

HANDS OFF ASSATA, HAND OVER POSADA!



DEMO

FRIDAY, JUNE 3RD

12 NOON

OAKLAND FEDERAL BUILDING
1301 CLAY STREET
DOWNTOWN OAKLAND

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

WITH CLIPS FROM "EYES OF
THE RAINBOW" AND "POSADA'S
VICTIMS FAMILIES DEMAND
JUSTICE"

6 PM

SATURDAY, JUNE 4TH

OAKLANDISH
411 2ND ST. (NEAR JACK
LONDON SQUARE)
OAKLAND

PROGRAM SPEAKER

WALTER TURNER

HANDS OFF ASSATA CAMPAIGN
AND KPFA'S "AFRICA TODAY"

On May 2nd the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) put a \$1 million bounty on the head of Assata Shakur and placed her on the domestic terrorist list under the Patriot Act. Assata is a former member of the Black Panther Party and the Black Liberation Army falsely accused of murdering a New Jersey State Trooper on May 2nd, 1973. In 1979 Assata escaped prison and was given political sanctuary in Cuba. The aim of the FBI's attack on Assata is to eliminate the domestic resistance of the Black Liberation movement, undermine the sovereignty of Cuba and Venezuela and set the stage for the possible invasion of these two nations. The FBI escalation at this time is also meant to divert attention from Luis Posada Carriles, an anti-Cuban terrorist wanted by Venezuela on charges of blowing up a Cuban airliner, who recently came to the United States seeking political asylum. We must defend Assata, our right to resist, and the sovereign rights of Cuba and Venezuela!

ORGANIZED BY THE MALCOLM X GRASSROOTS MOVEMENT, THE JERICHO AMNESTY MOVEMENT, HANDS OFF ASSATA CAMPAIGN, THE PRISONERS OF CONSCIOUSNESS COMMITTEE, THE BLACK RADICAL CONGRESS, THE ANSWER-SF COALITION, AND THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE TO FREE THE CUBAN 5 . FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT MXGM AT (510) 220-1100 OR MXGMOAKLAND@HOTMAIL.COM. ALSO VISIT WWW.HANDSOFFASSATA.ORG.

Standing with Assata

On May 2, 2005, the United States Justice Department announced it was raising its bounty of \$100,000 for the capture of Sister Assata Shakur to \$1,000,000. For over two decades, Sister Assata has been living as a political exile in the Republic of Cuba. This is part of a long campaign to capture or kill Sister Assata since her escape in 1979, and part of the historical assault against the Black Liberation Movement.

Who is Assata Shakur?

Assata Shakur, born Joanne Deborah Byron in July 16, 1947, in Wilmington, North Carolina, grew up in the segregated South. When she was a college student in New York she decided to participate in the freedom movement of people of African descent against racism and white supremacy. Her thirst to do something for her people led her to the Black Panther Party (BPP) in New York City. She participated in a program teaching Black youth their culture and history and other service programs of the BPP. In 1969, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Director J. Edgar Hoover labeled the BPP “the greatest threat to the internal security of the country.” Through its counter-intelligence program, COINTELPRO, the FBI and other police agencies waged a low-intensity war on the BPP and other Black freedom organizations. Activists were assassinated, incarcerated and forced into exile. When New York Panthers came under attack Assata went into hiding and joined the underground movement called the Black Liberation Army (BLA). She became one of the major targets of the United States government. On May 2, 1973, Assata and two other Panthers forced underground, Zayd Shakur and Sundiata Acoli were stopped by New Jersey Highway patrolmen on the New Jersey Turnpike. At the stop a shoot out ensued and Zayd Shakur and one of the highway patrolmen, Werner Foerster, were killed. In spite of that fact she had not fired a weapon and was paralyzed through the entire gun battle, she was convicted by an all-white jury in Middlesex County, New Jersey and sentenced to life plus sixty-five years for the death of Zayd Shakur and the highway patrolman. Sundiata was also convicted and given a sentence of life plus sixty-five years. After years of being incarcerated in male facilities or prison units on November 2, 1979, Assata, with the aid of the BLA and white friends of the Black Liberation Movement, was liberated from prison. In 1984, she was given political asylum in Cuba. The recent bounty placed on her head is only a continuation of a pursuit to re-capture her for over two decades. Since her escape twenty-six years ago, the FBI has committed an agent to her re-capture. The placing of Assata on the domestic terrorist list only confirms the fears of the Black liberation movement and human rights activists concerning George Bush’s “war on terrorism.” “The war on terrorism” is a means for the right-wing in the United States to eliminate its political enemies. Through vehicles like the Patriot Act, the “war on terrorism” gives justification for abuses of a modern day COINTELPRO.

COINTELPRO and the War on the Black Freedom movement

In the 1950s, during the Cold war, the FBI started COINTELPRO. As the Civil Rights Movement gained momentum Black Activists, like Martin Luther King, Jr., Robert F. Williams, Ella Baker, and Bayard Rustin became the primary targets of COINTELPRO. When the federal government did not respond to the demands of the nonviolent movement and also did not protect activists and Black communities from the violence of segregationist many activists moved toward Black Power and armed resistance to get human rights and freedom. Fearful of the assertive Black Power movement, the United States government used programs like COINTELPRO to destroy the Black movement.

Instead of seeking reconciliation of political conflict, the attempt to re-capture Assata only exacerbates political and racial conflict in the United States and internationally. In other countries around the world, including South Africa, Turkey, Morocco, Ukraine, Peru, Sierra Leone, East Timor, Ghana, Belgium, governments have established a review of the abuses of their police agencies on opposition movements in their countries as a gesture towards reconciliation. The United States has never sought reconciliation with the targets of COINTELPRO. The pursuit of Assata promotes more conflict in that rather than choosing an alternative dispute mechanism it chooses to continue the criminalization of the Black Liberation movement. Moreover, it encourages the mercenary invasion of a sovereign nation, the Republic of Cuba, and encourages global conflict. We oppose the sending of mercenaries and bounty hunters to apprehend Sister Assata Shakur. The United States government must acknowledge its abuses and grant amnesty to political prisoners and exiles.

As supporters of Human rights, we call for:

- 1) The end of the pursuit of Assata Shakur by immediately removing her name from the domestic terrorist list and repealing the bounty placed on her head.
- 2) The rejection of mercenary attacks on the sovereign nation of Cuba
- 3) The de-criminalization of the Black Liberation movement, particularly given the political nature of the conflict of the 1960s and 70s, and the abuses of COINTELPRO.
- 4) Congress to impanel an independent Truth Commission as an alternative dispute mechanism, to finish the mission of the Church Committee and of the cases of political prisoners and exiles, including Assata Shakur, Sundiata Acoli, Mutulu Shakur, Sekou Odinga, Kamau Sadiki and Marilyn Buck.
- 5) That the United States Congress implement remedies and restitution for the communities, organizations and individuals who were targeted and whose human rights were violated due to COINTELPRO.
- 6) The repeal of the Patriot Act.