

# Building a Culture and Communities of Solidarity, Resistance and Liberation

by Michael Novick, *Anti-Racist Action-LA/*  
*People Against Racist Terror (ARA-LA/PART)*

For many years, I used the slogan “culture of resistance” as a type of shorthand to express the need to oppose imperialism in a broad, deep and sustained way. More recently, I have come to see that slogan as inadequate. As the title of this essay indicates, I think it needs to be expanded in several ways.

First of all, I now understand that we must start, not with resistance, but with solidarity. Similar to the change of the subtitle of this publication, from “Journal of Anti-Racist Action, Research & Education” to “Journal of Inter-communal Solidarity,” I believe that we must begin by accentuating the positive. Solidarity expresses an affirmative, positive goal. As the Native aphorism would have it, a single twig is easily broken, but a bundle of twigs can withstand great pressure. In order to effectively resist, we must first establish a positive foundation of unity.

## AFFIRMATION, NEGATION & TRANSFORMATION

The three-part formula “solidarity, resistance and liberation,” in a sense, expresses three aspects of a process: affirmation, negation, and transformation. It sums up the basic dialectical process of a thesis, antithesis, and synthesis. This situates the cultural, political, social and economic struggle we must engage in clearly in the process of development of all natural, physical, biological and social phenomena.

We must affirm our humanity. What does it mean to be human? Human beings exist within a continuum of physical reality, natural existence, biological life, and other sentient beings. Human beings are social animals with a long gestation period, a lengthy maturation period, and the necessity for education and inculcation of behavioral norms and moral standards in ourselves and our offspring. Our behavior reflects the capacity for free will in the context of the need for kinship, collaboration, and collective effort in order to survive.

Our consciousness reflects the need and capacity to make choices about how we interact with each other and with the rest of nature, as well as a freedom of sexual expression, satisfaction and connection shared with only a few other forms of animal life. Our ability to work and generate the means of survival relies primarily on learned and shared practices, rather than instinctual or genetically coded instructions. Our bonding and familial relationships are similarly less bound by such ironclad arrangements and more subject to choice, variation and experimentation. Humans have demonstrated a capacity to shape not only our own physical and social evolution, but the co-evolution of many other species.

This is not unique to humans, because the geological and biological history of our planet demonstrates that life from its inception has Terra-formed the planet itself, helping to produce the oceans, affect the composition of the atmosphere, and shape the course of development of many different life forms. Humans however, have the greatest potential thus far demonstrated to engage in such processes consciously and with intent. Thus, to be human means to possess great power, intellect and capacity for growth and transformation. It also requires a deep understanding of and respect for the web of life within which we exist and upon which we depend. In our interactions with each other and with the rest of nature, therefore, humans require rigorous inquiry and a clear and careful moral code to survive and thrive.

## BLACK LIVES MATTER

The affirmation of solidarity is an expression of both a moral stance of empathy and sympathy and an openness to curious and self-critical engagement with others. This understanding has been embedded in slogans such as “An Injury to One is an Injury to All,” or more recently and succinctly, “Black Lives Matter.” But this solidarity must extend to include other life forms and the physical and chemical underpinnings of life. Humanity will not long endure if we exterminate the birds, the bees, and the fish in the seas.

As humans, we must learn from observation and participation in natural and social processes larger than our own individual perspectives or desires. Like all other natural and social phenomena, humans embody a contradiction that drives our development. We require both autonomy and embeddedness; both individual and collective will, identity and action, in order to be fully human, and to survive and sustain ourselves across generations.

Because of this inherent contradiction, the affirmation of solidarity must be confronted and supplemented by negation, in the form of resistance. This is not only because humans learn through individual and social trial and error and experimentation, learning from our errors through a process of criticism, self-criticism and course correction. It is also because in the nature of physical existence, we live on a planet with gravity. Anything we do requires work, the application of energy to produce movement. If there is no friction, however, there is no traction. It is a law of nature and thermodynamics that every action has an equal and opposite reaction. But in particular, the evidence of our senses regarding the state of natural and social conditions as they have been impacted by the current dominant forms of economic, social and political organization of humans makes it clear that continuing on the current course is suicidal, genocidal and ecocidal. Resistance to the particular dominant current paradigm of colonialism and capitalism is essential to continued existence of humanity and the biosphere that sustains us.

As humans, we require and make use of individual initiative; but the hyper-individualistic, “dog-eat-dog” mentality of capitalism and colonialism will rapidly be the death of us -- and more than us -- if we do not resist and effectively oppose it. For the good of all, we must affirm the humanity and inherent value of the cultures that various humans have created in a thousand thousand places around the globe, and of the valuable cultural diversity and (with crops, biospheres and ecological niches) biological diversity this represents, a rich heritage and pool of knowledge for all humanity.

But to do so requires confronting and eliminating colonialism; the imposition of hierarchical monoculture (on both humans and the lands we inhabit). The restoration of sovereignty, and of a communal way of life, is vital, appreciating the commons and the inherent value of land as the source and ground of life, itself a part of the transformative cycles of life, death, birth, decay and recomposition. We must resist the burning of fossil fuels, the depletion of ancient aquifers, the acidification of the oceans.

But in order to resist successfully, we must have a goal and a purpose. Our resistance cannot be atavistic or

***Resistance to the particular dominant current paradigm of colonialism and capitalism is essential to continued existence of humanity and the biosphere that sustains us.***

nihilistic. Particularly for people of European descent in the western hemisphere, and the global North, but to some extent for all peoples uprooted and dispersed from the seedbeds of their particular people and ancestral way of life, the only way out is forward -- to a new way of life, to liberation. This requires conscious application of our solidarity and our resistance strategically.

## DIVIDING ONE INTO TWO

We must separate the baby from the bathwater, identify and elaborate what is best and most positive in our cultures and communities; critically examine and transform what is negative, whether internal to our own development or imposed and implanted by a colonizing power. This may involve changes in our diets, our child-rearing, our “way of life,” our belief systems. It means embracing the actual diversity of human genders, as opposed to a Procrustean binary of masculinity and femininity. It means recognizing that women are the species and that all men are at least half women genetically and chromosomally.

Recent studies and papers have dated the “anthropocene,” the era in which humanity began to shape the planet and particularly the atmosphere, to the eradication of tens of millions of indigenous people in the Western hemisphere after European invasion. While it is true that this genocide, and the related one of tens of millions of Africans in trans-Atlantic slavery, had such an impact -- particularly in the reforestation of the Americas that produced a mini-Ice Age in Europe because of the sequestering of atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> in the forest growth -- that view is Eurocentric.

Those tens of millions of humans had been helping shape the atmosphere long before that, along with the forests and vegetation, by controlled burns of forest areas and underbrush in what became known as North America, a steady release of carbon dioxide for the purpose of creating a human-shaped environment that facilitated the capture of wildlife as a food source. In the Amazon basin to the south, there is recent archeological evidence of similar controlled burns in the rain forest to produce charcoal to create new types of soils, as well as of an arboreal agriculture revolution that produced foods without clear-cutting and deforestation. It's thus the height of arrogance

to imagine that it was only the action of Europeans (even the horrible, genocidal ones) that ushered in a different era of a human-shaped planet.

However, it is today the actions, culture, belief system, economic organization and enterprises of European society, of industrial imperialism and colonialism, that is without a doubt destroying the capacity of the planet to regenerate life. This is not a racial matter, because that way of life has been internalized and reproduced by Asians, Africans and other indigenous people. The rise of BRICS -- Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa -- will be no salvation if the Chinese, Indians, Brazilians, Russians and South Africans, as is currently the case, adopt the same irrational and destructive models of growth and development practiced by the US and the EU. The high rates of economic ‘growth’ in Africa are manifesting in greater economic inequality and deepening real poverty, benefitting only a neo-colonial elite in bed with the imperialist monopolies, banks, and international financial institutions of the “West.”

So in Europe, among Euro-Americans and the peoples “internally” colonized within the US, in Africa, Asia and Latin America (the historic “Third World”), the prescription is actually increasingly similar. We must realize our creative, communitarian powers, create spaces to build a new way of life and a new world in the interstices and ruins of the old, while simultaneously arming ourselves spiritually, intellectually, philosophically and physically to erode and uproot the power of the state and the economic enterprises that run it and use it. We have to defend ourselves against the forces of reaction and repression.

Lenin, a century ago, described imperialism as “moribund,” dying capitalism. But Leninist and other revolutions proved incomplete, and capitalism has survived and sunk its tentacles even more deeply into everyday life and even into the biological processes of life itself in the past hundred years. Now, we must say that capitalist imperialism/colonialism is not merely parasitic or moribund but  *necrotic*  -- it “lives” through death, and its touch kills so that it may live. We need to devise mental, emotional, spiritual and economic probiotics, ways of thinking and acting in harmony with nature and with each other that extirpate the roots that system has sunk into our own minds and practices. We need to immunize ourselves and each other against its infectious seductions. We must abandon, once and for all, the identification with and as the oppressor that has held back our movements, and decolonize our minds.

## ALLIES OR ACCOMPLICES?

For people of European descent, heirs to settler colonialism, that means especially recognizing that



privilege is actually a form of social control that governs our behavior and enforces our obedience. We must embrace the struggle against capitalism and colonialism, for liberation, as the only path forward.

There's been some discussion lately about terminology, whether people should be “allies” or “accomplices.” Despite the identification of the term “white ally” with the so-called non-profit-industrial complex, I think it's a better term than *accomplice*. *Accomplice* is a term rooted in *complicity*, and in jurisprudence and criminal law; it accepts the idea that someone is engaged in criminal behavior, wrongdoing, and someone else is facilitating that action, before or after the fact. *Ally* is a much clearer and more positive word in its true meaning -- allies fight alongside each other for a common purpose against a common enemy.

The key is a willingness **to fight**, including against white supremacy and colonialism. There have been mass reactionary forces based on racism, class hierarchies and privilege in Cuba, Venezuela, Brazil, in Asia, Africa and the Arab world. It's absurd to think the US is exempt. We white allies will have to confront and undermine white reaction, and drive a wedge into pro-imperialist forms of white ‘solidarity’ and nationalism, to build a base with the social weight to contribute to the struggle for liberation.

# AN OPEN INVITATION TO ORGANIZERS, ACTIVISTS AND SOCIAL-CHANGE AGENTS:

## Another world is possible. Another system is necessary!

Join the US Social Forum, June 24-28, in Philadelphia PA, Jackson MS, and San Jose CA.

Our communities and our society are in crisis. There is no economic recovery for the poor and oppressed. State violence and political repression are a daily reality. Climate and environmental change threaten our survival. But we're resisting and building movement for the long haul.

We invite you to attend, to participate and to help create and shape the third US Social Forum June 24-28, 2015. To think together, vision together, act together, and strategize as a movement.

The US Social Forum comes out of the World Social Forum process, a gathering of social movement forces beginning in 2001, that rejects the neoliberal agenda of global capitalism.

The prior US Social Forums convened in Atlanta in 2007 and in Detroit in 2010, drawing over 10,000 each time!

This year, we are gathering in Philadelphia, PA, San Jose, CA and we are collaborating with organizations in the South in areas like Jackson, Houston, Florida and Georgia— with plans to link our work via technology.

This will be a perfect place for social change-agents to educate, agitate and organize together. It is more than an event – it is a movement building process led by poor people, people of color, immigrants, women, LGBT people – the people and organizations on the very front lines of struggle. We organize under a very specific set of principles, and unite under the banner “Another World is Possible. Another System is Necessary.”

So if you are working for peace, justice, democracy, equality, sustainability and liberation, we invite you to join us.

Register your organization so you can submit a workshop or a participatory Peoples Movement Assembly. Or register yourself as an individual.

Your help is needed. Spread the word. Join us!  
[info@ussocialforum.net](mailto:info@ussocialforum.net)  
<https://www.ussocialforum.net/>



## FRANKENSTEIN'S MONSTER

Column Written 2/15/15 © 2015 by Mumia Abu-Jamal

Every generation for the past 200 years can vividly picture the Frankenstein monster.

Tall, imposing, usually mute, this creature is alive and not alive; mobile, but haltingly so, so that we, the more nimble can escape his perilous embrace.

Yet, who is the real monster: the one who designed and constructed this being? – or the one who was built?

One wonders of such things when we see the sudden slaughters, bombings and beheadings – happening in many parts of the cities of Europe and the Middle East – and beyond.

We hear of ISIS – and of Nigeria's 'Boko Haram.' But guess where it all began?

In the 1970s – 1979, in fact – an Afghan warlord, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, was hired by Pakistani intelligence as a gift to the U.S. CIA. Hekmatyar was a ruthless dude, who hated both the U.S. and the Soviets. His Pakistani backers told him his job was to kill Russians – Communists actually – who wanted to back Najibullah, the Afghan president.

Hekmatyar, then head of something he called the Islamic Party, built a military machine he called Mujahiddin. While the CIA was quietly calling the guy a “fascist” and “scary,” then President Ronald Reagan called them “freedom fighters,” and invited them to the White House.

This would be the seed of the Taliban, al Qaeda, now ISIS, and hundreds more across the world: trained, armed and aimed at the West's targets and now – aimed at the West itself.

Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, the author of the 1818 science fiction novel, *Frankenstein*, had the scientist say the following words: “I beheld the wretch – the miserable monster whom I had created.”

Who was the real monster – the maker – or the made?



## Statewide Coordinated Actions To End Solitary Confinement STOP THE TORTURE!

by Prisoner Hunger Strike Solidarity Coalition

In response to a call from the SHU prisoners involved in the prisoner hunger strikes for the Five Core Demands, the Prisoner Hunger Strike Solidarity Coalition (PHSS) has helped launch Statewide Coordinated Actions To End Solitary Confinement (SCATESC) on the 23rd of each month, which started Monday, March 23, 2015. The next scheduled actions are on Thursday, April 23, Saturday May 23, and Tuesday June 23, 2015.

This date emphasizes the 23 or more hours every day that people are kept in solitary confinement. Statewide Coordinated Actions every month respond to the Pelican Bay Hunger Strikers' Proposals (November, 2013). They stated:

“We want to consider the idea of designating a certain date each month as Prisoner Rights Day. On that date each month prisoners across the state would engage in peaceful activities to call attention to prison conditions. At the same time our supporters would gather in locations throughout California to expose CDCR's [CA Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation] actions and rally support efforts to secure our rights. We can see this action growing from month to month as more people inside and out become aware of it and join our struggle.”

These coordinated actions will acknowledge the importance of organized, community-based pressure as



a core strategy (along with courts and legislators) of our work outside the walls to end solitary confinement.

Actions are planned in CA from San Diego to Arcata (including San Diego, Los Angeles, San Jose, Oakland, Santa Cruz, Arcata); also, nationwide and internationally. Information can be found at the PHSS Facebook Event Page: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Prisoner-Hunger-Strike-Solidarity/117053298383319>

and <https://prisonerhungerstrikesolidarity.wordpress.com/2015/03/16/beginning-march-23rd-statewide-coordinated-actions-to-end-solitary-confinement/>

Anti-Racist Action-LA is one of the co-sponsors and helped pull together the LA launching action outside the Reagan State Building on Spring and Third Sts. downtown (where offices for Attorney General Kamala Harris and Gov. Jerry Brown are located). The time and location of the upcoming actions have yet to be determined.

Please let us know at [phssoutreach@gmail.com](mailto:phssoutreach@gmail.com) if you will endorse or what you will do to co-sponsor, and describe action(s) in your locale. If you want to be part of the Outreach Group organizing this effort, please email Verbena and Willow. Verbena <[peoplesarc@gmail.com](mailto:peoplesarc@gmail.com)>; Willow <[kohenet@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kohenet@sbcglobal.net)>

### On-Line Resources for Turning the Tide

You can find archives of *Turning the Tide* at [www.antiracist.org](http://www.antiracist.org) that go back more than seven years.

In addition, there are several Facebook pages, such as [facebook.com/tideturning](https://www.facebook.com/tideturning), and [facebook.com/intercommunal solidarity](https://www.facebook.com/intercommunal solidarity). You can follow @ara\_losangeles on Twitter, and the De-Colonize LA blog at [ara-la.tumblr.com](http://ara-la.tumblr.com). Also check <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/stop-polabuse>, Stop Police Abuse Now!

# Native Prisoner Project Seeks Contacts, Stories & Art

by Kori Cordero

The federal prison system is designed for adults. Yet the criminal jurisdiction maze in Indian Country results in Native children accounting for 70% of children committed to the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) as delinquents and 31% of youth committed to the BOP as adults, despite being only 1% of the national youth population. On a policy level, there is very little information about how this happens and there isn't a person or agency that knows exactly where all of these Native children are; they just get 'lost' in the system.

The Federal Juvenile Delinquency Act (FJDA) requires the Attorney General to certify that states lack jurisdiction or adequate programs and services before placing a child in federal court and federal detention. The only exception is if the alleged crime is a specific felony or drug crime where the federal government has a substantial interest in prosecution. There is no similar certification mechanism for Native nations, however, which allows the federal government to prosecute Native children without consulting their Native nation. At the state level, there is no general requirement for states to inform Native nations that their child-citizen is in custody.

The FJDA also makes it mandatory for states to have continuing education opportunities for incarcerated children. The federal government has not followed this standard; Congress has stopped allocating funds for mandated educational services and programs to incarcerated Native children. As a result, many Native children in the adult federal prison system are not receiving basic services mandated by federal law.

The federal government is aware of this unconscionable situation. They were reminded in 2008, when "A Tangled Web of Justice" was published. They were reminded in November 2013, when the President of the US and Congress received recommendations from the President's bi-partisan Indian Law and Order Commission (ILOC). And they were reminded again in November 2014, when the Attorney General's Task Force on American Indian/Alaskan Native Children Exposed to Violence released its report. Aside from the lack of meaningful response from the federal government, one thing each of these reminders has in common is their data sources. While the reports are the product of qualified and committed people, the lack of raw data has made it so there isn't much new information to disclose.

At the state level, Native children and adult prisoners are often lumped into the "other" category on forms that collect data by race. This lack of data at the state and federal level makes it very difficult to create effective policy. As a result, Native prisoners - especially Native children - are subject to especially harsh treatment with little hope for reform, because policy makers and Native rights advocates do not have accurate and complete information as to the number of Natives in prison populations.

Without complete data, it is difficult to hold systems accountable for placing Native prisoners, including children, far from their families and communities. Before contact, banishment from the community was one of the harshest punishments that occurred, second only to death in some communities. While Native prisoners haven't been banished, they've been forcibly removed, and the effect is the same, if not worse. Their nation loses a citizen and the prisoner suffers the trauma that comes with separation and incarceration.

For example, based on the little data available, we know that around 20 percent of Alaska Natives under the supervision of Alaska's Department of Corrections are caged in the state of New York, almost all at the Hudson Correctional Facility. Anecdotal evidence reveals that placing Native prisoners far from their homes and communities is not an uncommon practice. But we don't have the data needed to demonstrate to policy makers that a change needs to come.

Tied to the problem of isolation from the community is the loss of religious expression. Native religious practices are important to rehabilitation. But without complete data, the religious rights of Native prisoners are especially vulnerable to infringement. People that are working on this important issue need to know where/how Native prisoners are being held if they are to effectively advocate for their rights. Prison systems that do not keep track of Native prisoners can more easily get away with violating religious rights of Natives.

In response to these problems, the Native Prisoner Project (Project) will collect information from Native prisoners, using *Turning the Tide* and community outreach to

solicit Native experiences of incarceration. The Project is using a survey and collecting letters, stories, and art from prisoners and distilling the information into uniform data points -- demographic and procedural information about their respective cases.

We will pass the data on to academics, service providers, and policy makers who can use the information to create a positive change. The original letters, stories, and art will be the basis of a community art project that can be accessed online; a website where people can view the media we're collecting as we get it and whatever else prisoners want to share for that purpose. The website will also contain information that can be used to widen participation, so anyone can contact a Native prisoner they know and help them get involved with this Project. While finding every Native prisoner is a daunting and virtually impossible task, this Project will provide a forum and procedure that Native communities can use to find our people.

This Project will also facilitate communication between Native prisoners and the community, sharing stories and experience through art. Native prisoners who participate in the Project can grant permission to release their contact information on the website, creating the opportunity for the wider community to reach out to individuals. Incarceration cancels the voices and visibility of prisoners and alienates them from their communities, which is especially damaging to Natives.

Collecting information about Native prisoners is a positive start. Creating a system within the federal prison system that is actually designed for youth can be a positive change. But the fact remains, U.S. federal and state prisons, jails, and juvenile detention centers are incredibly violent, dehumanizing, and cause irreversible damage.

That kind of evil cannot be reformed. Let's do something better. Native nations have a particular advantage when it comes to abolishing the BOP's impact in our communities and incarceration itself; Native nations' sovereign status, treaty rights, and federal Indian law are all tools that other groups cannot use. Another advantage is that the idea of a world without incarceration is actually an ancient reality: the justice systems of pre-contact Native nations did not require cages. With over 566 nations, there are several models to choose from. Even in modern times, Native nations successfully use restorative and alternative justice models that allow communities to heal and grow, all while avoiding incarceration.

While the plan is to make the data available to people who are pushing for justice, including those in the federal government, my hope is that Native nations will feel inspired and challenged to work together and come up with incarceration alternatives that put Native nations back in control of what happens to community members and their children. Funding is a big obstacle to sustainability, but some money is already there. According to the BOP, contracting to place a juvenile costs \$259 per day or \$94,535 per year. Native communities can do much more with those resources than the federal government ever has. Each community needs the ability to operate a justice system that is tailored to its cultural values, instead of being coerced into adopting a foreign (and failing) "justice" system. While I'm not sure what better looks like, I know that finding our people is a start, and listening to what they have to say is a good second step.

**See Release Form & Questions on next page.**



<https://www.facebook.com/prisonarts>  
Prison Creative Arts Project  
(c) R. De Jesus 2014

## Introduction to the article and the Questions

Hello. My name is Kori Cordero, founder of the Native Prisoner Project. I'm a Chican@ and Native activist and I'd like to be helpful to my communities. I'm hoping you can show me how. You're the first to see the complete Native Prisoner Project; it was created with you in mind and we need your participation for it to be successful.

The related article above is an introduction to the project that I've started in order to find incarcerated Natives. It describes a problem that concerns me and my plans for addressing it. Essentially, Native prisoners are not accounted for in the prison system, which makes it more difficult for Natives to access to important services. The state might not care to keep track of where you are or what happens to you; but I care and I'm not alone--our community cares and has been pushing for change. We can't be very effective without your help. Please read the article and answer the questions on the next page as best you can. We'll use the information to fight for a change.

We'd like to know what change is most important to you; the article outlines the goals of the project, but the goals can be shifted to better address your concerns. If you would like us to know more than what is covered by the questions, please send us material for the community art project. We will put your art, letters, poetry, or other writings on our website. The community art component is very important for at least two reasons: (1) it will reveal your experience and concerns and can help us focus future work on those issues that are most important to you; (2) it increases our ability to advertise the project via social media (facebook, twitter, etc.) and help push for change in the prison system.

If you decide to participate in this project please answer the questions as fully as possible. Also, consider sending your art or writings so they can be part of our community art project.

Please be sure to copy and sign the legal release on the next page, so we can put your art and writing submissions on our website. Because you're the first to hear of the project, the website is not yet live. Once we get submissions through this first *TTT* article, we will launch the website. The next *TTT* will contain an update on the project.

If you're not a Native prisoner, please let any Native prisoners you might know about this project and help them get involved. We are hoping to reach as many Native prisoners as possible. Your help spreading the word will be key to the success of the Native Prisoner Project.

--Love and Solidarity, Kori Cordero, Native Prisoner Project

All materials should be mailed to:

**Kori Cordero, c/o Tribal Law and Policy Institute**

**8235 Santa Monica Blvd., Suite 211**

**West Hollywood, CA 90046**

# NATIVE PRISONER PROJECT SURVEY

...Continued from previous page

## Legal Release for Artworks and Writings

(The release below gives the project exclusive permission to use your art/letter/info submissions and you will no longer have legal rights to it. For example, if the project makes a book with your art inside, you will not have any rights to the proceeds. The Native Prisoner Project is not-for-profit and any money raised will go back into the project or related prison or Native rights work. The project will not publish your art unless you copy and sign this release. However, we can and will, still use your answers to the questions.)

For good and valuable consideration, the receipt and sufficiency of which is hereby acknowledged, I hereby acknowledge and agree that you, Kori Cordero c/o Tribal Law And Policy Institute (“you”), shall exclusively own all rights in and to the all works submitted by me to you (the “Works”), including, without limitation, the exclusive worldwide ownership in and to the Works, including the exclusive right to exploit the Works by any and all means and in any and all media throughout the universe whether now known or hereafter developed, and I hereby waive any and all moral rights and related or similar rights in respect thereof. You shall own the entire worldwide copyright in and to each Work as a so-called “work for hire,” and in the event it is determined that any of the foregoing does not constitute a work for hire, I hereby irrevocably assign the foregoing rights to you. I hereby acknowledge that you shall have the worldwide right (but not the obligation) in perpetuity, to use and publish my name, likeness and biographical material in connection with the Works. I warrant and represent that I have the right to execute this agreement, that the Works submitted by me are new and original with me and not an imitation or copy of any other material, and that no materials, ideas or other properties furnished by me will violate or infringe upon any common law or statutory right of any individual or entity. I hereby agree to indemnify and hold you harmless from and against any and all damages, liabilities, loss, costs or expenses (including, without limitation, reasonable attorneys’ fees) arising out of or in connection with any breach or alleged breach by me of any of the warranties, representations or agreements made by me herein. This agreement and all matters directly or indirectly arising out of, under or related to this agreement or any related document or instrument are governed by the Laws of the State of California. I acknowledge and agree that I understand the foregoing and that upon signing my name below, this document shall become legally binding.

**Print Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Please copy and return release along with artwork and answers to questions below to the address for Kori on previous page.

## QUESTIONS:

**DISCLAIMER: No confidential or incriminating information should be written in response to these questions; assume your responses are being read by prison officials before they reach The Project.**

Please answer all of the questions below on a separate sheet of paper. If you know other Native prisoners, please share this survey and encourage them to get involved in the Native Prisoner Project. Once they are done with the survey questions and copy the legal release form, they can pass it on to another Native prisoner. The more data we collect, the better chances we have for making a positive changes for Native prisoners.

## TRIBAL AFFILIATION:

Are you enrolled? If so, which Tribe?

Are you eligible for enrollment? If so, which Tribe?

Are you a member of a terminated or unrecognized Tribe? If so, which Tribe?

Have you ever been enrolled, but are now dis-enrolled?

If you are a descendant (do you have a KNOWN Native ancestor), please list your Tribal affiliation and any explanation you wish to share:

Do you identify as Native under the institution’s yard politics?

## CASE INFORMATION:

Please answer all questions for EACH criminal case, if possible, starting with Juvenile cases and work your way to the present. If you have more than one case, label your answers 1a-1x for your first case, 2a-2x for your second case, 3a-3x for your third case, etc. Or, just answer the questions for all your cases as best you can and we will try to organize them for you. Please answer as completely as possible, we would rather have too much information than not enough.

- A. How old were you when the alleged crime occurred?
- B. Where exactly did the alleged crime happen? (city and state, Tribal, State, or Federal Land)
- C. Where were you held while the case was pending? Were you in a juvenile or adult facility?
- D. Were you in your own cell? With juveniles or adults?
- E. What crime were you charged with?
- F. What crime were you ultimately convicted of?
- G. Was there a plea agreement? If so, what were the terms?
- H. Who prosecuted? (Feds, State, or Tribe)
- I. Did you get prosecuted or convicted more than once for the same alleged crime?
- J. Did you get prosecuted once and serve time in two different systems?
- K. Did you have a lawyer? If so, what kind? (public defender, private attorney, lay advocate)
- L. Was a Diversion Program available? (for example, drug court)
- M. Was a Treatment Program available?
- N. Where did you serve time? In a juvenile or adult facility? Did you have your own cell? Did you share a cell with Juveniles or Adults?
- O. How close was the facility to your family/tribe? Was it hard for people to visit you?
- P. What kind of services did you receive? What kind of services were available? (for example, education, job training, religious services, cultural service, etc.)
- Q. If services were available, did all Native Juveniles and Native adults get them? If no, why not?

## GENERAL QUESTIONS:

- R. What was your daily life like as an incarcerated juvenile?
- S. What was your daily life like as an incarcerated adult?
- T. Have your religious rights been respected? Have there been any recent changes to your ability to practice your religion?
- U. Were you ever in the Child Welfare system?
- V. Were you ever a sex worker (dancer, stripper, escort, prostitute, etc.)? Or, have you worked in related industries (brothel manager, cocktail waiter, massage parlor etc.)? Or, have you ever been charged with a crime related to sex work? (pandering, trafficking, extortion, etc.) –This question is optional and your answer to it will not be made public; say as much or as little as you like.
- W. Is there anything else about your case or experience that you would like us to know?
- X. May we put your name and contact information on the website with your art/letter, so folks can contact you directly? Or, would you rather we keep your name and contact info private and just post the letter/art?

## Free Speech Society: Forum for prison activists inside and out

March 25, 2015

<http://sfbayview.com/2015/03/free-speech-society-forum-for-prison-activists-inside-and-out/>

by J. Heshima Denham

The Free Speech Society (FSS) is primarily a movement to defend and preserve the rights of imprisoned activists to inform society of the social contradictions of the prison industrial slave complex in hopes of educating the people not only to the existence of these social ills but their impact on their daily lives. The Free Speech Society is composed of embedded reporters who are committed to exposing the structural inhumanity of the modern prison industrial slave complex (PISC) and its interconnections to the social ills which affect us all. We are your eyes and ears, committed to providing you the truth about the use and misuse of your tax dollars as they feed the insatiable man of the modern prison industrial slave complex.

Recidivism and criminalization are systemic components of the prison industry intentionally manufactured to ensure the ever-expanding influence of the PISC in our daily lives, and it is our job, our responsibility, our duty to inform you of its intricacies.

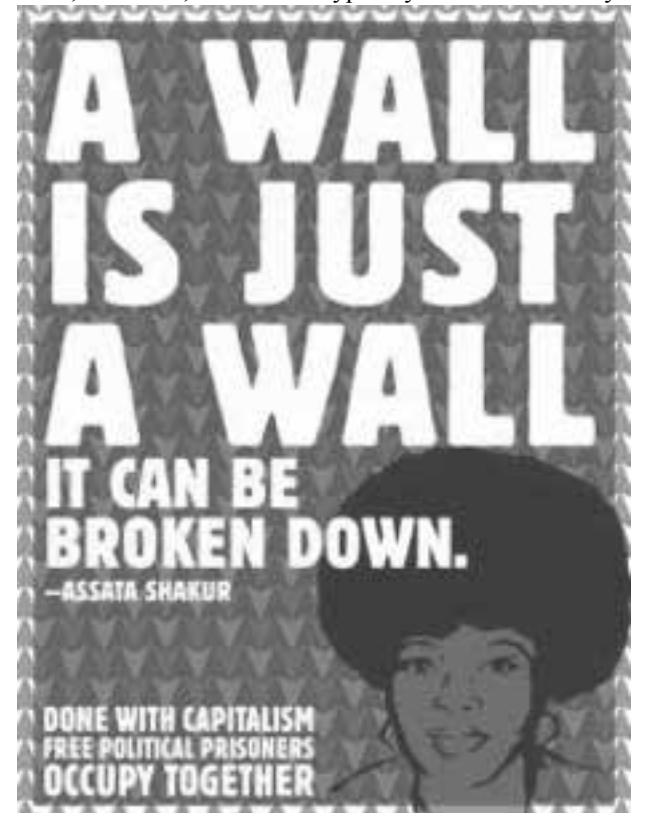
However, the Free Speech Society is not only a movement composed of embedded reporters for the people, but also a forum for progressive activists to analyze these social ills with the intent of developing viable solutions to them, hand in hand with the people. This means the Free Speech Society (FSS) is also a forum for progressive activists and social critics in society at large to ensure that they have a space to work hand in hand with imprisoned activists to articulate and expose the interconnections between the structural inequities inherent in capitalist society and their manifestations in the socially hostile microcosm of prison – racism, sexism, classism etc.

## Goals

The present goals of the Free Speech Society are to:  
expand the number of activists in society who want to join and support the Free Speech Society;  
provide financial and infrastructural support for FSS activists to both carry out their purpose and defend themselves against repression. This means the Free Speech Society will:  
**develop a “war chest”** to cover the costs of civil litigation, copies, filing fees and supporting FSS activists in fulfilling their mission;  
**develop a team of legal professionals** – lawyers, paralegals, investigators etc. – to defend the First Amendment rights of Free Speech Society activists both free and bond;  
develop youth activists to form Free Speech Society chapters in their schools, communities and social circles;  
**develop FSS chapters on college campuses** across the U.S. with a focus on journalism majors and activists students;  
**develop an “emergency response network”** to aid imprisoned Free Speech Society activists experiencing censorship, repression or other attacks on their First Amendment rights.

It is our sincerest hope that all of you reading these words will join us in this historic effort and support the FSS with your time, talent and treasure.

For more information and to get involved, contact Steve Marinot, [martinot4@gmail.com](mailto:martinot4@gmail.com); Abdul Shakur (s/n J. Harvey), C-48884, CSP-COR-SHU 4B1L-25, P.O. Box 3481, Corcoran, CA 93212; Jona Sinsai (s/n Heshima Denham), J-38283, CSP-COR-SHU, 4B1L-25, P.O. Box 3481, Corcoran, CA 93212; Michael Zaharibu Dorrough, D-83611, CSP-COR-SHU, 4B1L-22, P.O. Box 3481, Corcoran, CA 93212; Kijana Tashiri Askari (s/n M. Harrison), H-54077, CSP-COR-SHU, 4B1L-31, P.O. Box 3481, Corcoran, CA 93212. Typed by Adrian McKinney.



## First Person Personal:

# I Am My White Ancestors: Self-Portraits Through Time Using Art and Personal Story to Help End Racism

by Anne Mavor

*I Am My White Ancestors: Self-Portraits through Time* is a multi-media installation that uses my family history to explore the conflicted story of European Americans.

It consists of a series of 7' x 5' life-size photographic self-portraits of me as my ancestors printed on fabric panels, and accompanied by audio diaries from each ancestor's perspectives with opportunities for viewer response and discussion.

The goal is to make European American history personal and visible and to fully claim the positive and negative of my white heritage. Instead of focusing on people of the global majority, this project seeks to reveal and understand the sources of racism, which are the learned behaviors and beliefs of white people.

Over my 40 year art career I have made art that explores personal and social issues. I owe this interest to my time spent in Los Angeles during the 1970s and 1980s when I was part of the Feminist Studio Workshop, the Woman's Building, and the overall feminist art movement. I have used a range of media: performance, writing, book arts, installation, visual art, and graphic design. Some topics have been world hunger, nuclear disarmament, women's roles, disability liberation, and how to combine motherhood and art.

About seven years ago, I decided to focus on visual art and see where it would lead me. The initial work, a series of paintings of ancient sacred sites located mostly in England and Scotland, where my ancestors came from, gradually became an exploration of how family, home, and heritage affects our relationships with the environment and each other. In expanding this interest I initially had the idea to collaborate with a Native American artist to compare our relationships to sacred spaces and place. But I soon realized that I had fallen into the usual pattern of the well-meaning white person appropriating native images and ideas.

So I turned it around and decided to understand my own heritage instead. I knew I had ancestors who had owned slaves and stolen land from the native people in New England and South Carolina. What if I became those ancestors? And what if I took it back further into Europe to understand where their ideas of racism, colonization and genocide came from? I was curious to examine issues such



as immigration, colonization, slavery, war, and what life was like in Europe. I wanted to know how similar or different I might be to my ancestors and what I could learn from their lives. Claiming connection to my family history is also one step towards taking responsibility for the past. What would I have done in their place? What am I doing now that is similar?

The twelve ancestors will reflect a range of experiences from 500 BCE to 1860 AD: Viking conqueror, Scottish witch hunter, English king, South Carolina slaveholders and Indian fighters, Swiss participant in the 1359 Basel massacre of Jews, English noblewoman in the Tudor court, Iron age Celtic tribal member and more. Their stories will reveal how they were oppressed and how they in turn acted out that oppressive behavior on other groups and passed it on.

I expect the project will spark discussions among the viewers and people who read or hear about it. So far, whenever I share my plans and prototype with people I meet, they start telling me about their families. The project gives them permission and a context in which to connect with the past. Many white people have heard stories about their slaveholding ancestors, but rarely had a

place to safely speak about it. My greatest hope is that the project could contribute to the dismantling of racism in the United States, an institution that harms our country economically, environmentally, and socially.

The project brings the past to life and reveals how the history of European Americans and European history impacts contemporary life. As an educational project, it brings the past to life to stimulate discussion and curiosity about history and family heritage. In schools it can be used as a jumping off point for projects and discussions in a wide range of classes such as history, political science, sociology, women's studies, fashion, and art history.

As an artistic project, it approaches difficult topics in a personal and vulnerable way. It brings together my interests and skills and helps me to reach new audiences and engage with them. The form of installation blends a range of art forms, including painting, portraiture, costuming, theater, writing, performance, body art, and social engagement. I was also interested in transforming traditional European portraiture into a forum for social commentary. Since the background painting will be executed in the style of each time period, it traces the changing art styles, along with clothing, roles of women and men, historical events, and social mores.

The vertical 7' x 5' portraits are arranged chronologically along the walls of the exhibit space. Digitally printed on fabric, they are in full color and drape to the floor. In each portrait the character (me dressed as my ancestors) poses in front of a hand-painted background in the style of that era and culture. Beside each portrait is a nameplate with basic information about the ancestor such as name, date, where they lived. To hear a short first person narrative about each of their lives, hand held audio players are available for viewers to use. Two or more small tables with chairs are placed in different parts of the gallery space. Each table holds a box with questions on cards for people to ask each other to stimulate discussion and to take away.

Study guides are available for high school or college teachers to use for their classes. Designed as a lightweight and compact traveling show, it will premiere in 2016 at the Alexander Gallery, Clackamas Community College, Oregon City, OR.

For more information about the project, email me at [mavorina@gmail.com](mailto:mavorina@gmail.com), or visit <http://www.annemavor.com>.

## 100X100 Campaign to Increase Publication Frequency of Turning the Tide

Now in its 28th year, *TTT* has been published in xerox, magazine format, 24-page tabloids, and from time to time on a bi-monthly basis, six issues a year. For the last few years, economic necessity has dictated that we print four 8-page issues a year. Now, to restore bi-monthly publication, we have launched a fund-raising campaign we've dubbed "100X100".

We're looking for 100 people who will donate \$100 a year to make it possible for *TTT* to resume publishing six issues a year, and continue mailing nearly 1800 copies of each issue into the prisons.

We have set up a GoFundMe site for this campaign, <http://gofundme.com/eugzgg>, and we are asking people out here in "minimum security" who appreciate the unique perspectives and resources *TTT* provides to donate.

Chairman Mao said, "Where the broom does not reach, the dust does not vanish of itself," in referring to the need for conscious struggle, criticism and self-criticism, to change oppressive habits and thinking. Well, *Turning the Tide* doesn't print itself, or mail itself. The prisoners who get the paper can occasionally contribute a few stamps; their contribution more often comes by writing articles, letters and poems or sending in drawings. Often, they pass the copy of *TTT* that they received from hand to hand, cell to cell, or they send in the names and addresses of half-a-

dozen or more other prisoners who want to get their own copies and use the paper for study and discussion.

But none of that can happen without you. If you'd like to see *Turning the Tide* more frequently yourself, if you'd like to see fresher and more current information and analysis more often, if you want to contribute to breaking down the walls of isolation and separation imposed by the prison system, please contribute.

If you can't manage \$100 all at once, you could donate \$10 a month. But any donation you make can help. Postage costs for a single issue of *TTT* are almost \$1000 and climbing. If you can't donate yourself, please help spread the campaign via your social media, to your Facebook friends, Twitter followers, and email contacts.

If you live in southern California, you could set up a house meeting with a few friends prepared to donate \$10 or \$20 each, and *TTT* editor Michael Novick will come and speak.

If the campaign is successful, we will put out a fifth issue of *TTT* in 2015, and then begin publishing every other month in 2016. If the campaign is not successful... we won't suspend publication, but we may have to reduce how many copies we send inside prisons or how often we send them. Postage is quite frankly the biggest expense in

our budget. Nobody gets paid to write for *TTT*, to lay it out or to put content up online and via social media. But the Postal Service is not so generous. We have a handful of people who are sustainers, making a monthly donation, a larger number of people who subscribe once a year or so. But if 100 of you reading this donate \$100, we would raise the \$6000 necessary to do the mailings, and \$4000 to cover the print run, the PO Box and website. That's a bare-bones budget for a 6-issue year, and the other money we have coming in could be used for promotional mailings and advertising to increase our paying subscriber base.

The future of *Turning the Tide* is in your hands. Now, while you're thinking about it, go to:

<http://gofundme.com/eugzgg> and donate.

Then share it with your contacts. With your help, *Turning the Tide* can step up to the "urgency of now" -- the necessity for radical organizing, educating and analyzing to respond to the growing crisis of the Empire -- endless war, police terror with impunity, mass incarceration, ecological devastation that will shortly become irreversible. If you think *TTT* is a useful tool in the struggle for people's power and a new world, please donate today. If you wish, you can also just send cash, check or money order to:

**Anti-Racist Action,**  
PO Box 1055, Culver City CA 90232

# INTERVIEW WITH FORMER POLITICAL PRISONER SEKOU KAMBUI

## Q: What got you involved in political activity?

**Sekou:** As a youngster, I grew up in different parts of the country - Harlem, Orlando, FL, in Springfield, Massachusetts, Cleveland, Ohio, and finally Detroit, Michigan, where my father had begun work with the Ford Motor Company, building cars as a foreman. My parents brought me up from the South (Gadsden, Alabama) to become a part of an experiment orchestrated by a faction of the Civil Rights Movement, very likely the NAACP, where I was chosen to become a part of the school integration efforts after the Brown v. Board of Education ruling in Topeka Kansas. The Civil Rights Organization was selecting Black youth with good grades to integrate different schools across the U.S. - both North and South - to challenge "Jim Crow" racial segregation of the schools.

I was sent back down south with the Freedom Riders that were to be pitted against racial segregation in transportation and the racially segregated department stores. I was returned to the care of my grandparents in Gadsden AL. I had come home from high school and told my grandmother that I wanted to become part of the Civil Rights Movement. She told me at the time that, "Son, I know I'm always telling you to do this/do that, that's right/that's wrong; but this is one of those times you'll have to decide for yourself whether you're really ready for such a serious, obviously dangerous commitment; are you willing to take those kinds of risks with your life?" I became involved with CORE, SCLC, SNCC, and other local Civil Rights Movement organizations in AL and Miss., where I, along with other youth were trained to become resistant to violence that was being used to try and intimidate people involved in the Civil Rights Movement.

I was brought together with a coalition of Black youth, being trained to become future leaders and organizers within the Civil Rights Movement. With my influence among the youth, my little group was often used to form security perimeters around meetings, programs, and events held in churches at night, to attempt to thwart possible violence, bombings by members of the KKK/White Citizens Council or such like. In my adolescence, I was committed to such groups training up young future leaders.

I, and other youth was moved back and forth between the south and north as needed. I joined the BPP (Black Panther Party) and later the PG-RNA (Provisional Government of the Republic of New Afrika) by way of N.Y. & Detroit; and later the BLA (Black Liberation Army). We moved from one area of the country to another (clandestinely) to organize whatever type of group was needed or more practical for people in that area, or just bring security back-up to protect them from hostile folks. The particular formation we organized might be the Urban League, NAACP, or any other Civil Rights group, depending on the consciousness, condition, and needs of local people -- then we would fade into the background, and they would carry their struggle forward.

## Q: How did you become a political prisoner?

**Sekou:** COINTELPRO came into play. There were attempts to murder us, some people I knew in the Panthers, the Moors, the Civil Rights group[s], and other formations were brutally killed, or blatantly attacked; others were framed up and outright railroaded into prison. We moved into different parts of the country in a more clandestine effort with the BLA (Black Liberation Army). I was captured at one point while leaving Michigan and heading back to the South in 1967, when police (and what was suspected later as the FBI) raided a Civil Rights Movement Organization (said to be hosting illegal activities) wherein there were several veterans of the military and some returning Vietnam War soldiers, who were or had been approached earlier on the night of the riot, by young militants and students asking them to train them in paramilitary tactics.....The students, along with myself (who had a young girl friend off 12th and Buchanan,) left to go home, leaving the militant brothas at the hotel. It had occurred on at least two occasions, where the police had come to my house on the East side of Detroit, several cars deep, running around my family home, saying they'd had a call that a burglary was in progress at this address. After they looked in at my mother cooking dinner at the stove in the kitchen they left. They came a second time, the night the riot began. My mother told me that was no coincidence, I should return to AL that night. I, with two other brothas, left for Birmingham AL immediately (traveling opposite the way we had arrived in Michigan) to where I was residing at the time.

In a hotel room, known later as the Algiers Hotel Incident, Federal National Guard and Detroit PD raided the establishment, and shot up three or four brothers from Birmingham. They were accused of being bank robbers, and said they were shot because one of them had reached for a gun under a pillow - turned out to be a cigarette lighter. However, the true nature surrounding their death at the hands of the police and National Guardsmen is a mystery still left untold. Only a few people know who they were and what they were doing at the Hotel Algiers.

After returning to Birmingham, I was subsequently arrested and charged with murder, but later exonerated and released. I was eventually framed up, rearrested and sent to prison for many, many years. The charges were fraudulent and the testimony against me was coerced by the police and prosecution, which was the only basis for conviction. Later the people who gave this false testimony eventually admitted to my investigators, years later, that they had lied under coercion and pressure from the authorities, but were still terrorized from coming forward to help free me.

## Q: How were you able to win your release?

**Sekou:** We brought together a coalition of many organizations, Paulette D. and their network with the Jericho Movement, Houston ABC membership, with



Top: Sekou selfie. Bottom: Houston ABC call-in flyer.

Heather and Maggie and others working on a telethon for two days running prior to my hearing on June 18, 2014; NYCABCF & ABC, Denver ABC, Tim Fasnacht with ABCF of Philadelphia, Sara Falconer, and ABCF members of Toronto, Canada, Montreal ABCF, Alina Dollat and friends from France; Jennifer Murman and members with Deep Green Resistance, Freedom Archives and its network under Claude's hand. AL State Senator Hank Sanders, the Chief Spokesperson at my parole hearing, and his wife, Attorney Faya Ora Rose Toure, who was a member of my Defense Committee in support of my release. She had not been able to receive mail from me mailed from the prison, so she became even more enthusiastic over working in support of my release and united with my Defense Committee members from across the country.

Senator Sanders acted as my chief spokesperson at my hearing, and Attorney Toure was my sponsor and worked with my Free Sekou Kambui Defense Committee to show my predicament as a blatant miscarriage of justice too long denied. Youth organizations like the Bloods and Crips, Black Gangster Disciples, Vice Lords and such like, whose incarcerated members knew me, came to aid and assisted the other organizations by downloading a hard copy of the on-line petition put up by my Free Sekou Kambui Petition Drive and Letter Writing Campaign, by way of Arron and others from Denver ABC, at Change.org, putting it on the streets of communities all across Amerikkka, obtaining signatures and forwarding the same to the governor, Parole authorities and Attorney Toure.

The online petition used lynching pictures from "Without Sanctuary," covering contributions to Lynching in the Slave manufacturing South. The petition used these photos as exhibits, demanding the same justice, same equal

treatment under the law that those who'd perpetrated those spectacle and outright lynchings of Black Men, Women, and children had received. No time was available to obtain proper permissions, but pray such a deliberate oversight will be forgiven, due to the urgency of the moment. "No" was not seen as an option. We had our own Legal Support and Defense Committee for Sekou Kambui focused specifically on my case, and received further support from the Freedom Archives, All of Us or None, and many other groups.

Former political prisoner Linda Evans, of All of Us or none, and her partner Eve Goldberg came down to Alabama to act as liaisons between my Sekou Kambui Legal Defense & Support Committee and Faya Ora Rose Toure. Houston ABC, with group members Heather and Maggie and the rest of their grouping coordinated a two-day telethon call-in campaign to the Alabakkma Parole Board to demand my freedom on June 16-17, two days prior to my hearing on June 18th, 2014. People came together from across the country and world, from England to Germany to France, with their different political, philosophical, ideological backgrounds, and ideologies, to embrace and promote the idea that I should be released from my illegal, unjust imprisonment.

Today, I am a formerly incarcerated political prisoner because of the initiative taken by the groups I've mentioned herein.

## Q: What sustained you while you were locked down all those years?

**Sekou:** When I went to prison, racism was very openly brutal, very violent. Convicts were being outright murdered with impunity, or beaten to insanity. Prison authorities used hard labor as punishment, and in general exploited convict labor for the State's economic gains. They would throw us into filthy, crap and lice infested cells (called doghouses back then), and overcrowded cages to retaliate against the growing rebelliousness and resistance that was being organized by the Mafundi Lake's and Sekou Kambui's, and a long list of brothas whose names elude me at the moment but came together to form the Inmates For Action organization against the violent aggression of prison guards and administrators, even at the face of death that came easy in those early years of my imprisonment; a street organization called Families For Action, under the leadership of Mrs. Annie L. Norri; Dr. Steven Whitman, and other family members of Alabama's Incarcerated, including other people from across the country organized support marches on the outside to back up Inmates For Action and its fighting on the inside. There were many brothers killed, beaten down by racist guards (no blacks worked in any prison during those years; not until law suits challenging this condition was won by Willie Beard, Richard Mafundi Lake, Sekou Kambui, and a list of other brothers, to include Wayland Bryant of South Carolina, and Campbell of Massachusetts;) beaten with pick handles, shot in the head and had their head bashed in to cover the bullet wounds, some who were blinded or near-blinded in one eye, or made to suffer brain damage from serious injuries and blows to their heads.

I was encouraged to study law inside, and mentored by Caliph Washington, who won a lawsuit in the late 60s to force the integration of the AL prison system. I became a skilled prison "jailhouse lawyer" and litigator on civil rights/human rights (we couched our litigation in human rights terms from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights violations as well as Civil Rights violations under 42 USCS § 1983 against prisoners in both state and federal court. We created study groups and organized literacy classes inside the prison, and also pursued litigation to get people the right to an education while inside. We won many victories over time, even had help from Attorney Michael Figures and A. J. Cooper of Mobile AL in our fights. Rep. Charles Rangel saved many an Alabama incarcerated person's life or directed the AL DOC to provide proper and adequate medical care even from Washington, DC. But the state legislators eventually voted against higher education for prisoners, and then the federal government blocked Pell Grants for prisoners. So we set up our own self-help groups and advocated and practiced the idiom: "EACH ONE TEACH ONE," to effectively produce a literate people; we would read to people who couldn't read, or write, and do whatever was necessary to bring together people together from different ethnic groups and backgrounds regardless of the diversity in religious beliefs.

...Continued on next page

# SEKOU KAMBUI INTERVIEW

...Continued from previous page

**Q: What are some things you learned while incarcerated that you want to share? How were you able to overcome those differences and build unity?**

**Sekou:** We organized groups by addressing the common needs people had, rather than their differences. We would focus on meeting those basic human needs, that were not being met by the State Slave System. Brothers who were strong in math, reading, comprehension skills would help those who were weak in math, reading, comprehension skills, or brothers who could read would help those who couldn't read or couldn't read so well to insure they improved. We did poetry readings, art-craft training to attract brothas with skills they didn't know they had; we put together workshops and cultural art programs and exhibitions as such activities seemed to get people enthusiastic about expressing themselves. Maybe they would start by reading a poem and realize they could also write a poem.

We didn't allow ourselves to get hung up on debating our personal, ethnic, racial, even political levels of consciousness. These differences were put aside, and we focused on meeting people's basic personal needs, writing their letters or teaching them to write better themselves; helped them learn how to get their GED, and then made the State give them the exams; we styled our efforts of self help as "each one teach one".

The organization that was co-founded by myself and Mafundi Lake, and several other brothas, behind the walls to provide an umbrella of protection for youth, and a means of obtaining knowledge of liberation ethics for the young revolutionary, or prison human/civil rights activists, was called in the early years "Inmates For Action." It evolved into a second grouping identified as the "Inmates For Action-Atmore/Holman Collective," even later: the "Social Consciousness Development Group" (SCDG), and its sister organization that evolved out of this group, the "Cultural Awareness Think Tank" (the CATT). Clandestinely speaking: the Black Panther Org.

At this time, the SCDG is being revised and set up to become a Self Help Community Organization here in Dothan, AL under the leadership of Jennifer Murnan and Sekou Kambui. As I left the prison, aside from the organizations I left in place, there is now the fast growing

"FREE ALABAMA MOVEMENT," itself taking up the banner and legacy of the previously mentioned organizations within the AL DOC, everyday involved in the same human/civil political and economic rights struggle. They are taking a stand, demanding freedom from mass incarceration, long-term imprisonment, blatant physical abuse from prison officials, deprivation of human rights, inadequate medical conditions, abusive and hostile living conditions, etc. The struggle for human dignity don't stop! Forward With the Revolutionary Struggle Behind Enemy Lines! SUPPORT THE FAM MOVEMENT OF GEORGIA, ALABAMA, AND MISSISSIPPI NOW!!!

**Q: What recommendations or lessons do you have for the effort to free all political prisoners?**

**Sekou:** We just had a conference call here in AL about how to build a coalition of all different organizations. I said we need to address the situation of Sundiata Acoli, who was given a parole date and then not released. We can't allow the state to play RUSSIAN ROULETTE with people's lives; we can't let more people die in prison like Merle & Phil Africa; one moment they are seen in the best of health and the next, they're doing too poorly to live.

We have to step up support and activity on the outside. Sometimes, we need to focus our attention on a particular individual at a critical time. It's not about making someone a "star" -- it's just that by focusing collectively on one individual when its needed most, and at a time we can make a real impact on their plight, that we will strengthen the collective ability to get everyone out of prison (ALIVE). People on the inside or the outside have different skills or constituencies that they can bring together to put pressure on the state to release these freedom fighters. Then we can connect together, build bridges from one Legal Defense and Support Committee to another, helping linking an individual case of a particular political prisoner to all the political prisoners and to all the prisoners facing and dealing with racism and injustice, and mass incarceration.

We're connecting with the young people out protesting racist police murders. There's a coalition here in AL. I talked recently with some youth in the Black Lives Matter and Ferguson type formations. There's a Jubilee Arts Festival that's being planned in Selma, around the 50th anniversary of the Selma to Montgomery March. The meeting was instrumental in reminding me about how I

began as a youth, traveling, and training in the civil rights movements of the 50's, 60's, and 70's; just like these young people are doing today, going around the country learning how to organize resistance against police abuse and injustice. That's how I began in my youth, learning street organizing and community work on a basic human level.

We have a situation today where police around the country are murdering young Black men, women and children with impunity; everybody can step up to the plate to deal with this age-old phenomenon, not only New Afrikan or Black people. We have to use these events as opportunities to raise the level of consciousness of all people, and organize activities and method of struggle that all people benefit from.

Who's next? Don't wait for the next attack. European or (White) people or other ethnic groups and nationalities shouldn't wait until the police attack or kill one of their children. Why wait? Come forward and let's unite around the issue[s] at hand. Let's dismantle these forms of brutality and violence against our children NOW!!

Please note, once these PP/POW's are released, they need support units in place; don't abandon them. Some have no family or friends outside after long term imprisonment. They need economical, psychological, even spiritual support from you once they are released by your efforts. DON'T ABANDON THEM! Stand beside them until they are on their feet, and can stand alone!

Were it not for the continued support and backup of Friends and groups instrumental in helping me regain my freedom still standing beside me, giving me their love and support, I could very well become a recidivist statistic of the State. (But tell my enemies and Nay-Sayers: 'DON'T COUNT ON IT!')

**Note:** You can reach Sekou Kambui at P.O. Box 195, Dothan AL 36301. or at: sekoykambui@gmail.com or call him anytime at: 334 200 9364. He has been dealing with health issues resulting from his long incarceration and lack of proper, adequate medical care while incarcerated, but is continuing to organize on the outside for justice and to free all political prisoners.

## **BLACK POWER MARCH 16th--BLACK LIVES MATTER DAY Black Panther Gun Group leads openly ARMED March against police terrorism!**

A colossal event for our people has taken place! Black Riders went to Texas from California to march with the Huey. P Newton Gun Club (an ARMED Black United Front). We marched on the Texas state capitol openly armed with 40 people in honor of Michael Brown, Ezell Ford, Eric Garner, and Clinton Allen (he was murdered by Texas pigs)!

This action was taken while the Austin, Texas State Senate legislators were on the floor of the capitol debating Open Carry Gun Rights, which is designed to keep Black and oppressed people defenseless and powerless against pig terrorism. It's similar to the California Mulford Act process designed to strip the original Black Panther Party and our people of our 2nd Amendment rights to bear arms in the early 1960s.

In 1967, the original Black Panthers Oakland Chapter marched on the Sacramento state capitol openly armed, in 1968 the original Black Panthers Seattle Chapter marched on their state capitol openly armed, and we follow that same Panther tradition in 2015. I was proud to be there with my comrades who were legally armed and fed up with White Supremacy, Capitalism, and U.S. Imperialism.

Our comrades were openly armed with REAL BULLETS and REAL A.K.'s, M-16's, and SHOTGUNS. All this took place in front of the shocked faces of the racist Texas police, who kept their distance during the Armed march! Now that was a Black is Beautiful sight to behold! Strong, Powerful - Black Men and Women who refuse to bow down to police Terrorism!

The non-indictment of the pigs that murdered Michael Brown in Ferguson, Ezell Ford in Los Angeles, Eric Garner in New York, and Clinton Allen in Texas proves once again that we can't expect the pigs to investigate the pigs. That's like asking Frank James to investigate his brother Jesse James, when both of them are racist cowboys. We must defend ourselves by any means necessary. Point J of our upgraded "10 Point Platform and Program" called the Black Commune Program, clearly states that:

"J. We Ride for an immediate end to POLICE BRUTALITY and MURDER of Black People. We Ride because we believe we can end police brutality in our Black Community by organizing Black Self-Defense groups dedicated to defending our Black community from racist police oppression and brutality. The 2nd Amendment to the U.S. Constitution gives a right to bear arms. We therefore believe that all Black People should arm themselves for Self-Defense."

The main goal of March 16th was to educate oppressed Black People on the need of community ARMED self-defense, through what Minister of Defense Dr. Huey P. Newton called Observation and Participation! Dressed in all Black with berets, standing tall with long weapons in front of the State Legislature, we exposed to the world that we will defend our people and we will win our freedom from modern-day slavery!

**Long Live the Huey P. Newton Gun Club!!**

**We must continue to build a unified Nation Wide Defense Force  
against Racist Police Terrorism!  
BLACK LIVES DO MATTER!**

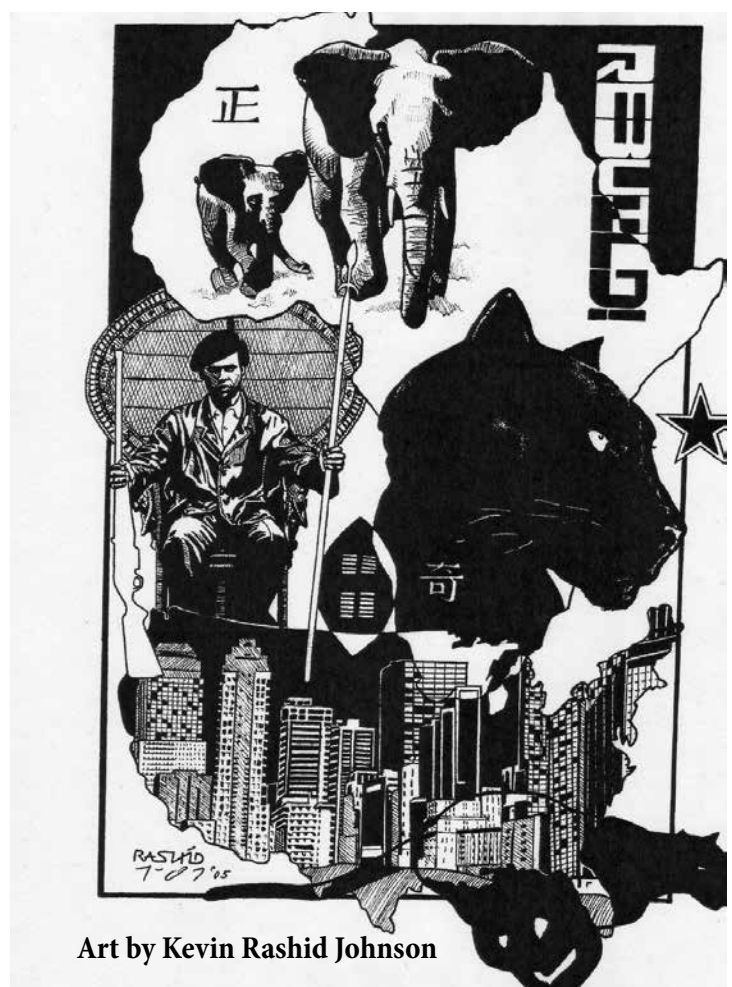
To see actual footage of the mission go to youtube or google - Armed Black Panthers March on Texas State Capitol - March 16th !

Sincerely,

General T.A.C.O (Taking All Capitalists Out) A.K.A Wolverine Shakur  
Black Riders - New Generation Black Panther Party for Self-Defense!

**Black Power! All Power to the People! RBG 4 LIFE!**

You can reach the Black Riders Liberation Party, New Generation Black Panther Party for Self-Defense, at PO Box 8297, Los Angeles, CA 90008, blackriders1996@gmail.com or by calling 602-842-2757 (BRLP), or on facebook, Black-Riders-Liberation-Party. The BRLP has been setting up new chapters rapidly around the US, and is building a nation-wide prison chapter. JOIN NOW!



Art by Kevin Rashid Johnson

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# TURNING THE TIDE

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★ and Much More!

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## UPCOMING EVENTS:

- ★ April 4, 1pm M. Novick speaks: AWARE-LA, Santa Monica UU Society
- ★ April 23, Coordinated Statewide Actions to End Solitary Confinement
- ★ April 25, 2-5pm Building Blocks vs Climate Change, Wilshire Bl. LA
- ★ April 29, Monthly Call-In to White House: Free Oscar Lopez Rivera!
- ★ May 1, International Workers' Day, M1GS, Migrant Rights Rally, LA
- ★ May 28-31, Left Forum in NYC ★ June 24-28 US Social Forum, San Jose
- ★ June 6, From Ferguson to Mexico to Palestine: HP Boycott Campaign  
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- MUMIA ABU JAMAL

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