to us. And this stadium construction will destroy the community in Bayview-Hunter's Point, an historic Black district, and urban renewal has already destroyed other historic Black communities there and driven thousands into Oakland, taking San Francisco's Black population down from 28-34% to 9-10% and falling.

This is Spatial Deconcentration, a plan to move the Blacks and poor out of major cities to prevent rebellions or concentrated urban power for the poor, a PLOT which was put into effect by the capitalist state after the 1968 Watts rebellion.

I spoke at the Anarchist Book Fair on March 29th, and attended the West Coast Anarchist Organizer's Meeting, but in my opinion with few exceptions the anarchists are still dominated by lifestyle budgets, almost like our struggle is dominated by cultural nationalists.

See next page, first column.

Crack: The CIA brings it in; the community must throw it out.


news from page 3.

Forces of Colombia (FARC), the hemisphere's largest guerrilla group. But at the University of California at San Diego, where a Tupac Amaru Web site has been operating since shortly after the Peruvian rebel hostage crisis began in December, administration officials have declined to take action.

The FARC and the Tupac Amaru rebels are on the State Department's list of international terrorist groups. In its annual report on terrorism issued last week, the department said both groups had engaged in attacks on civilians and other violence — such as the takeover of the Japanese ambassador's residence in Peru.

But U.S. laws on terrorism are vague, and spokesmen at the State and Justice departments said this week that there is little they can do about foreign terrorists on the Internet — as long as the material posted does not directly incite violence. The two sites contain photos, documents and interviews with rebel leaders but steer clear of asking for military or financial help.

Most U.S. university Web servers allow free postings of material from any source: except business activities and pornography) if the Web pages are authored and managed by students or faculty — but not if they are run by outside groups.

Faced with similar cases, however, officials in Binghamton and San Diego have interpreted the policy differently.

When first asked about the FARC site by The San Francisco Chronicle, Binghamton spokeswoman Anita Doll said the university was unaware of it. Then this week, she said that the school administration had decided that the site was "totally unacceptable" and should be shut down.

In San Diego, where the Tupac Amaru site (http://burn.ucsd.edu/~ats/mra.htm) was put up and is operated by a left-wing autonomous group in Toronto with no connection to UCSD, officials said they are willing to continue giving the guerrillas free Web space on a site that would cost several hundred dollars per year at a commercial server.

The rebels, however, took this week's setback in stride, and moved their site to a commercial server (http://members.tripod.com/~farc/).

Marco Leon Calarca, the FARC's Mexico City-based international representative, said in an interview with The Chronicle that it was the
There was some effective work coming out of it, an ABC [Anarchist Black Cross–ed.] was built to do prison work, and a community organizer’s project which promised to work with Black Autonomy and the Young Comrades locally, but in my opinion nothing concrete was developed. I did meet folks that I could work with in the future, and especially for you on the West Coast.

Now as for the radio station: I didn’t get shit from Dunifer, he played games with me like he does with everyone else, he wanted me to give him money, and then wanted me to believe he would “mail” the shit to me. This is nonsense, why would I have flown out there if it could not be put in my hands as promised? And in fact, this fool had outright promised to have it ready for me before I returned home, so I was doubly offended.

Then I found out first-hand that this ass---- is ripping people off right and left, and that really steamed me. So it was good that we had that open fight to expose him and to also fight his role as a white radical gatekeeper of skills, equipment, and money.

Yet, since I raised the money due to a number of benefits and book sales, I ordered the entire radio station from a guy who used to work with Dunifer in California, but had a falling out and left his ass for the South. He will have the entire station delivered to me within 30 days.

So I will get everything except the mics, a mixer, and cables and mast for the antenna, which will cost another $200 in all, then I’m done. Total cost of all this will wind up being $1,000. I will raise some money in England for this. Like you, there will be a newsletter prepared each month to talk about our programming and our political views in the BA!, and more importantly will the very voice of Black Autonomy.

Scotland, U.K.
I spoke last night in Edinburgh at the African Center. Very interesting experience. First, it illustrates once again that our people inhabit even the most remote regions of the countries in the Western world in a fashion that this has never been the case before. According to statistics that I have been given, just under 5 million non-white persons live in the United Kingdom, which includes Scotland, England, Wales and the Irish Republic. About 2 million of these are African and Afro-Caribbean.

In the USA, Black people are so used to thinking of themselves as the only major population bloc of African people outside of Africa and the Carribbean, but this is not the case. I pointed out in my other letter, following my March ’96 trip to Belgium and Holland, that the demography has changed, and our people have come into the West in large numbers from all over.

Besides these recent immigrant however, there are people in cities like Liverpool, Birmingham, Leeds, and Oxford which have had stable African communities for over 100 years. Many hopped off of the slave ships, and made their way into English society, and stayed when slave importation was outlawed.

See next page, left column.

Be prepared for protracted struggle...

Build...or be DESTROYED.

from page 4, left column.

continued from page 4, right.

third time in recent months that a FARC site had been shut down.

In December, the rebels’ site on a Mexican server was closed after the Colombian army orchestrated a campaign of death threats against the server company, and another site on a U.S. commercial server was blocked earlier this year for unknown reasons.

Peruvian Rebels Make TV Broadcast.
Lima, Peru.
5/4/97. Three men, believed to be rebels of the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement, broke into a cable television station in Colombia on Wednesday night and had the crew broadcast a message that the group will retaliate against Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori, several Peruvian newspapers reported Saturday.

In the broadcast, the three masked men claimed that more than one of their comrades are still alive after the raid on the Japanese ambassador’s residence here and are being held by authorities. The three later ran away and no one was hurt, according to the papers.

The government has announced that all 14 Tupac Amaru members died on April 22, when the military raided the residence where the rebels had held 72 VIPs hostage for four months.

Racist Vigilantes Target Mexican Migrants.
San Diego, CA.
5/19/97. White Americans near the Mexican border are taking the law into their own hands in order to try to stem the flood of so-called “illegal” immigrants into the country.

Some have formed themselves into bands of armed vigilantes to patrol the isolated brushland in eastern San Diego county, where thousands of Mexicans try to enter the United States every night.

See next page, right column.

Check Your History! Who’s the REAL "illegal", pilgrim?!

Black Autonomy. 5
Up to this point of my tour, I have spoken in the Black communities of nine cities, including London. I will be in Glasgow and even Ireland before going back to Belgium.

I am telling them at every stop about build an international campaign for a moratorium against the death penalty in the U.S., about an amnesty campaign for political prisoners in the United States, and for direct action on July 4, 1997 at the American consulate in London, Edinburgh, Brussels, and other cities.

I'm also talking about tangible support for the Black revolutionary movements and prisoners in America. I am finding out about the numerous cases of racist violence and police brutality incidents in the United Kingdom as well, pointing up the necessity of an international campaign against racism and police brutality. All of this has been emphasized over and over again.

I am fully aware that most of our people in the US does not even know there is a Black community in the UK or in Europe. In fact, Amsterdam, Lisbon, and a few other European capitals are majority Black or non-white like just Houston, Atlanta, or Washington, D.C. is in the USA.

This means that we must revise our political strategies and organizing tactics. They may speak English with different accents or even languages, but they are our people...and they are catching the same hell here in the West.

One interesting side-note: Leeds has been the only city where the government has outright refused to allow me to speak, saying my coming would “cause trouble”. And yet on May 17, a 3-day rebellion against police brutality broke out in Chapeltown, the Black ghetto when pig cops roughed up some Black youth. Unfortunately missed all of that, but I know it paralyzed the whole city. The lapdog media here covered it up, just like they tried to do with the 1992 LA rebellion [in the U.S.].

More and more I become convinced that we in Black Autonomy are on the right road by creating an international organization, with autonomous sections, rather than some sort of “American” nationalist group attempting to build a state in Africa or North America.

I will not be back in the USA until the middle of June. Unfortunately, I do not have daily or extensive access to the internet because there are surcharges here, and also because my provider does not have any sort of international access.

This UK-Europe trip, and that to Australia in July should be extremely valuable in our desire to create an international committee to follow-up on the work in Philadelphia where so many groups came together around a common agenda.

I hope everyone is still committed to doing the July 4th Philly demo for Mumia, the Death Penalty Moratorium campaign, the March '98 Jericho Campaign, and the other things we committed ourselves to doing in a spirit of principled unity.

Public Hearing on Police Brutality: Negrosie “Leaders” Sham and Scam in the South.

by Jackie Mathis and Damon McGee.

BAl-Atlanta, GA.

On Monday, May 19, the NAACP Atlanta chapter in Georgia sponsored a “public hearing” on police brutality at Mount Epheram Baptist Church and what a circus it was.

The hearing was called by the president of the Atlanta NAACP chapter, the Right Reverend Dr. R.L. White, who is also the pastor of the church. The purpose of the hearing was to hear cases of police brutality from the public. According to the pastor, he wanted to assess the information to be able to address the problem further. However, the masses were kept from speaking freely due to a “restrictive” list that was made up of civic, “civil rights” heroes and members of the “Negrosie” middle class who sought to exploit the issues for their own gain.

Two Black Autonomy members from Atlanta, myself and Bro. Damon McGee were present at the hearing.

At the hearing, several Atlanta City council people, an Assistant DA (who deliberately “botted” a police murder case, the Jerry Jackson Case), a mayoral candidate, an Atlanta Housing Authority representative, an ACLU lawyer, and former Atlanta police officers were speakers on the panel.

Some of the speakers spoke mainly about their middle class status and about the “good ole days of the NAACP.” One member even took the liberty of recognizing city council people and civil rights “of heads” who were in the audience, which included regional leaders of the NAACP.

Mr. Bill McKinney, a state senator, father of Representative Cynthia McKinney, and former Atlanta police officer spoke. He made some remarkable comments, which included boasting that in his days as an officer, he “busted a lot of heads.”

Kabila Proclaims Victory.

Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo.

5/17/97. Rebel forces marched into former Zaire’s capital to the cheers of eager crowds, and a beaming Laurent Kabila proclaimed victory in his war to end the three-decade dictatorship of President Mobutu Sese Seko.

Government loyalists fled the country and Zairian soldiers put up little resistance to the final assault of rebel forces, which swept across Africa’s third-largest country in just eight months. Gunfire crackled in the capital as government troops abandoned the city, looting as they went.

Citizens ran jubilantly through the streets, waving palm fronds and flashing victory signs. “Mobutu has gone crazy! We want Kabila!” they cried. Kabila, speaking at rebel headquarters in the southeastern city of Lubumbashi, declared himself president.

See page 7; left from page 5, right column.

Using violence where they see fit, the vigilantes hold the illegals at gunpoint until Border Patrol agents arrive to arrest them and ship them back over the border.

There aren’t enough Border Patrol agents to stop them so we have to do it ourselves,” said Bob Maupin, 57, who heads a group of volunteer fascists known as “Bob’s Boys.”

Armed with a semi-automatic rifle, seismic sensors and accompanied by his Alsatian dog, Maupin leads his men, dressed in camouflage and carrying rifles, on weekend patrols across his 250-acre ranch, which adjoins the border. It is rare that they do not come across several groups of Mexicans.

“The brush is so thick you can’t see 10 yards away but there are so many of them they are impossible to miss,” he said.

“My dog speaks their language - as soon as they see his teeth they understand him right away. We tell them to lay down on the ground and then we radio for the Border Patrol.”

The vigilantes are known to the Border Patrol and to the Sheriff’s Department. “We appreciate the support of the residents but rather than taking up arms and putting ourselves in danger we would prefer them to not to confront aliens but to notify us,” Agent Pilkington said.

Deputy Sheriff Robert Novak of the Boulevard sheriff’s office, said: “We know these guys and they are within their rights to arrest anyone they find trespassing on their property. But we don’t encourage them to carry or use weapons.”

See next page, right column.
The meeting went on with people mainly speaking about their past experiences in the so-called Civil Rights Movement, but never dealing with the fact that these same negroes never address the “current” issues of police brutality and police murder.

During the latter part of the hearing, several victims of police brutality represented by their lawyers came forth to tell their encounters with the Atlanta police.

One victim in particular, Tinnie Sinclair was severely beaten by the Atlanta Police in front of his family during Fresknik weekend in April of this year.

After listening to their cases, a sister by the name of Otabumi Chavins, up ‘til now a virtual “unknown” victim of police brutality told her story last summer. Sis Otabumi is a taxi driver who works in College Park, an area near southwestern Atlanta. Her encounter began as she was dropping off a passenger in downtown Atlanta. Upon arrival, a customer immediately “jumped” in her cab, wanting to be taken somewhere and she told him that she was not allowed to pick up passengers at that site.

At that point, a pig came up to her, verbally abused her, and accused her of violating city laws. The pig proceeded to have her taxi cab impounded. While waiting for a ride she was approached by another pig in the midst of a crowd of tourists. The police officer immediately told her she was under arrest. Thinking that the officer was joking, she laughed. The officer immediately picked her up and violently slammed her headfirst on the pavement. She immediately was dazed and lost consciousness.

The officer then handcuffed her and threw her into the back of a patrolcar. He stated that he would make her sorry for what she did. He then radioed in to the police dispatch that he was bringing in a suspect that “resisted arrest.”

She called the offices of Mayor Bill Campbell and Police Chief Beverly Harvard but they told her that she had to file a complaint at police headquarters. Otabumi tearfully stated that it took her two weeks to file the complaint because of the mental abuse she received at the headquarters. After the complaint was filed, she received a letter in the mail stating that the police officer who abuse her was fully exonerated from all charges. She was hurt and felt degraded by the letter. She is still fighting this case in court and on June 10, 1997, she is summoned to appear in court.

The turning point of the hearing came when a spectator interrupted their little “party” and condemned the whole public hearing, the pastor, the city council, and the panel for avoiding the issue. He reminded all of them that if they or any close member of their family was beaten by the pigs they would not be acting so “passive” about the issue. The broth was applauded by a large percentage of the audience.

Afterwards, Bro. Damon gained “permission” to speak publicly about the issue unbeknownst to the bankrupt white liberals and “sell-out” Negro civil rights all-stars.

He first acknowledged the Jerry Jackson Case. Jerry Jackson was murdered by the Atlanta Police Department on De-

See page 10, left column.

from page 6.

The 56-year-old rebel leader pledged to form a transitional government and issue a new constitution within 60 days.

Since that proclamation, Kabila has banned all demonstrations and public meetings by opposition parties, gave himself broad constitutional powers, and promised free elections in two years. A demonstration against the ban was dispersed by gunfire from Kabila’s forces in Kinshasha.

By midday, rebel fighters held the Voice of Zaire radio station in central Kinshasa. Hundreds of residents celebrated outside, wearing white headbands to show support for the rebels.

In their first radio broadcast the rebels told government troops to hand in their weapons by Sunday morning, and warned that looters would be punished. The rebels also were in control of the Parliament building, Kinshasa’s sports stadium, airport, and the information ministry.

Most of the city was in rebel hands, but witnesses near Camp Tshatshi, the capital’s main military camp and the site of Mobutu’s fortress overlooking the Zaire river, said fighting continued there into the night.

At the Grand Market, about 300 young people faced down government troops who tried to block their way. The troops opened fire and then dispersed. Two people who appeared to be civilians were killed.

Port officials and reporters in Brazzaville said many other Mobutu generals and political cronies had arrived. Mobutu associates could be seen leaving Kinshasa in speedboats.

The Swiss government announced Saturday that it was temporarily blocking all assets held by Mobutu and his family.

Anti-Racists Held By Police on $100,000.00 Bail Each.
Cleveland, OH.
5/18/97.Four anti-racist demonstrators were arrested at a protest outside the Norwegian Hall in Cleveland, Ohio, where David Duke was speaking at a National Alliance event. The arrests were made as the demonstration of 50 people attempted to move onto the street. Cleveland cops used whippsticks against the anti-racist protesters as 300 David Duke supporters gathered inside.

See page 10, right column.

Black Autonomy. 7
Black Panther Geronimo Pratt Free!

Marin City, CA.

"I want to be the first one to call for a new revolution," the former Black Panther Party leader said at an exultant homecoming in Marin City Thursday evening (June 12).

Many of those people, he said, are inmates wrongly imprisoned in the system that Pratt just escaped, at least temporarily, after being behind bars for 27 years for a 1968 murder evidence shows he did not commit.

"We have a lot of beautiful brothers and sisters in those prisons," said Pratt, a UCLA student when he was imprisoned and now 49.

He was released on $25,000 bail earlier in the week pending a possible new trial on the murder charge and, though it was clear he was savoring the simple pleasure of basking in a setting sun, he made it clear to a crowd of family, well-wishers and reporters that he believes he still has a mission.

"I don't want no Cadillac... I don't want no bunch of woman," said Pratt, his voice rising in emotion. "I want freedom for my people. That's all I want." But for the moment, he was enjoying the taste of freedom.

"You got to understand," Pratt told the crowd, "I didn't see dirt or grass for eight straight years. All I saw was concrete and steel. So just looking at a tree makes my knees weak.

Marin City residents and reporters swarmed the car carrying Pratt as he and his ex-wife, Ashaki Pratt, slowly drove up to their home.

Neighbors had tied purple and gold balloons to trees around the Pratts' patio. Welcoming banners were placed at the entrance to the housing project.

Several TV satellite trucks were positioned in a parking lot that was filled with dozens of residents who had shown up for Pratt's arrival just after 6:30 Thursday evening after a flight from Southern California.

Asked how it felt to be home, although he has never actually lived in Marin City, Pratt said: "It feels good. It feels beautiful." After attending his son's graduation from the eighth grade at San Domenico School in San Anselmo Friday afternoon, Pratt said his next priority would be to visit his ailing mother in Louisiana. Eunice Petty Pratt, 94, last saw her son in 1974.

Dressed in a baseball cap, jeans and a denim jacket, Pratt appeared relaxed as he spoke after first going inside his home briefly and waving at the crowd from a second-story window.

Pratt was asked what he missed during his nearly three decades of incarceration.

"Being able to see my family... holding my granddaughter, holding my wife," he said.

Young girls from the Performing Stars of Marin, a group based in Marin City, twirled batons to the beat of music playing from a van. A pizza place at the new shopping center across the street gave out free pizza to reporters and residents.

Pratt was arrested in 1970 for the slaying of Caroline Olsen, who was gunned down on a Santa Monica tennis court and robbed of $18. Despite evidence that Pratt was miles away in Oakland at the time of the shooting, he was convicted 1972. The conviction was thrown out last month by Orange County Superior Court Judge Everett Dickey, entitling him to a new trial.

The judge ruled that prosecutors had failed to disclose to the defense that a key prosecution witness had been an FBI and Los Angeles Police Department informant.

Pratt has consistently maintained he was at Black Panther Party headquarters in Oakland when the slaying took place. Fellow Panthers at the time refused to back him up because of deep divisions in the party between backers of warring leaders. But surviving Panther leaders over the past several years joined the international campaign— that included such human rights leaders as Nelson Mandela, Coretta Scott King and Amnesty International—to free Pratt.

On Tuesday, June 10, Dickey ordered Pratt released on $25,000 bail. Los Angeles District Attorney Gil Garcetti is appealing the ruling that set Pratt free, but did not oppose bail for him. He says he intends to pursue a new trial, although there is widespread speculation he'll change his mind because the only eyewitness to the murder—the victim's husband—is dead, the length of Pratt's incarceration already, evidence of FBI and LAPD intelligence campaigns against the Panthers and the political consequences should Garcetti lose another high profile case.

Pratt's attorney, Stuart Hanlon of San Francisco, said as far as Pratt's criminal case goes, "We consider it over." He repeatedly has said, however, that if Garcetti goes for a new trial, "we'll beat him from one end of the courtroom to the other."

Hanlon did not say whether any civil litigation would be forthcoming, although suits against the FBI, LAPD, and perhaps others appeared likely.

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8 Black Autonomy.

Prison Legal News

http://www.synapsci.net/~arrakis/pln.html
ZAPATISTA DREAMS.

by Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Over 500 years after European conquest of the Americas, the native, indigenous peoples (that is, their few surviving descendants) still live on the margins of society, and are the poorest of the poor, the sickest of the sick, the people most disposessed of so-called ‘New World’ populations.

Many of us forget that so-called ‘Indians’, not Africans, were the first slaves of the Americas, pressed into service by Admiral Cristobal Colon (known to the Americans as Christopher Columbus) and crew to dig for gold, and if they were unproductive, their hands were chopped off. This Columbian injustice was the opening which brought genocide to untold millions of natives, and transformed an ancient, ‘Indian’ world into a ‘New’, white one.

Thus, every country in this hemisphere, Canada, United States, Mexico, rests upon the shattered bones of native genocide, and may be seen as New Europe (Canada=New Britain and New France; US=New England, New France; Mexico=New Spain) for the mass importation of Europeans, the decimation of natives, and the forced captivity and enslavement of Africans.

In the southernmost “kneecap” of Mexico, in Chiapas State, an indigenous revolutionary movement is growing, energized by the Mayan and ‘Indian’ poor, who are injecting a remarkable vitality into the revolutionary tradition. In July – August 1996, the Zapatistas convened the First International Meeting for Humanity and Against Neoliberalism (called The Encuentro, or The Encounter) in Chiapas. In their opening remarks one finds the emergence of something deeply moving in its vision and poignant in its poetic power:

Let us introduce ourselves. We are the Zapatista National Liberation Army. For ten years we lived in these mountains, preparing to fight a war. In these mountains we built an army, Below, in the cities and plantations, we did not exist. Our lives were worthless than those of machines or animals. We were like stones, like weeds in the road. We were silenced. We were faceless. We were nameless. We had no future. We did not exist.

To the powers that be, known internationally by the term “Neoliberalism,” we did not count, we did not produce, we did not buy, we did not sell. We were a cipher in the accounts of big capital. Then we went to the mountains [of southeastern Mexico] to find ourselves and see if we could ease the pain of being forgotten stones and weeds. Here, in the mountains of southeastern Mexico, our dead live on. Our dead, who live in the mountains, know many things. They speak to us of their death, and we hear them. Coffins speak and tell us another story that comes from yesterday and points toward tomorrow.

The mountains spoke to us, the Macachualob, the common and ordinary people. We are simple people, as the powerful tell us.

Every day and the next night, the powerful want us to dance the X-tol [a “conquest dance” reenacting the struggle between the Christian and Moor, with the latter representing the conquered indigenous folk] and repeat their brutal conquest. The Kax–Zuel [half-foreigner, or Mestizo, Latin] the false man, rules our lands and has giant war machines, like the Boob, [forest demon] half-puma and half-horse, that spread pain and death among us. The trickster governor sends us the Alucob [a small forest spirit, a trickster] the liars who fool our people and make them forgetful.

This is why we became soldiers. This is why we remain soldiers: Because we want no more death and trickery for our people, because we want no more forgetting.

The mountains told us to take up arms so we would have a voice. It told us to cover our faces so we would have a face. It told us to forget our names so we could be named. It told us to protect our past so we would have a future. This is who we are. The Zapatista National Liberation Army. The voice that arms itself to be heard, the face that hides itself to be seen, the name that hides itself to be named, the red star that calls out to humanity around the world to be heard, to be seen, to be named. The tomorrow that is harvested in the past.

—from Dark Night Field Notes, #8, P.O. Box 3629, Chicago, IL 60690-3629; from reprints of Zapatista documents; p.34.

Named after the ‘Indian’ Revolu-
tionary, Emiliano Zapata (1879-1919), whose forces fought against the Spanish dictator, Porfirio Diaz, under the slogan, “Libertad Y Tierra” (Liberty and Land), the Zapatistas draw their strength, their imagery, and their vision from the most oppressed segments of Mexican life, the indigenous, the conquered ones who have sustained themselves in the face of over 500 years of conquest.

That they exist is something of a miracle, and they bring something to life’s table that is wonderful.

Mumia Abu-Jamal is an award-winning journalist and former Black Panther sentenced to Pennsylvania’s death row for the killing of a white police officer, despite a lack of physical evidence, eyewitness accounts that contradict the prosecution’s claims, rampant judicial misconduct, and police intimidation of witnesses. Find out more.


March on Washington, DC to free all U.S. Political Prisoners and Prisoners of War.

March 1998

National Coordinator
Jericho March ’98
Safiya A. Bukhari
P.O. Box 650
NY, NY 10009
212-928-4349 ext. 2

Black Autonomy.
"Fighting Back!" continued from page 7.

by the Atlanta Police Department on December 7, 1995. He told the audience that the Black Autonomy Collective in Atlanta formed the Justice For Jerry Jackson Committee (JJJC) with Mrs. Brenda Jackson, Jerry Jackson's mother as its chairperson, to seek justice in the case. The JJJC organized students and sistas and brothas from the community and marched on Atlanta police headquarters in March 1996.

He decried that "absolutely no civil rights organizations, not SCLC, nor the NAACP, nor the ABCDEFG marched on police headquarters, nor demonstrated against Bro. Jerry's vicious murder, nor supported the JJJC, the Jackson family, or the Black community in regards to this issue."

Bro. Damon gave a history of police brutality and police murder in Atlanta. He reminded everyone about the futility of the need for a new Black mayor. He told the audience about Maynard Jackson being vice-mayor since 1968, who then in 1973 became mayor of Atlanta to "cure the ill of police murder" whose numbers had skyrocketed, ranking Atlanta, "the number one city for police murders in the world at that time." He also reminded the audience that under the next three Black administrations (Maynard Jackson’s, Andrew Young’s, and Bill Campbell’s), police brutality and police murders continued.

"What we need is a movement to oppose police brutality and deal with these murderous pigs, yes I said "pigs." "I’m not middle class, nor am I speaking to the so-called middle class as some of these upper-class Negroes have stated, but to poor working class sistas and brothas who are constantly being brutalized by these pigs."

We have got to go beyond the way we respond to police brutality in terms of color. Pigs come in all shapes and colors. We should respond to them based on our continued brutalization by them, all as an occupying force, all pigs, like the red dogs." (A paramilitary unit in Atlanta).

He also stated that we should organize ourselves, specifically Black poor and Black working-class sistas and brothas to take power, to defy police authority, to fight police murder and police brutality, and to practice collective self-defense against these murderous pigs." He challenged the proposed actions of the NAACP.

"What is the NAACP going to do with these issues of police brutality and police murder. Someone said that we should form committees. The hell with that. We need action. We must demonstrate and protest against these pigs. I propose that we march on police headquarters and hold the city council, the mayor, the police chief, and the political establishment accountable and we want checkin' these pigs. We need to actively seek justice concerning these issues and create an anti-authoritarian movement against these pigs, against these so-called negro leaders and against the white government."

Essentially, we exposed the "do-nothingness" of the NAACP and the fact that they were seeking to exploit the police brutality issue in Atlanta to gain political and economic capital and rebuild their presence in Atlanta.

These negroes are seeking to exploit the people just like the National Council of Churches (aka the National Clergy Confer- men) who exploited the Anti-Black Terrorism Issue (Church Burning) to raise twelve million dollars worth (and counting) of economic capital and political capital exploiting the Black masses acting as if they are working for Black masses when they just pimpin' the people and the people's issues.

Our challenge to demonstrate and march became a rallying cry for majority of the sistas and the brothas gathered. We, along with other sistas and brothas in the audience rose to our feet and raised their fists chanting, "March! March! March!" Hurredly the new president of the NAACP, Reverend Dr. R. L. White abruptly dismissed the meeting. The masses refused to be silent and broke with the negro leadership and declared as one sista said: "these uncle toms ain't done nothin', we need to organize ourselves and do it ourselves."

The sista would not realize how prophetic her words would be.

It was later revealed that the Right Dr. Rev. R. L. White had met with Atlanta Police Chief Beverly Harvard earlier in the afternoon at "his" church. T.V. cameras revealed White kissing and hugging the Chief of the Atlanta Police Department!

After the meeting was abruptly ended, Damon and I were met by a hostile crowd which consisted mainly and solely of Right Dr. Rev. R. L. White's congregation.

They accused Damon of not following the protocol of the meeting established by their minister and that he disre-
A Brief History of Police Terrorism in Seattle.

by Merciful Allah; Copwatch 206.

1936: Barry Samson, a Black man, fell asleep in a downtown hotel lobby. The police arrested him, took him into the elevator at the King County Jail, and brutally beat him to death, according to a female witness.

Both officers were tried and convicted, but neither served a day in jail. One of the officers eventually received a pardon from the governor.

1945: Eugene Mozee, a local Black community activist, began organizing sit-ins at restaurants that refused to serve Blacks. State law stated that it was illegal to discriminate in public accommodations, but this law was never enforced. In addition, the state supreme court ruled that this law “didn’t apply.” Mozee was also working with attorney John Kaufman and Reverend Ben F. Davis of Mount Zion Baptist Church to get the state legislature to pass a decent civil rights law.

Mozee was attacked by drunken sailors who didn’t like the fact that he asked the white bar maid for a date.

1966: Eddie Lincoln pulled a fake gun and was shot to death by two off-duty Seattle police officers.

1970: Larry Ward, a Black Vietnam war veteran, was set up by police informants that had infiltrated the local Black Panther Party. He was to place and detonate a bomb at a white-owned Real Estate office. When he arrived, he was met by waiting Seattle Police who then ordered him to put his hands up and cut him down with shotguns.

1975: Joseph Hebert, another Black man, shot in the back and killed after police stopped Hebert, accusing him of driving a vehicle that was involved in a burglary. The autopsy revealed that he was unarmad and had his back turned at the time of the shooting. A private inquest held by the Seattle Police and King County Prosecutor’s Office found no misconduct and no charges were filed.

After the fight, he returned to the gas station he owned. Eight police vehicles soon arrived, and officers emerged with guns drawn. Neighbors came out to see what was happening. Mozee asked the officers if they had a warrant, and they opened fire; killing Mozee, but not before he fired off rounds from his gun and killed one of them.

We are all targets...

Do we have to be victims also?

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Meanwhile one of the treasonous so-called chiefs, Oren Lyons, was quoted as saying on national television, in effect — “It was stupidity to try to block a highway and this is no substitute for brains.” Said an Onondaga — “Governor Pataki is trying to get 5 corrupt chiefs to say they speak for us. According to our law, they don’t.” A New York State official confirmed that Oren Lyons, Irving Powless and Ollie Gibson ordered the attack. These three now have “special protection” from all those the troopers harassed.

Bail was set very high for midmeanners, mainly trespassing, unlawful assembly and resisting arrest. A condition of their release is to not return to their homes in Onondaga. The property owner where the attack took place told troopers — “These people are my invited guests.” He was arrested and charged with trespassing on his own property and can’t go back there. “It was overkill” said one observer. “Oren and NY state were mad over the Indians’ victory in the courts. NYS can’t tax Indians and the deals between Pataki and these chiefs are illegal and ultra vire. This is their way of getting back.”

He continued, “The Iroquois Nation people have been denouncing their chiefs for corruption, complicity in genocide and sending the NYS police, of a foreign nation, on their people. When Hitler occupied France, everytime he had trouble, he would send in the storm troopers to put down the resistance.”

According to the Iroquois Confederacy, these chiefs have no right to sign anything with New York State. The relationship is nation to nation. This issue should be negotiated on a nation to nation basis with an impartial third party, according to natural, international, and constitutional law. “The chiefs must be getting payoffs such as being business license-givers on behalf of NYS and running casinos to enrich themselves.”

The people arrested are currently being released from the Public Safety Building in Syracuse NY following the posting of bail. Your help is needed to help us in our public flight to have the United States follow their laws. Contact: 716/532-4449 416/972-1573, 514/635-8696 514/635-5595 Mohawk Nation Office Kahnawahe Branch.
A Brief Request For Assistance From Copwatch 206.

Brothers, Sisters, and Comrades,

Copwatch 206 was established by local activists from Black Autonomy International/Seattle and the Nation of Gods and Earths (a.k.a. The Five Percenters) in August of 1996 as a response to the shooting death of Edward Anderson by Seattle Police officer William Edwards on January 12, 1996 (which was followed by the choking death of Andre Stapleton the following September), as well as in response to the usual harassment of Blacks and other people of color by the police.

Copwatch 206 is part of a larger program called Watch 206 that does counterintelligence and advocacy work around other “issues” such as worker/employer relations, schools, media, and more. Watch 206 is a non-profit 501(c)3.

For those of you who are not familiar with what we do, here’s a brief look:

1.) We patrol the streets of Seattle, Washington and the surrounding area in easy-to-identify uniforms; armed with video cameras, law books, and still cameras, observing the police in action.

2.) We assist victims of police harassment and brutality by doing everything from helping them to get a good lawyer to providing our footage as evidence in court. We also are willing to testify on the behalf of victims.

3.) We do speaking engagements where we discuss our operation as well as the law. We show people how to use the legal system to their advantage, while at the same time pointing out its inherent limitations and making the connection between that, revolutionary politics, and the need for revolution to establish self-determination and direct workers control of not only industry, agriculture, and educational institutions, but all aspects of daily life.

12 Black Autonomy.

4.) We publish our information in periodicals such as “Black Autonomy”, and the upcoming “Peoples Information Network”. We’re also in the process of putting together the Peoples Information Network public access t.v. show. We also broadcast on “Black Liberation Radio with the Black Autonomy News Service” every Saturday morning from 10:30am-12pm on F.U.C.C. 89.1 FM pirate radio, in addition to maintaining a website of the same name (http://www.webcom.com/nattyreb/blackautonomy). Black Autonomy is also a 501(c)3 non-profit organization.

5.) We send our findings to other anti-police brutality groups, including the Police Complaint Center in Florida.

We would like to do more, but to do so requires YOUR help. We need MONEY in order to get professional video cameras, audio equipment, audio/video editing gear, computer equipment of our own, and more vehicles so we can put more of our new members on the street, in addition to funds for emergency bail, etc.

Whatever you can afford would be greatly appreciated, though we do suggest a contribution of $20.00 U.S. But again, we’re not snobs; we still save and roll up pennies for gas money, so anything and everything helps!

Please make all checks/money orders payable (in U.S. funds only) to: “Watch 206”. For those interested in getting a copy of “Black Autonomy” newspaper, single issues are $1.00/U.S.; subscriptions are $10.00/U.S. for 6 issues per year. Make all checks/money orders payable (in U.S. funds only) to: “Black Autonomy”.

The Powerful Eye of the People Sees Everything!

from page 11, right column.

Florida KKKops To Get Assault Rifles.

West Palm Beach, FL.

5/20/97. Palm Beach Sheriff's deputies soon may be armed with submachine guns and military-style assault rifles to keep pace with "criminals".

Authorities say the new high-powered weapons will create a better balance of firepower between law enforcement officers and the heavily armed. The action comes little more than one week after deputies were involved in a shootout with better-equipped suspects.

Five deputies trying to stop two fleeing men were peppered by a barrage of more than 100 rounds of high-powered ammunition that tore through patrol cars. Although no one was wounded, authorities say the incident pointed up the need for police to be better armed.

Officials say the scene, littered by spent shell casings, was reminiscent of the February bank robbery in Los Angeles during which heavily armed suspects outfitted in full body armor kept police pinned down with automatic gunfire.

Sheriff Robert Neumann is pressing to equip as many of his 985 deputies as possible with the high-powered weapons even though some colleagues have reservations about the move.

To date, the Palm Beach Sheriff's Office is the only south Florida law enforcement agency planning to swap semi-automatic handguns for assault weapons.

KKKop Who Kicked Black Suspect on Video Tape Is Acquitted.

Springfield, MA.

5/21/97. In a case reminiscent of the Rodney King beating, a judge in has dropped charges against a white police officer caught on videotape kicking an unarmed black suspect.

The decision earlier today sparked angry reaction among blacks in the state's third largest city, and extra police were put on patrol in "minority" neighborhoods in case of any violence. No incidents were reported.

The officer, Jeffrey Asher, was suspended indefinitely and charged with assault after a home video camera caught him kicking the suspect, Roy Parker, as he was being held face down on the ground by other officers two months ago. A district court

See page 13.
Update On The Situation Inside Nigeria.

Report from the Awareness League.

The Awareness League is a nation-wide anarchist organization of about 1,000 members based in Nigeria. This piece has been edited for length — ed.

Nigeria is increasingly a pariah in the international community, a rogue state which finds company with countries such as Libya, Sudan, Syria, Iraq, Burma and Iran.

The mere mention of the country's name evokes a typical image characterized by corruption, military dictatorship, debt, disease and disaster. Nigeria is living dangerously and this, even by Africa's long suffering standards, speaks volume for a country blessed with abundant oil and gas reserves, several solid minerals, agricultural potentials and overflowing human capital.

Three decades of military rule have spawned the monstrous specter of unfreedom, denial of fundamental human rights, violent subjugation and brutalisation of the psyche and spirit of the overwhelming majority of the population. The tragedy of Nigeria is underlined by the facts that the country continues to live well below her potentials; the economy is in ruins. The population is held prisoner by the barrel of military armour that has brought the country to its knees.

1996 was both a trying and rewarding year for the Awareness League and its membership. As usual AL had several brushes with security operatives and the military membership. Two seminars/political education workshops put together by AL, one at Enugu and the second inside the campus of the University of Nsukka, were disrupted by plain clothes police and men of the state security service (SSS), who claimed that they were acting on "orders from above". They said both meeting were illegal and were designed to sabotage the transition to civil rule program of the junta.

They confiscated materials meant for the workshops, but made no arrests.

In response to the strike action embarked upon by lectures in all of Nigeria's Universities, the authorities initiated massive clampdown on the teachers and other activists known to sympathize with the lecturers. Hundreds were arrested and detained, while the umbrella union of the teachers, the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) was proscribed by military decree.

Two lecturers, who are AL members were detained in the course of the general clampdown for a period of three months. They are: Comrade Ahmed Ojezia of the University of Uyo and Comrade Rex Denedo of the University of Jos. Interestingly, their incarceration has done little to dampen their faith and commitment to the struggle for a just and better society.

On July 26, 1996, AL, in conjunction with three other left group organised a peaceful protest in Ibadan, about 150 kilometers Southwest of Lagos to press the junta to release all activists and journalists, incarcerated since Abacha seized power in November 1993, especially those jailed on trumped-up charges of coup-plotting.

A follow-up week long anti-military enlightenmnet and education workshop slated for the second week of August, 1996 was called off as a result of a massive clampdown that followed a planned nationwide strike by some oil workers unions.

We later held our annual congress on October 29, 1996. The congress was attended by about 65 delegates. The intensified repressive tendencies of successive military regimes have dictated a reassessment of tactics and strategies on the part of AL, without necessarily losing focus of the wider Libertarian objectives. To this end, AL in 1996 undertook a new initiative to establish cells and networks in select industrial establishments. Before now, AL's activities were concentrated in the Universities, media houses and the states' civil services. The focus of the new drive is to make AL's presence felt in other key sectors of the economy.

So far, we have witnessed modest successes, with the establishment of medium size networks within the ranks of junior bank workers in Enugu, Jos, Owerri, Benin Asaba etc, as well as among the radical wing of oil workers in Warri, Calabar and Port-Harcourt in the oil devastated Niger Delta Region.

The implication of this development are immediately obvious: AL can directly participate in major oil and bank workers strike actions henceforth, in addition to the opportunity to enlarge its membership and bolster awareness about anarcho-syndicalism within the ranks of Nigerian workers.

Coming soon: A book by the Awareness League, "History of Anarchism in Africa"

Last year, a campaign was launched to buy a computer and other office equipment for our Nigerian comrades. Send your contributions to: Workers Solidarity Alliance 339 Lafayette St., Room 202 New York, NY 10012, USA.

Florida 1st grader arrested at school. Tampa Bay, FL.

5/23/97. A Tampa Bay, Fla., area elementary school student has been released into his parents' custody after his arrest for disrupting class.

The 7-year-old first grader was handcuffed and taken to a juvenile assessment center after he kicked, screamed and tossed furniture around a classroom for more than an hour-and-a-half.

Police were called to Azalea Elementary School when administrators felt they couldn't control the boy.

The incident reportedly began when a teacher asked the boy to get a book and a pencil. The student refused, saying he wasn't a butler and got angry. The child is charged with disrupting a school function, a misdemeanor. The boy has a history of throwing tantrums, but his family claims school officials and police overreacted.

Police say they handcuffed the 4-foot-6, 120-pound boy because his actions created a dangerous situation.

Black Autonomy. 13
Letters.

Oakland to install police surveillance cameras on city streets.

[The following was sent to us by a reader in Oakland. The text, dated September 17, 1996, is taken from an informational report sent to the Office of the City Manager Public Safety/ Health and Human Services Committee by Joseph Samuels, Jr., director of Police Services Agency. —ed.]

Video telesurveillance is rapidly becoming one of the most useful tools in crime prevention and public security strategies. The capacity to have live video from a remote location to a central site can, potentially, have a deterrent effect on criminal activities and thereby increase the sense of public safety.

Earlier this year, the city of Baltimore, with funds from federal and state grants, and donations from corporations began a process of mounting up to 200 cameras throughout the downtown area. Preliminary results indicate that the presence of the cameras did have a deterrent effect on crime, but it is premature to offer specific conclusions or precise reasons.

However, in view of the potential for this technology, staff from the Police Services Agency and the Office of Communications and Information Services have begun exploratory talks with a private vendor. As in Baltimore, video monitors would be placed at a central site to view live images from multiple locations. Effective use of the video information would still require officers to respond to what is seen through the camera's eyes.

We recommend that the Committee schedule a visual demonstration of the technology. If staff are directed to then proceed with the project, key issues to be addressed are (1) the availability of fiber optic cable to transmit the images; and (2) concerns about the "Big Brother" impact (a matter which we believe can be successfully resolved).

We believe the project can lead to a public-private partnership with significant impacts on crime problems in specific areas. Committee direction is required regarding the scheduling of a demonstration. More detailed information and analysis can then be provided.

Freedom of speech under attack in Decatur, Illinois.

[From the Internet.—ed.]

On Saturday morning, May 10, the police attacked the home of Napoleon Williams and Mildred Jones, arresting the two founders of Black Liberation Radio.

The raid began at about 8:00 a.m. There were numerous uniformed Decatur police officers involved. They cut the lights to the house during the raid, and completely destroyed the front door in the process of entering. Streets near the house were blocked off by the police. Police officers equipped with shields and gas masks conducted a SWAT team-style operation.

Black Liberation Radio was on the air when the raid began. Cutting the power to the house helped the police guarantee that the station would not be able to broadcast. This is the latest of many acts of official harassment.

For six years, Black Liberation Radio, a small, unlicensed FM station, has courageously exposed police brutality and official misconduct. It played a particularly important role in helping build ties between the African American poor of central Illinois and the largely white work force at the local Caterpillar Tractor plant during the bitter strike at that company during the early 1990's.

Napoleon Williams and Mildred Jones have paid a high price for their work with Black Liberation Radio. An Illinois state agency took custody of the couples' oldest daughter, Unique Dream in 1992, and of the younger daughter, Airue Dream, in 1994. The couple is still fighting to regain custody of those two children. Both Napoleon and Mildred are currently free on bond.

Please spread the word about this incident. Donations and messages of support can be sent to:
Black Liberation Radio
629 E. Center Street
Decatur, Illinois 62526
phone: (217) 423-9997.

Chicano revolutionary activist needs your help.

[Emailed to use by the Black Fist Collective.—ed.]

The experiences in organizing for Alvaro's freedom are reminding many of us on the frontlines why we're fighting.

While mainstream "Hispanic" forces claim there's no problem and the answer to everything is the call of the mayor, the people on the streets see a different reality.

The depth of the problems for Chicano Mexicanos in Alpine, Texas is profound; as activists doing grassroots work in the barrios report numerous instances of police misconduct and harassment of youth labelled "gang members", beatings of Mexicanos for no reason and extralegal actions by cops abound.

As a lifelong fighter against injustice, Alvaro Hernandez needs your support.

In July of 1996, Alvaro Hernandez Luna was arrested in Alpine, Texas and charged with aggravated assault on two police officers (a sheriff and city police), a confrontation resulting from charges which were later dropped by the local district attorney.

On November 4, 1996, representing himself in court, Companero Alvaro was able to defeat the system and force them to drop felony charges by proving that the Alpine police department and the prosecutor were lying and withholding evidence in an attempt to have him imprisoned. It was these original charges (which were dropped on Nov. 4, 1996) that led to a confrontation with Alpine police and the system imposing new charges of "aggravated assault".

Companero claim that Companero Alvaro unlawfully resisted arrest and that two officers were assaulted. The system has dropped the original charges and are attempting to imprison Alvaro for resisting police brutality. Companero Alvaro Hernandez currently has civil rights lawsuits pending against the city of Alpine, county sheriffs, and the Alpine police department, for false arrest, malicious prosecution, conspiracy, illegal search and seizure, inhumane jail conditions, and mistreatment/harassment.

Companero Alvaro has also filed a lawsuit against the State District Judge for maintaining a history of racist discrimination and exclusion of Mexicanos from Grand Juries. The experiences of most Raza and studies taken by the government have proven that the criminal justice system throughout the southwest is anti-Mexican.

Alvaro has a long history of community based organizing on behalf of Raza and was in the process of organizing against police brutality in Alpine and this is the real reason the police began harassing him, ultimately leading to all those false charges and the situation in which he finds himself today.

If you want more information or want to lend assistance, contact:

Union del Barrio
National Chicano Moratorium
Committee P.O. Box 620095
San Diego, CA 92162

Black Fist
P.O. Box 980582
Houston, TX 77098-0582

Alvaro Hernandez #7005911
El Paso County Jail
P.O. Box 125
El Paso, TX 79999

14 Black Autonomy.
The new autonomous politics is made up of the anti-authoritarian core of Anarchism and many of the tenets of revolutionary Black nationalism. This combination of all elements makes up something so new it has not been fully defined before now. We will attempt now to more sharply define what has been talked about for the last fifteen years, and also to place it within a historical context so that it can no longer be dismissed as an "eclectic mish-mash", or "corruption" of (both) ideals as the purists would claim.

And yet, it should not alarm Anarchist ideological "purists" when we speak of a Black anarchist politics. First, the early Anarchist movement in America always reflected the cultural, social and political ideals of the community that produced it. Thus we had a Germanic-dominated Anarcho-syndicalist tendency during the 1880's called the International Working People's Association which was strong in Chicago, Pittsburgh and other industrial cities; a Jewish anarchist movement in New York and other cities during the 1900's where in some whole newspapers were printed in Yiddish; an Italian movement in New York, New Jersey and other areas in the 1920-30's and so on. One ethnic group after another produced a unique, though no less valid, American Anarchist social movement.

So the question then becomes, why should anyone even be surprised to learn that there will be Anarchist movements which culturally and politically reflect those communities of Africans or Hispanics. In talking about Anarchist ideals, we are not talking about "orthodoxies" which cannot be revised, we are talking about ideas which will be picked up, used by millions of oppressed peoples, and adapted to their purpose and circumstances.

Anarchist purists and other Eurocentric ideologies will just have to shudder, because it is happening now and there is nothing that anybody can do to stop it. Even as we are talking, the first slow steps toward building a core tendency of Black anarchism is a reality. Several men and women have been influenced by the ideas raised in pamphlets by former BPP and SNCC member Lorenzo Komboa Ervin in the 1970's, but they have taken those ideas, made them into a class weapon reflecting the African experience on this continent, and are taking the first step to free our people and our class.

It is important that we define ourselves, since we realize we are our own liberators. We demand that Africans be subjects of history, and not mere objects that Europeans decide what to do with.

This great Black sector of humanity has said" enough", and has now started to find its own voice. There will be no condescending saviors out of the mother country, we must begin to do this ourselves, although we know the revolutionary project to defeat the system of capitalism and enslavement requires millions of other allies who will help us. We will decide the agenda, the timetable, and the tactics of obtaining our freedom.

The new Black autonomous politics differs from European Anarchism in that we know that we are oppressed both as a distinct people and as workers for our labor power. But Anarchism places its greatest contradiction with the state and its ability to hold back a free lifestyle, and this is exactly what we cannot limit our critique to. This is a white world-view based on their privileged place in this society. We realize that historically constructed "races" have been created under this system, which determine both the manner of life and death under this system, and that the State upholds this racial/class system. It is no accident, and it's true that racism has not been compensated by individual white workers, but they have been the beneficiaries of our oppression, and whites are part of the social control mechanism of the state. It is nonsense to say something otherwise, like "we are all in the same boat" or all just workers like the American socialist and communist have done. We say this is a lie and part of a myth about the white working class as a vanguard and "working class heroes".

In addition, we say that people are super-oppressed because of their race under this system, not just their class. Anarchism's limitations to critique this type of oppression are quite obvious, and is what has resulted in an all-white movement, which is confused about how to intervene in struggles that involve people of other than European nationalities and how to analyse the nationalism of the oppressed. It has always been my project to extend the Anarchist ideals to cover new contingencies and other areas of struggle not foreseen by the initiators of the doctrine.

The Black anarchists also disagree with many Anarchists and other white radicals because we know that the battle is not just against "racism", or fascist vanguard elements like the Nazis or Klan, rather it is the system which produces fascism which must be destroyed. The capitalist system literally came into existence based on the enslavement and forced labor of African, Asian, and other oppressed peoples; the genocide of the Native Americans, and the brutal theft of the lands of the Hispanic peoples are other examples of this oppression. But Europeans of all classes benefited from this super-exploitation, and capital has created the hierarchical structure of race and class oppression we live under. It is extremely important to understand that this kind of racial stratification is not some deliberate ideological nonsense that people of color have created themselves, so-called "identity movements" as some vulgar socialists call them, but has been a function of the state from inception, with one's place in society and class privileges riding on the outcome. If you are non-white, you will be treated one way, if you are white, another. So "racism" is a class doctrine, used by the state for super-exploitation of certain workers and peoples; in fact, we contend that it is the actual class relations in North American society.

So-called "white" people are a super-contrived nationality designed to help the capitalists keep workers of color in their place and safeguard the status quo. So rather than see the "white" industrial working class as a potentially revolutionary class, instead we see it as an opportunistic, collaborationist body which must be redefined and reorganized if it is to constitute a reliable ally and have any ability of fighting in its own interest as a new class.

As Black anarchists, we of course disagree with Marxists and other "radicals" who claim that an authoritarian party and strong leadership cultism is necessary to produce a social revolution. But we go further and say that neither they or the Anarchists can lead us as a people of color (or even themselves) to freedom, even though they have been conditioned as Europeans to command and rule over people of color. We can work with them on certain projects or in action on a campaign, but they will not determine the agenda or outcome of our struggles.

However, we differ with the Black Nationalists, although we share many basic ideas with them. We also believe in and treasure many of the traditions and history of...
our people, but believe it must be demystified and made into a culture of resistance, rather than personality cults or escapism from the reality of racism.

Further, we do not believe in a “race nationalism”, we are not xenophobic, do not entertain any racial mythology about Europeans, and are not seeking to build a Black state as the answer to our problems. In many respects, we know that Black nationalism is dead, and that revolution will ensure even under such a Black state, which calls itself “African Socialist”.

We also believe that historically, Black nationalism has asserted itself most forcefully as a defensive doctrine about white racism, not as an anti-racist movement, but as a counter-power movement, that is, to organize an interest group which can battle for political power inside this system. This is what happened to the seemingly revolutionary “Black Power” current produced by the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee during the 1960’s; it was usurped by the Black petit bourgeoisie.

In addition, those who argue for a state never tell how it will be obtained, and many of those arguments are vague and fanciful. Who really believes that America will just grant an Islamic state or give us a government-in-exile or even the the majority of us want it. Why, it would require years of a bloody struggle, and a major organizing campaign. In addition, the only group which ever talked about conducting a plebiscite to find out what form African people believe our independence should take was the Panthers. Even though we have good relations with many of these organizations, we have a hard time taking these people on this issue seriously and have always considered this wishful thinking or a flight of fancy. But then it is not up to us, but to the Black masses themselves.

So far, we have made little more than the arguments that many socialists and Anarchists have made for years against certain kinds of nationalism. However, it would be extremely unfair to not point out that groups like the Black Panther Party, League of Revolutionary Workers, (and even the SNCC in the late 1960’s), though calling themselves “revolutionary black nationalists”, in fact did not call for or actually struggle to obtain a nation state in Africa or on the existing land-territory of the United States. It appears that they had adopted some variant of socialist doctrine, and had as their primary motivation the toppling of the existing capitalist state/empire. Their position radically differed from the Cultural (Afrocentric), Religious, and various of nationalist tendencies.

The BPP especially was an advanced political formation which did much pioneering theoretical and organizing work on race and class issues, and although we have many disagreements with their vanguardist and authoritarian political structures, we have much in common philosophically.

We too believe in armed self-defense, but we believe it is the people at-large, not a political party which must be organized in self-defense units. We too believe in armed struggle, but believe the masses extending an insurrection to a social revolution will be the likely unfolding scenario, not a vanguard party seizing power “in the name of the people” or a small secret army. But, in common with the Black Panthers, the Black autonomists believe that even before capitalism is defeated, we can begin to turn our communities into dual power communes, from which we can wage a protracted struggle with capitalism and its agents. We believe in common with the Panthers and the League of Revolutionary Black Workers that the Black working class will be the decisive factor in any such struggle, not the middle class. And in common with SNCC, we think the role of the organizer is not to lead people, but to empower them and let them take over their own local struggles. We also believe that our communities are colonies or semi-colonies which are totally under the control of the state. But we do not believe in politics or electoralism in any form, and reject coalitions with Liberals or social democrats.

Finally, like the Panthers, and contrary to today’s Nation of Islam and its spokesmen, we believe that there were historical, socio-economic factors which accounted for both slavery and racism, not because whites are “ice-people”, “devils”, or other such nonsense. This system produces racism/white supremacy, and it is this capitalist system which must be destroyed to get rid of it!

So this is who we are: fighters for human rights, self-determination, and freedom for our people and our class.

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