

# MAIN LINE

## TRANSFORMING THE CRIMINAL MENTALITY INTO A REVOLUTIONARY MENTALITY

ISSUE #3 part 1  
of 2

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### Introduction

What exactly is the NABPP's position on revolutionary nationalism and what method of struggle do we promote for liberating New Afrikan/ Black people, if not by fighting to establish our own nation state in the southeast territory of Amerika, since we do embrace the "New Afrikan" national identity of Afrikan descendants in Amerika and those who embrace this heritage? We've been asked this question, in whole and part, quite often of late.

A number of comrades recognize that we were founded in 2005 as a revolutionary nationalist organization, just as the original Black Panther Party for Self-Defense was in 1966, but later critiqued both integration and separation (secession).

We've also received a lot of questions from and have been in dialogue with quite a few revolutionary New Afrikan nationalists and others on the viability and relevance of struggling for an independent national territory. We've been asked our response to polemics like the one written by New Afrikan revolutionary nationalist, comrade Sanyika Shakur (previously known as "Monster Kody Scott") in 2013.

Sanyika's article, "Get up for the Downstroke," [1] promotes secession and was written in response to my own 2010 article "Black Liberation in the 21st Century: A Revolutionary Reassessment of Black Nationalism," where in contrast to both integration and separation, I promote the revolutionary overthrow of the entire imperialist U.S. power structure through an united struggle of all oppressed groups within the U.S., including working class and poor Euro-Amerikans. Comrade Sanyika's arguments came off more as an angry and personalized attack against me, which he denied in that article, than an ideological and political debate aimed at answering how to achieve what we're all fighting for, namely to end our and others' oppression and exploitation by U.S. dominated imperialism.

This issue of *Main Line* is dedicated to these discussions, and questions of New Afrikan liberation and our Party's qualitative development from revolutionary nationalism and internationalism to Revolutionary Intercommunalism, which we first publicized in 2015 in a special 10th anniversary issue of our *Right On!* newsletter.

So, what follows is our 2006 position paper, "Black Liberation in the 21st Century" followed by one of several polemics against it, written jointly in 2013 by the New Afrikan People's Liberation Army and the Amazons' August Third Collective (AA3), a group co-founded by Comrade Sanyika.

This joint and NAPLA/AA3 polemic was written after Sanyika's "Downstroke" article. Although our Chairperson Shaka Sankofa Zulu wrote a brief reply to Sanyika, [2] we have yet to publish a full and formal response, but one is soon to be submitted to our Central Committee for approval and distribution. We anticipate publishing Sanyika's polemic and our forthcoming reply in a future issue of *Main Line*.

It should be noted that Sanyika responded to Shaka [3] and voluntarily acknowledged that "Downstroke" was a bit personalized as against me and he extended an apology and invited further debate. Although I feel an apology wasn't necessary, I warmly accept it in the spirit of unity and struggle, and will of course continue our struggle to the end of reaching a higher stage of unity.

Following the joint NAPLA/AA3 polemic in this Part 1 of 2 of this issue of *Main Line*, is my 2013 response to them titled, "Talking Nonsense Solves No Problems." Followed by articles setting out the NABPP's critique, analysis and adoption of Huey P. Newton's theory of Revolutionary Intercommunalism in Part 2 of 2 of this issue of *Main Line*.

We conclude this issue with an exchange (actually with the correction of an exchange) between me and Comrade Xinachtli (aka Alvaro Luna Hernandez), which was to have been originally printed in the "Line Struggle" section of *Main Line* #2.

The comrade who formatted *Main Line* #2, however mistakenly inserted the wrong letter by Xinachtli (a letter that I had actually never seen nor responded to). The correct letter is therefore included in the "Line Struggle" section of Part 2 of 2 of this issue with my reply reprinted after it.

We have received a lot of positive and productive responses to *Main Line*. If comrades would like to help expand and sustain its reach, you can help by

donating stamps to our distributor and, again, encourage other independent publishers to also distribute *Main Line*. High resolution copies of each issue can be obtained by sending an email request to [krj.nabppcc@gmail.com](mailto:krj.nabppcc@gmail.com), which can be printed and used as flat copies for further copying and distribution to prisoners.

Dare to Struggle Dare to Win!  
All Power to the People!

Kevin "Rashid" Johnson



## NOTES TO INTRODUCTION

1. Sanyika Shakur, "Get up for the Down Stroke" at <http://www.kersplebedeb.com/downstroke>; and also printed in Sanyika Shakur, *Stand Up, Struggle Forward: New Afrikan Revolutionary Writings on Nation, Class and Patriarchy* (Kersplebedeb, 2013).

2. Shaku Zulu, "'Ooh, momma, those black cats are out back again': A terse response to 'get up for the down stroke' by Chairman Shaka Zulu" (March 14, 2014) at <http://rashidmod.com/?p=1058>

3. Sanyika Shakur, "A Response to the NABPP-PC's Chairman Shaka Zulu from Sanyika Shakur" (2014) at <http://www.kersplebedeb.com/response-to-chairman-shaka-zulu>

### **Black Liberation in the 21st Century: A Revolutionary Reassessment of Black Nationalism (2010)**

Kevin "Rashid" Johnson

"[T]rue revolutionary leaders must not only be good at correcting their ideas, theories, plans or programs, when errors are discovered ... but when a certain objective process has already progressed and changed from one stage of development to another, they must also be good at making themselves and all their fellow revolutionaries progress and change in their subjective knowledge along with it ..."

Mao Tse-tung, *On Practice*

## INTRODUCTION

Some time ago comrades of the New Afrikan Maoist Party (NAMP) expressed a desire to reconcile contradictions between their line and the line of our New Afrikan Black Panther Party-Prison Chapter (NABPP-PC) on the question of Black National Liberation in the 21st Century. On this question, NAMP along with several other organizations—including the New Afrikan People's Organization (NAPO), the Provisional Government of the Republic of New Afrika, the Maoist International Movement (MIM) and others promote the Black Belt Thesis (BBT) as it was set out by the Comintern (Third Communist International) in the 1920s.

The NAMP comrades are correct in pointing out that our respective organizations have a major line contradiction on this question. We have as yet not publicly fleshed out our line on this, in contrast to that of NAMP and others, so it is time we did so in a formal position paper.

In developing our line on the Black National Question in the U.S. we have applied the method of historical and dialectical materialism and deepened the analysis put forward by Huey P. Newton of the original Black Panther Party (BPP). This means we do not hold dogmatically and idealistically to outmoded ideas and formulations that no longer fit the current situation. Instead we base our analysis on the study of concrete conditions in the context of their actual historical development, realizing that everything is in a state of motion and development from a lower to a higher level, and that correct ideas develop in struggle and contradiction with incorrect ones.

### **THE BLACK BELT THESIS AND THE NEW CLASS CONFIGURATION OF THE NEW AFRIKAN NATION**

The BBT was developed by the U.S. "Black Bolshevik," Harry Haywood, in his 1928 and 1930 "Comintern Resolution on the Negro Question," which was adopted by the Comintern and the U.S. Communist Party with support from V.I. Lenin. It holds that Blacks in Amerika (New Afrikans) constitute a nation within the territorial U.S. and that we should establish our own sovereign national territory in Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia, Louisiana and South Carolina (the "Black Belt" also known as the "Cotton Belt"). These states were chosen because we slaved there and developed and evolved as a national group and "internal colony" where Blacks made up the majority. The principal factors which supported the BBT were economic and demographic that existed in the 1920s but no longer exist today.

No one can sensibly deny that Black people were forged into a "nation within a nation" because of their loss of Afrikan national identity under slavery and exclusion from the white

Amerikan nation under conditions of "Jim Crow" segregation. Nor can one deny that this nation is bound to its Afrikan origin and defined by the imposed value that a drop of Afrikan blood sets one outside of the "melting pot" of white Amerikan society.

But where the BBT breaks down is that our present situation doesn't fit into the neat definition used by the Comintern in the 1920s. The reality is more complex today.

At the time the BBT was developed, Blacks in the "Black Belt" were a predominantly peasant (sharecropper) nation tied to cotton production. This condition was also shared by many poor whites and some Indians and mixed bloods. The BBT was based on Comrade J.V. Stalin's analysis of the National Question as essentially a peasant question. Unlike the analysis put forward by Lenin, and more fully developed by Mao, Stalin's analysis limited the National Question to essentially a peasantry's struggle for the land they labored on geographically defined by their having a common language, history, culture and economic life together. Hence the slogans "Free the Land!" and "Land to the Tiller!"

Indeed, ALL the national liberation struggles of the 20th Century occurred in peasant-based societies in opposition to colonial or neo-colonial domination and feudal or semi-feudal class oppression. Today, however, the Black population within the U.S. is no longer a rural peasantry. It is overwhelmingly a proletarian nation (wage slaves) dispersed across the U.S. and concentrated in and around urban centers in predominantly Black or multi-ethnic oppressed communities.

The trend since World War I has been towards migration away from the "Black Belt" South and from the rural to the urban setting (even within the South). Check this out from "1001 Facts" on Black History:

"African Americans (sic) continued to move northward and cityward after World War I in 1918. In fact, the migration increased during the 1920s as another million southern African Americans (sic) picked up their bags and left southern living conditions. The migration expanded in the 1930s as the New Deal Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1933 forced many more to migrate once the AAA paid white southern farmers not to produce crops and made it profitable to dispense with Black sharecroppers. Technological advances such as the cotton picker machine made large numbers of unskilled agricultural laborers obsolete in southern agriculture. Then, as World War II began, Black mass migration exploded and nearly 5 million African Americans (sic) left the South for the North from 1940 to 1960 ... [This] Second Migration created huge ghettos in all the major American cities. Whereas in 1890 close to 90 percent of African Americans (sic) lived in the South, by 1960 only 50 percent of African Americans (sic) still resided there. Moreover, the movement north was also a movement toward urban rather than rural living. By 1990 over 84 percent of African Americans (sic) lived in urban areas, making 'African American' (sic) and 'urban' almost synonymous in modern America."

Therefore, without need of pursuing a struggle to achieve a New Afrikan nation state, we have achieved the historical results of bourgeois democracy, at least as far as transforming ourselves from a peasant to a predominantly proletarian national grouping through the "Great Migration."

Of course the Amerikan liberal democratic revolution begun in 1776, which was continued by the Civil War (1861–1865), remains unfinished—in particular as far as Black people are affected. Pre-capitalist forms of exploitation continue to exist, such as the "slave status" of U.S. prisoners, institutionalized torture, legalized "lynching" as embodied in the racist death penalty, and all manifestations of racism, sexism and discrimination that prevent all from enjoying the "life, liberty and pursuit of happiness" promised by liberal democracy.

To complete the liberal democratic revolution and move forward to socialist reconstruction the proletariat must lead the struggle which is stifled by the increasingly antidemocratic, fascistic and reactionary bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie are no longer capable of playing a progressive role in history.

### **THE REVOLUTIONARY ADVANTAGES OF OUR PROLETARIAN NATIONAL CHARACTER**

That we New Afrikans are now a predominantly proletarian nation—and one without a national territory—is an advantage to the cause of building a multi-ethnic, multiracial socialist Amerika. Indeed, it thrusts us into playing a vanguard role in leading the whole working class and the broad masses in pulling down the capitalist-imperialist system and achieving social justice for all.

This conception of our historical role corresponds with Lenin's and Mao's lines on the National Question which we contrast with Stalin's and dogmatic continuation of the BBT. Lenin and Mao saw the national question primarily as a matter of building the ranks of the proletarian revolution to pull down the system of imperialism. In fact, in all of his writings on Black liberation in the U.S. Mao consistently talks about merging the Black liberation struggle with the proletarian revolutionary struggle in the U.S. He doesn't mention the land issue once. In *A New Storm Against Imperialism*, (April 16, 1968), he stated:

"Racial discrimination in the United States is a product of the colonialist and imperialist system. The contradiction between the Black masses in the United States and the U.S. ruling circles is a class contradiction. Only by overthrowing the reactionary rule of the U.S. monopoly capitalist class and destroying the colonialist and imperialist system can the Black people in the United States win complete emancipation. The Black masses and the masses of white working people in the United States have common interests and common objectives to struggle for.

"Therefore, the Afro-American struggle is winning sympathy and support from increasing numbers of white working people and progressives in the United States. The struggle of the Black people in the United States is bound to merge with the American workers' movement, and this will eventually end the criminal rule of the U.S. monopoly capitalist class."

In his August 8, 1963, article, *Oppose Racial Discrimination by U.S. Imperialism*, Mao's emphasis is on racial discrimination, not "Free The Land!" He sees Black liberation as driving forward the United Front Against Capitalist-Imperialism and pulling white workers and other strata towards socialist revolution in the U.S. The issue is not integration versus separation but revolution.

Even Malcolm X came to embrace this position. In fact, every popular, independent Black leader who came to hold this view and actively advanced it was promptly assassinated. Why? Because neither separation nor integration threatens the imperialist system—socialist revolution does!

### **SEPARATION, INTEGRATION OR REVOLUTION?**

Take Brother Malcolm; in his early stages of political development, he promoted Black separatism. Based upon his observation of independence struggles across the predominantly peasant-based Third World of the 1950s and early 1960s, he adopted the view that revolution was about land, and he embraced the slogan "Free The Land!" which he elaborated on in his Message to the Grassroots speech given in 1963. However, in an April 6, 1964, speech given in Harlem, he expressly rejected both Black separatism and integration, in favor of revolutionary change of Amerika as a whole. He stated:

"We have to keep in mind at all times that *we are not fighting for integration, nor are we fighting for separation*. We are fighting for recognition ... for the right to live as free humans in this society" [my emphasis]

Malcolm increasingly came to identify capitalism and imperialism as the ultimate enemy—embracing the need of Afrikan people everywhere to consolidate their struggles into a united Pan-Afrikan movement, and for Blacks in Amerika to unite in a common struggle with all the "have-nots", regardless of their skin color, against the common exploiters who

try to divide everyone and play us against each other. It was at this crucial stage of his development as a revolutionary that he was silenced by assassins' bullets.

A few months before his assassination, Malcolm X criticized his earlier views on separatist Black Nationalism, finding that:

"I was alienating people who were true revolutionaries dedicated to overturning the system of exploitation that exists on this earth by any means necessary . . . I had to do a lot of thinking and reappraising of my definition of Black Nationalism. Can we sum up the solution to the problems confronting our people as Black Nationalism? And if you notice, I haven't been using the expression for several months. But I would still be hard pressed to give a specific definition of the overall philosophy which I think is necessary for the liberation of Black people in this country."

At the opposite pole, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.—who was initially pro-integration and pro-capitalist—also came to identify capitalism and imperialism as the ultimate enemy, expressly rejecting integration and privately promoting socialist revolution in Amerika as the way forward. He stated in November 1967: "Something is wrong with capitalism as it stands here in the U.S. We are not interested in being integrated into this value structure." During later 1967 and 1968, shortly before his assassination, King repeatedly promoted socialism to his inside circle, but he refused to make this stand publicly for fear of government assassination. But his private statements, public opposition to U.S. imperialist wars abroad, and support for the rights of the poor and workers' strikes were enough for the imperialist ruling class to mark him for death.

George Jackson, pursuing the same path and arriving at the same conclusions in a more developed way, was likewise cut down by an assassin's bullet. He observed:

"It's no coincidence that Malcolm X and M.L. King died when they did. Malcolm X had just put it together . . . You remember what was on his lips when he died, Vietnam and economics, political economy. The professional killers could have murdered him long before they did. They let Malcolm rage on Muslim nationalism for a number of years because they knew it was an empty ideal, but the second he got his feet on the ground, they murdered him."

Despite Malcolm X's and even King's clearly-stated revolutionary positions that New Afrikan liberation lies neither in assimilation (accommodation) nor separation (running away), but in fundamentally changing Amerikan society as a whole, so that we can live as a free people right here, the Black Movement, and those purporting to lead it, have remained deadlocked between these two less than revolutionary positions. The original Black Panther Party has been the notable exception.

The Panthers recognized that the New Afrikan Nation can neither effectively separate from nor integrate into capitalist imperialist and white supremacist Amerika. Neo-colonialism precludes the former and racist national oppression precludes the latter. Our path to liberation—which even the Panthers found a bit difficult to consistently articulate—is to overthrow U.S. imperialism and play a leading role in the global proletarian revolution and socialist reconstruction. We must be the tip of the spear and rally everyone who has contradictions with imperialism to unite with us.

Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale, who were greatly influenced by Malcolm X, were organizing in this direction, in implementing the BPP's Ten Point Program and Serve The People (STP), survival programs while carrying out revolutionary agitation, education and political organizing to build community-based people's power. Huey saw that Blacks were an oppressed nation inside Amerika, but his ideas on charting our path to liberation took a quantum leap forward when he visited and toured Mao's revolutionary China. There he found that numerous racial and ethnic minorities had attained genuine liberation within China's socialist state, without separating or integrating in the classic sense.

What Huey observed in China gave him a blueprint for organizing Black folks to become self-reliant in the very urban communities where they were concentrated in preparation for revolution in the U.S. The BPP's implementation of these ideas quickly earned it the label of the "greatest threat" to imperialism's security, and the U.S. government concentrated its forces in an all-out campaign to destroy the Panthers. Here's what Huey found in People's China that inspired the BPP's STP survival programs and illuminated his ideas about Black liberation in Amerika:

"I saw, crystal clear, how we can start to reduce the kinds of conflicts that we're having in [Amerika]. I saw an example of that in China . . . what I saw was this: when I went there, I was very unenlightened and I thought I knew something about China. I thought, as it has been said so often, that China would be a homogeneous kind of racial/ethnic territory. Then I found that 50 percent of the Chinese territory is occupied by a 54 percent population of national minorities, large ethnic minorities. They speak different languages, they look very different, and they eat different foods. Yet there is no conflict. I observed one day that each region—we call them cities—is actually controlled by those ethnic minorities, yet they're still Chinese . . . I'm talking about a general condition in China where ethnic minorities I've observed control their whole regions. They have a right to have representation in the Chinese Communist Party. At the same time they have their own principles . . . The cities in this country could be organized like that, with community control. At the same time, not Black control so that no whites can come in, no Chinese can come in. I'm saying there would be democracy in the inner city. The administration should reflect the people who live there."

While Huey proved less than adept at linking together, organizing and leading a multi-racial anti-imperialist united front in Amerika, Fred Hampton, the leader of the BPP in Chicago, successfully pulled together a revolutionary coalition of poor whites (Rising Up Angry and The Young Patriot Party), Puerto Ricans (the Young Lords Organization), Mexicans (the Brown Berets) and various student groups known as the "Rainbow Coalition." He was being considered for promotion to national leadership when he was killed in his bed by FBI and Chicago police in a planned assassination.

Around the country the Black Panthers did inspire and forge alliances with many different ethnically-based groups including the White Panther Party, I Wor Kuen (Chinese), Ang Katipunan (Filipino), the American Indian Movement (AIM) and many others. This was paving the way for a revolutionary united front against imperialism rooted in the oppressed communities.

The NABPP-PC also finds relevance in Huey's theoretical concept of "Revolutionary Intercommunalism", which recognized that the U.S. no longer fits the classical definition of a nation state nor do the countries under its neo-colonial domination. Using "Dollar Diplomacy", along with covert operations and outright invasions, the U.S. has successfully imposed itself upon all of the former European colonies and overthrown the socialist-oriented governments brought to power by national liberation struggles in the 3rd World. This paved the way for the U.S. becoming the world's sole imperialist superpower. Amerika's consolidation of global power since the collapse of the Soviet Union and the increasingly globalized economic interdependence gives greater credibility to Comrade Newton's theory of "Intercommunalism," but we embrace this theory conditionally, recognizing that nation states still exist in the geo-political sense under various political and military set ups of "reactionary intercommunalism," although they exist within a system of relative dominant and subservient positions with the U.S. in the position of "Top Dawg." The shackles of bourgeois nationalism still bind the productive forces of the various nations to some degree, from which world proletarian socialist revolution will liberate them, creating the conditions for "revolutionary intercommunalism."

## REASSESSING THE NATIONAL LIBERATION QUESTION

As every national liberation struggle in the 20th Century has demonstrated, genuine national liberation and self-determination have been unattainable. In each case the capitalist-imperialists have created and appealed to aspiring native bourgeois and petty-bourgeois elements within the oppressed national groups and used these puppets to derail their own people's liberation struggles. They have used "Dollar Diplomacy" to forge neo-colonial bonds upon these new republics.

Through their neo-colonial designs, the budding socialist and non-aligned Third World blocs were undermined and overthrown (sweeping the tillers off the land) and their natural resources and productive forces were brought under U.S. imperialist domination (with other imperialist powers getting a share). In this world of U.S. imperialist hegemony, any New Afrikan struggle for independence and separation from the U.S.—along the lines of the BBT—would suffer the same fate in spades. Even if we did manage to reconstitute ourselves as a territorial nation in the "Black Belt," we would only join the ranks of imperialist dominated Third world nations—and with the imperialist U.S. right on our border.

At a time when few within the Third World national liberation struggles foresaw the danger of U.S. neo-colonialism, Amilcar Cabral sounded a warning to other leaders of anti-colonial national liberation movements in the Third World. He questioned whether the national liberation movements were altogether born of the colonial peoples' determination to be free or if they were also to some degree instigated by imperialism to create and "liberate" Third World bourgeois and aspiring petty bourgeois forces to serve as imperialist agents and "front men" to impede and counter the growth of world socialism and create global U.S. imperialist hegemony. Few took heed to his words—then or now. Here is Cabral:

"In Guinea, as in other countries, the implementation of imperialism by force and the presence of the colonial system considerably altered the historical conditions and aroused a response—the national liberation struggle—which is generally considered a revolutionary trend; but this is something which I think needs further examination. I should like to formulate this question: is the national liberation movement something which has simply emerged from within our country, is it a result of the internal contradictions created by the presence of colonialism, or are there external factors which have determined it? In fact I would even go so far as to ask whether, given the advance of socialism in the world, the national liberation movement is not an imperialist initiative. Is the juridical institution which serves as a reference for the right of all peoples to struggle to free themselves a product of the peoples who are trying to liberate themselves? Was it created by the socialist countries who are our historical associates? Let us not forget that it was the imperialist countries who recognized the right of all people to national independence."

Cabral went on to point out the inherent contradiction in the imperialists "promoting" Third World national independence if indeed such struggles were a threat to imperialism:

"This is where we think there is something wrong with the simple interpretation of the national liberation movement as a revolutionary trend. The objective of the imperialist countries was to prevent the enlargement of the Socialist Camp, to liberate the reactionary forces in our countries which were stifled by colonialism, and to enable these forces to ally themselves with the international bourgeoisie. The fundamental objective was to create a bourgeoisie where one did not exist, in order specifically to strengthen the imperialist and the capitalist camp."

Amilcar Cabral, *The Politics of Struggle* (1964)

Cabral found that "what really interests us here is neo-colonialism," which he observed was a new phase of imperialism devised after World War II to replace the old colonial

system, by “grant[ing] independence to the occupied countries plus ‘aid.’”

Witnessing the failed promises of “national liberation” Cabral recognized that to be genuinely revolutionary and “liberating” the struggles for national independence had to be joined with the struggle of the international proletariat. He concluded:

“... that imperialism is quite prepared to change both its men and its tactics in order to perpetuate itself. It will make and destroy states and, as we have already seen, it will kill its own puppets when they no longer serve its purposes. If need be, it will even create a kind of socialism, which people may soon start calling ‘neo-socialism.’ if there has been any doubts about the close relations between our struggle [for national liberation] and the struggle of the international working-class movement, neo-colonialism has proved that there need not be any.” (Ibid.)

Even the U.S. imperialists admitted using such “new tactics” of neo-colonialism as Cabral observed in supporting Afrika and Asia’s various national liberation movements. In the words of Vice President Richard Nixon on his return from a 1957 tour of Afrika:

“American interests in the future are so great as to justify us in not hesitating even to assist the departure of the colonial powers from Africa. If we can win native opinion in this process, the future of America in Africa will be assured.”

Quoted in *Dirty Works 2: The CIA in Africa*, edited by Ellen Ray, et al. (Seacausus: Lyle Stuart, Inc., 1979) p. 58

Accord this statement of the U.S. National Security Council:

“We must recognize, although we cannot say it publicly, that we need the strong men of Africa on our side. It is important to understand that most of Africa will soon be independent . . . . Since we must have the strong men of Africa on our side, perhaps we should in some cases develop military strong men as an offset to Communist development of the labor unions.”

quoted verbatim from the record of a January 14, 1960, meeting of the NSC

So clearly the U.S. government favored pushing its European rivals and their colonial governments out of Afrika by supporting the Afrikan national liberation struggles, by backing or placing native puppets at the head of those anti-colonial movements. In doing so:

“The stage was set for the transition to neo-colonialism: formal political independence for the African countries, but continued economic domination by imperialism, with imperialist political control exerted indirectly through bureaucratic African governments more or less subservient to imperialism, and military control exerted indirectly through covert links between imperialist powers and African military/police hierarchies.”

Daniel Fogel, *Africa in Struggle: National Liberation and Proletarian Revolution* (CA: ISM Press, 1982), p. 116

National “Liberation” has therefore proved empty of substance to oppressed Third World peoples, absent the defeat of imperialism, just as it would be in a struggle for New Afrikan national “liberation” in the southern U.S. territory absent the defeat of imperialism.

Moreover, any such struggle would almost certainly degenerate into an imperialist-sponsored race war, similar to what went down in the Kosovo conflict (1998–1999), and present day Sudan. In any such struggle, Blacks would be at a decided disadvantage—witness our helplessness in the face of the Hurricane Katrina Crisis and attendant martial law in Louisiana and Mississippi (both “Black Belt” states). And in that crisis we didn’t have to contend with angry and desperate whites fighting to keep their land and homes. Or do our

proponents of the BBT expect whites in the “Black Belt” to passively concede the territory and leave? Or do they think we will just grab the imperialists by the throat and demand that they give us five states, make all the arrangements, and then let us run the show there without interference?

And what about the white proletarians who live in the “Black Belt”? What stake would they have in this? Or would we want to just push them into the arms of the reactionaries opposing us? Such a plan would only divide the proletarians along racial lines, set them against each other and give the imperialists a free hand to play the “Divide and Rule” game “Willie Lynch”-style.

Furthermore, our migration back to the “Black Belt” would be “a leap from the frying pan into the fire” for how would we survive in the already poor economy of the rural South? “Returning to the Land” may sound romantic, but trying to bust a living out of the depleted soil of the Deep South was a dead end that caused the “Great Migration” in the first place.

And what a loss it would be to the international proletariat for us to give up our strategic positions within the urban centers across Amerika. Of course revolutionary work should be done among the people of the “Black Belt” South (including the poor whites and others) as well, as part of building the revolutionary movement to overthrow capitalist-imperialism.

The BPP did not promote a mass exodus of New Afrikans back to the “Black Belt”; rather they correctly looked to New Afrikan self-determination right in the oppressed urban communities where Black people are concentrated. It really wasn’t until Harry Haywood’s book *Black Bolshevik* was published in 1978 that the BBT was revived among the New Communist Movement in the U.S. The name New Afrikan was adopted by a convention of 500 Black Nationalist leaders in Detroit in March of 1968 at a Black government conference.

For the NABPP-PC “New Afrikan” is more than the latest in a series of monikers given to Black people in Amerika. Afrika is our common heritage. It (not the “Black Belt”) is our common historic homeland. When a Black persyn comes to Amerika from the Caribbean, Brazil or from Afrika they become a part of the New Afrikan Nation in Amerika—and suffer national oppression and discrimination—even though their ancestors never set foot in the “Black Belt.”

As proletarians, our relationship to production and the world economy makes us “New” and different from the peasantry of the Third World and our ancestors in the Old South. Even if we could go back it would be a retrogressive step—and we doubt this is what the Black masses want.

### WE HAVE NOT LIQUIDATED THE NATIONAL QUESTION

By our pointing out that the shift from peasantry to proletarian and from rural to urban has fundamentally changed the National Question for New Afrikans, we expect some critics will accuse us of having “liquidated” the National Question. For those who dogmatically apply Stalin’s analysis, the problem is: “How can we be a nation without a land base?”

We reiterate that the issue is a bit bigger and more complex than that.

If we look at the New Afrikan Nation as being part of a greater Pan-Afrikan Nation, inclusive of the peoples of Afrika and the Afrikan Diaspora (as Malcolm X did), and this liberation struggle in the context of world proletarian socialist revolution, then we shall see the issue a bit differently. Then we can also see our struggle within the context of a future socialist Amerika that is multi-ethnic and a strong ally of the oppressed peoples internationally.

The proletariat fundamentally has no country and seeks to create a world without boundaries or nation states. So to the proletariat national liberation is not an end in itself but a stage to pass through on the road to World Communism. It is a stepping stone to greater unity and the ending of all oppression.

There are many white comrades (Communists, Socialists, Anarchists, Radicals and Progressives) who are committed to supporting Black liberation because it serves the cause of liberating all of humynity from imperialism and exploitation, and because it strengthens the workers’ movement. The

cause of uniting the Black liberation struggle with the proletarian class struggle is a step towards the total liberation of humynity and the whole world becoming one people.

Just as the proletariat seeks to abolish itself as a class by abolishing all classes, we must seek to abolish ourselves as a nation by abolishing all nations—all national divisions and all national oppression. But this has to begin with liberating ourselves as nations from the grip of colonialism, neocolonialism and imperialism. Just as the proletariat must rise as a class and “pick up the gun to put down the gun” (what is the state but a special body of armed men and wimyn?), we create nation states only to render them obsolete and allow them to fade away when they are no longer necessary. The transitory nature of nation states under socialism is clear.

### COMPARING RACIAL AND NATIONAL OPPRESSION

We can only speak of New Afrikan national liberation because we suffer from national oppression. National oppression is linked to but not the same as racist oppression. The people of Haiti don’t just suffer national oppression as citizens of a Third World nation but also racist oppression because they are Black. Iceland is a small island nation too, but if an Icelander family emigrates to the U.S., they will be accepted as whites. If a Haitian family moves here they will face racial oppression. All people of color, to one degree or another, suffer racist oppression because of the institutionalization of the ideology of white supremacy.

The Haitian family will suffer oppression and discrimination in the U.S. because they are immigrants, because they are Black, and because they are not white. A Korean family will have to face the first and the last but not the specific oppression and discrimination levelled at Blacks (New Afrikans in Amerika). This oppression is rooted in the history of slavery (not just in the “Black Belt” South) and colonialism that spawned the white racist mentality.

Whereas in Amerika, the oppression of the indigenous people is a bit different. People with Indian features (“Skins”) suffer from national oppression and so do Indians with black or white-skinned features. Black Indians are also oppressed as New Afrikans. White-skinned Indians (if they are identifiable by their dress) may be subjected to racial slurs and discrimination, but this is really national oppression. There is a difference between “white Indians” and “white people” in Amerika, but the difference is national rather than racial.

Within the Indian nations there are divisions between “Bloods” and those who are perceived as “Black Indians” and “White (or mostly white) Indians.” These contradictions (which can be antagonistic) between “Red”, “White” and “Black” members of the same oppressed indigenous nations are a reflection of the culture of racism that permeates American society (a colonial settler state) and projects throughout the world.

We do not (as many Black nationalists do) confuse race with nationality. Nationality is not confined by race. One can change their nationality. One can also have dual or multiple nationalities. One can be a Puerto Rican and a New Afrikan (and also a Taino Indian). One can be a Palestinian, an Arab and a New Yorker all at the same time. National identity is a complex issue.

Do not some New Afrikans identify primarily as Amerikans? What is Obama trying to sell us? Yet look around any prison and what do you see? Look at the statistics on poverty, infant mortality, hunger, unemployment, and violent deaths. These tell a very different story—one of continued (and intensified) national and class oppression for the Black masses in the U.S.

I have written before that:

“As revolutionary New Afrikan nationalists, we realize that there is a contradiction between race and nationalism, and moreover, that there is no nation composed of a single race. All existing nations, like the Indian nations here in North America, include whites and mixed bloods, even though there are contradictions. It was the policies of white colonialism created by the ruling class that produced these contradictions, and indeed the New Afrikan Nation. In this regard, we say all people of Afrikan heritage, regardless of skin tone, are part of a single New

Afrikan Nation ... a Pan-Afrikan Nation. Indeed, most 'Blacks' in Amerika are 'mixed bloods'; mixed with white and/or Indian bloodlines.

"We therefore move beyond black and white dogmatism, Native Americans have always done this in adopting any 'race' of people into their nations who embrace and respect their heritage and culture. All non-chauvinistic nations have done this. We also accept that nationalities can overlap and are not merely an either/or situation. People the world over embrace multiple nationalities, and so can New Afrikans. One can be a Venezuelan and a New Afrikan, or a Lenape and a New Afrikan, etc. This concept becomes practical revolutionary internationalism that has all nationalities struggling for both national self-determination and united multi-national, anti-imperialist cooperation ...

"From our point of view, the key question is building alliances between the oppressed nations [and nationalities] within the U.S. and abroad and the multi-national proletariat."

Kevin "Rashid" Johnson, *On the Questions of Race and Racism, Revolutionary National Liberation, and Building the United Front Against Imperialism*, 2007

The success of socialist revolution in the U.S. would "break the back" of global imperialism and create conditions for successful revolution in every other country. This eventuality will create the conditions for a global dictatorship of the proletariat and move the struggle decisively towards rendering nation states obsolete. What then will be the need for national boundaries or militaries?

Could we not then move forward towards classless society at an accelerated pace? Could we not, for example, create a single international currency and globalized planning of production and distribution of goods? Would it not be possible to have a World Health Organization that really provides for people's health needs and a global commission with clout to address the issues of ecological preservation and balance? Could we not standardize wages and prices and ensure a decent standard of living for everyone on the planet—eradicating poverty?

## CONCLUSION

Most theories on the National Question do not address the dialectical relationship between New Afrikans in the Diaspora and Afrikans in Afrika, the contradictions between Afrikans everywhere and imperialism in the Age of Neo-Colonialism and the Crisis of Capitalist-Imperialism, and between New Afrikans in the U.S. and the white-supremacist, imperialist U.S. ruling class. These questions demand a reanalysis of the BBT and our strategy for Black Liberation.

Kwame Nkrumah's concept of an All-Afrikan (Pan-Afrikan) Revolutionary Party (supported by a military arm) is the correct answer to neo-colonialism. We can take a lesson in this from the struggles going on in South Asia. India contains many nationalities with their own languages and regions, yet they are being led by a united Communist Party of India (Maoist). Likewise we can look to Nepal where the Maoists have won the support of many national minorities and have created autonomous regions. In Afrika, neo-colonialism had an advantage because it was able to play the various budding nation states and tribal groups against each other. Our strength is based on unity and common purpose.

Our concept of Afrika as a Pan-Afrikan nation departs from the Comintern's definition of the National Question which confines the nation to the boundaries already in existence (even though these only reflect the imperialists' carving up of Afrika). We don't expect that the New Afrikan Nation will ever constitute itself again in the "Black Belt," but we can play a significant role in the constitution of a Socialist Afrikan Union, and in the creation of a Socialist USA.

We believe that it is the historic destiny of the nation of New Afrikans in Amerika to play a leading role among the oppressed peoples of the World in overthrowing capitalist

imperialism and advancing humanity to a higher stage of political-economic organization based on the principles of social justice and equality.

Our unique history and position within the "Belly of the Beast" gives us the opportunity to deal the coup de grace to U.S. imperialism. Our long-suffering at the hands of white supremacist Amerika gives us a bond with all who have suffered racist and national oppression and enables us to be truly internationalist in outlook.

As Mao predicted:

"The struggle of the Black people in the United States is bound to merge with the American workers' movement, and this will eventually end the criminal rule of the U.S. monopoly capitalist class."

This is the mission of the New Afrikan Black Panther Party-Prison Chapter and our position on the National Question.

*Dare to Struggle, Dare to Win!*  
*All Power to the People!*

## An Open Response Letter to the New Afrikan Black Panther Party with regard to it's Position Paper titled: Black Liberation in the 21st Century: A Revolutionary Reassessment of Black Nationalism (1) (2013)

*The Amazons-August Third Collective; NAPLA*

Revolutionary Greetings!

We are aware of no less than ten (10) responses already written by various comrades across the board regarding this specific piece, & as far as We can tell, most points have been touched on & amplified to the extent of offering clarity with regard to the myriad of ideological & theoretical entanglement. Admittedly, some comrades have gone a bit further, We think, than necessary in criticizing some of the points made by the NABPP. We however, feel that those points have been well made & that is not the area this letter will center on. In fact, as another rad already pointed out:

"The NABPP has written itself into an ideo-theoretical quagmire, the likes of which We as a Movement should be long past since We have so much material at our disposal for study & struggle." (2)

And this is true in more ways than one. Tho' We are not suggesting We should or even can be, mistake free—that's absurd since struggle is born & made into a weapon by ALL experiences that We engage in. In other words, there are no real bad examples or experiences since all go into the pot of developing struggle, i.e. theory & practice.

Our points regarding the NABPP center on it's obvious display & dangerous adaptation of nostalgia. And We'd like to go through a few of these which We hope will bring your attention to bear on this unscientific adventure, which if not reigned in could be quite harmful to not only the cadres of the group, but comrades in the Movement & thus the People & struggle.

Why do you call yourselves New Afrikan if you don't believe or struggle for the self-determination of the New Afrikan Nation? Our elders struggled hard to formulate this ideological line, this conscious understanding of ourselves as a New Afrikan people/nation. A lot of our elders in the Movement gave their lives, their time & their wealth (possessions) to birth this ideology—& to construct the roadmaps of our revolution. Have you ever read the Code of Umoja (Constitution) of the New Afrikan Nation? Do you consider yourselves conscious citizens of the Republic of New Afrika? It seem to us that you have just affixed 'New Afrikan' to the name of Black Panther Party to appear as if you are about New Afrikan Revolutionary Nationalism, but in essence you are not. Your position paper on Black Liberation shows this clearly. It's almost as if you are opportunistically hopping on the bandwagon of an ideology already established & then, like a Trojan horse tactic, you all flood out with a totally different set of lines that serve to disrupt & distort the reality established. This is why your position paper has caused so much discord & so many responses from various orgs & collectives in the Movement.

If the Black Panther Party, as it existed from 1966 to 1980,

was already a so-called *Black* organization (& We all know it was), why would you need to come along & call yourselves the New Afrikan Black Panther Party? Isn't that redundant? We mean, like, doesn't everyone know what the Panthers were about? See, this is where it comes across as opportunistic when you take an obvious, already well established, orgs names & then clothe it in another ideology to fit the times. You are being lazy. You are not starting from scratch. You are building on momentum that lost its energy, then trying to resurrect it by an ideological blood infusion, but the ideo-theoretical mismatch has caused schizitsophrenia. And you publish this confusion as an "official line" which then blurs the vision of young potential cadres who have not learned better & are searching for answers. That's foul.

By calling yourselves the New Afrikan Black Panther Party it makes people (those who don't know any better) think you are somehow a continuation of the old Black Liberation Movement into the current New Afrikan Independence Movement. But We know that's not true don't We? This is not hip hop, where you come into the cipher & battle as the youngest to out rap the oldest. This is Our lives—literally. We question the sincerity here in being revolutionary, let alone New Afrikan. Why not just call yourselves the New Black Panther Party? Oh, Khalid Muhammad started that org in the early 1990's. Well, how bout The New Afrikan-American Panther Vanguard? Yes, excuse Us again, that group also already exists, right? So, here you all come calling yourselves the New Afrikan Black Panther Party ... it's all rather confusing. Confusing to anyone who doesn't know better, but to Us it's opportunism & distortion.

But if that's not bad enough, it's an org that began & to our knowledge, only exists in prison. It's not a mass based org in the tradition of the Black Panther of renown, no it's a prison group. And even 'group' & 'org' may be a stretch. Here's the real danger that We hope to point out to you comrades: history is best qualified to instruct—if it's analyzed correctly, and if it can be applied concretely. Look back at the history of Our struggle in concentration camps—look at the comrades We've lost in the camps because they felt it expedient to affix a hierarchal title to their names, or to function out in the open, in a 100% hostile environment. The prison movement was given life by the dialectical flow of conscious people inside & out, outside & in.

The NABPP has its "minister of defense" in not only a kamp, but in the hole of the kamp. He has been identified, tagged, & locked down. This is the "minister of defense." How can he offer defense to the group, Movement, & the People from a kamp inside of a kamp? And, it's Our understanding that this comrade was recently assaulted [...] by the pigs. Yet, there was no response from the NABPP. If the "minister of defense" can't defend himself, how can he be in a position to defend the Org, the Movement, the Masses? And, what of secure communication with the "Minister of Defense"? What about when the "Minister of Information" or "Minister of Justice" or any other Lofty titled "Official" needs to communicate sensitive info, or conduct strategy & tactics with the "Minister of Defense"?! Do you really believe his mail is secure coming thru a kamp? A kamp where he's already been identified, tagged & locked down—& assaulted? Have We learned nothing from the death of Comrade George, Andaliwa Clark, L.D. Barkley, Sam Melville, Andreas Baader, Ulrike Meinhof & not to mention all the New Afrikan P.O.W's & political prisoners in California Pelican Bay & Corcoran. Khalfani Khaldun in Indiana or Maroon in Pennsylvania??

What's going to happen is, the NABPP is going to be pulled into a trap & encapsulated. The intelligence network is going to encircle you, manipulate your communications & play you out of pocket. And We know that the Comrads Sundiata & Maroon advised Us to "protect this one," but We cannot do so when the traps set are being deliberately ignored & you all are walking headlong into them.

To us it seems that it's a lot of macho posturing & nostalgia playing out in hopes of what—a reputation? A legacy, or place in the book of martyrs? The obligation of the revolutionary is to make the revolution. Not be a superstar or some macho-macho tough guy.

Let Us ask you this: who's the Asian leader in amerika? Who's the Mexicano leader? The Puerto Rican leader? Don't know do you? You know why you don't know? Cause

their "leaders" are in their communities out front leading. They feel no real need to be or have some lofty ass title which serves only to expose & illuminate them to hostile transgressions from the enemy culture. This all comes off as amateur hour, really. Atavistic macho posturing.

We know that the BPP in its beginnings, in 1966, could not have been born, let alone grown & developed into the mass org it became by 1968-69, had Chairman Bobby Seale & Minister of Defense Huey Newton, been in a kamp—let alone a hole in the kamp. And although we know the Coordinating Committee of the Black Liberation Army was, by & large, a Kamp based org, it also must be pointed out that the BLA-CC comrades were members of the Army & related formations before being captured. We can't imagine the logistical problems likely to occur having to wait around for a Minister of Defense, who's captured, sending tactical orders down the line!

Why not call yourself a mere "theoretician"? Or simply a cadre. What's all the "Minister of Defense" posturing about? From what We've seen in various publications is that this Comrade is actually the only functioning theoretician of this group anyway. It seems he's the Minister of Defense, the Chairman, the Minister of Information, Minister of Propaganda & the Resident Artist. While We admire the fire & obvious stamina of this multi-tasking Brother, We question the scientific ability of this approach. Not to mention the dangerous exposure.

Are there any women, gays, or transgendered members of this group? Do you all attend New Afrikan Nation Day Ceremonies? It is easy, We all know, to project an image. Film projectors do it all the time. They can throw up an image very life like, onto a wall or screen. Colors & sound, flashes of light, bells & whistles the whole thing—but it's only a two dimensional projection, it's not real. It only engages the sight & sound senses. But We all agree some of the movies are really good, right? But at the end of the film the movie's over the screen fades to blank, the actors go on to the next job. The audience goes home—the sensation subsides. That's what the NABPP is like in the sense that We see your writings everywhere—in publications from Quebecs Certain Days Calendar to Bing Hampton's college publication OFF! From California Prison focus to the San Francisco Bay View & all areas in between. But We don't see you on the ground. Theory is good & necessary—where would We be without it. But theory without practice is what's called in Swahili: babaiko "meaningless talk." And talk is a currency everyone can afford—it's cheap. And here is where the NABPP falls flat on it's face because both conscious New Afrikans & the real Black Panther Party are/were about practice. It's not just about explaining social phenomena it's about changing it. And the fact your "Minister of Defense" is a prisoner starts you out with a strike. Cause aside from the stifling hierarchal structure that this entails—lofty titles manufacturing superior & inferior positions of leaders & followers—it also subjects you to dangerous security problems having to necessarily deal with strategy, tactics & logistics. Everything your Minister of Defense will know from you—the pigs will know. Everything your Minister of Defense sends to you—the pigs will know too. This will allow them to encapsulate you—surround & manipulate your actions until they are ready to swoop down on you & put you in the cage next to or down the tier from your Minister of Defense.

Revolution in amerikkka is against the law, it is illegal. If We've learned anything from the failed revolution of the late 60's & early 70's, is if We prematurely show Ourselves—the enemies are coming. They have to. No alternatives can be allowed to challenge or exist under oppression. They are reading everything We read. Why make it easy for them? Why offer your chest or head up to the snipers? Your spear is your intellect, your wit, your stamina, your ability to advance. Your shield is your strength to ward off, evade, defend & shelter yourself. In tandem they are your weapons of struggle. In every metaphor for life's struggle, whether against the elements of nature, or oppression from humans on humans, the spear & the shield can be used. Your tactical knowledge at any given time will instruct you whether to thrust your spear, or raise your shield. Whether to go on the offensive or to retreat. In order to have this consciousness you'll need to be in tune with objective reality. You can't wait on orders from on-high when the shells are falling. When

you are being subjected to the influence of oppressive lead. Let us share with you something a comrad said:

"'Clandestiny' must come to characterize the entire movement, i.e., a 'mass-based underground' is what We need; a resistance movement in territory occupied by settlers who regard all 'anti'-struggles as threats to the continued existence of the empire. We want to build a New Afrikan movement where 'leadership' can't be easily identified, because 'leaders' will be the owner of the corner grocery store, the secretary, the phone repair person, the physical education teacher, etc. & they'll only 'surface' after We've liberated some territory!" (3)

We just don't want to be unnecessarily having to attend funerals that could be avoided. Or, having to a mass all our energy marching to "free so & so." These things can be avoided by better practice. We fail a lot of the time because of Our own weaknesses giving the pigs the opportunity for easy kills. And when we do this, what's this called? Petty-bourgeois thinking. Why? Because somewhere in our minds We actually think, or still think, that the enemy is going to let us organize a revolution to end its empire on his front lawn! We somehow believe We have "constitutional rights" to bear arms, assemble & free speech—to be safe from unreasonable search & seizure; to be free, or to be without the hazards of cruel & unusual punishment. Get real. That's petty-bourgeois thinking. That We have to the constitutional right to organize ourselves out front, naked to the world with titles like "minister of defense" or by combining two of amerikkas worst nightmares together. New Afrikan & Black Panther Party. And We don't think this combo was lost on those who brought this org into existence. We think a conscious effort at posturing was in effect, sprinkled with a dash of opportunism. Which is not to say you weren't pushing from a true position. NO. You may have been sincere. Though clearly uniformed & historically challenged. Again to the rads words:

"Why do We need New (secure) lines of communication? Because We don't want the enemy to know who We are, where We are, or what We're thinking, planning, or doing. They may know We're coming, but We don't want to let them know from which direction We're coming, at what rate of speed, what we're bringing, with Us, or how much of a load We're carrying. We need New, secure lines of communication because the old movement is passing away, & the old lines & methods of communication must pass away with it. We can't "re-group" or revitalize a movement which is already in the latter stages of decomposition. We can't build a new movement with lines & methods of communication (to say nothing of theory & other forms of practice) that are EFFECTIVELY detected, intercepted, disrupted & contaminated. Nor can We build a new, secure movement with people who are not only blind to this reality, but they're also deaf & dense." (4)

Again, this is not a battle rap—this is Our lives. And the lives of our future generations. We know that our people have a complex that feeds to the need to "do something" against the system or feel a loathing sense of inadequacy. Usually this complex surfaces in the petty bourgeois realm of "showing off," "frontin" or "showboatin." In this way, the loudest, most flamboyant individual usually gets the attention and is somewhat satiated by the admiration—even if the attention is negative. One comrad likened it to the "invisible man" syndrome after the characterization in Ralph Ellison's novel of the same name. It stims. We think, from a colonial mentality. Or, as Frantz Fanon would say, Colonial War Mental Disorder. We, of course, are no psychiatrists; however, We know Our People. That's our business. So, usually, the need to act out, in order to be made visible—from colonial obscurity—and enter what's believed to be history, takes on petty-bourgeois characteristics. That is within the set parameters of the oppressor nation culture & laws.

However, We also think that this mentality can manifest in the revolutionary realm as well. Yes, it's actually called adventurism. Or the "lets get busy right now" syndrome. If you're up on your George you'll remember the first page of BIME where he tells the comrade he's writing about having

to "browbeat" the youngsters everyday there who felt that being a warrior was quite enough. Where they felt they didn't need ideology, strategy, and tactics. And it's not so much as you in the NABPP think you don't need ideology, strategy, or tactics, it's a matter of you mixing & matching an entanglement that serves more to distort & confuse than anything. Lines of a political or military org are made not thru theoretical work alone. Practice ultimately creates the line. Theories are tested in practice to test their validity—to experience their effect in objective reality. That is the criterion of truth. Practice.

What you have done is (obviously) read a lot of different ideologies, theories, and strategies and from these built your own. Then, those which are not in accord with yours, you all combat ideologically as if your lines have been tested. When actually you're theoretically masturbating. It may feel like sex, but actually it's a solo mission. It's easy and quick and until the next sensation, satisfying. But no births, no real life can issue from it, because it's not really life giving, life sustaining practice. It's just ... well, jerking off. And what are the masses to do, watch? Be spectators as you act out your macho auto-eroticism as a Revolutionary Organization with your anatomy exposed for all to see? The enemy loves that. Easy pickings, one shot, one kill. And then here We are having to begin again with one more grave yard affirmation talking about how "real they were." The pattern by now is predictable. But must it be so? Do We have to keep sacrificing Our best to the beast to prove that We "didn't die in the sick bed"? Again, the obligation of the Revolutionary is to make the Revolution.

Finally, titles, ranks and all that are for show. If a person ain't earned the ability to be something, don't fall for no self-named anything. Would you call a vest bullet proof if the last person who wore it got shot thru it? Be conscious of who and what you align yourself with. Revolution is against amerikkkan law.

Free The Land!  
The Amazons-August Third Collective  
NAPLA

(1) "Black Liberation in the 21st Century: A Revolutionary Reassessment of Black Nationalism." *California Prison Focus*, Number 38, Spring 2012

(2) Anonymous-Internal Army Communication.

(3) Iyapo Tsukama, *Study Notes on Secure Communication: So That We Don't Fool Ourselves Again*. Spear & Shield Publications

(4) Atiba Shanna. *Ibid*.

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### Talking Nonsense Solves No Problems: Reply to an Open Response Letter Allegedly Written by the Amazons-August Collective and NAPLA to the New Afrikan Black Panther Party (2013)

Kevin "Rashid" Johnson

I recently received an "open letter" purporting to be from the Amazons-August 3[r]d Collective (AA3) and New Afrikan Peoples Liberation Army (NAPLA), which claims to respond to an article I wrote elaborating the New Afrikan Black Panther Party-Prison Chapter's (NABPP-PC) line on New Afrikan Liberation. [1] The said letter, however, doesn't analyze nor respond to our article at all. Instead it goes to some lengths, building momentum as it proceeds, to ridicule and angle to undermine the motives and character of the NABPP-PC in general and me as a leading member in particular.

The letter proves to be based purely on conjecture, where its authors, (whoever they might actually be), admit having little or no factual knowledge or study of the NABPP-PC as an organization, our history, our political and ideological line, our membership, or much else. Yet we are disparaged as unscientific nostalgic adventurists, egotists, glory-seekers, opportunists and more [2]. The letter is obviously geared to lead others to look upon our Party, its work and members with suspicion and ridicule, characterizing us as a threat to the Movement, the People and the struggle that must be "reigned in," and without a shred of fact to back its critiques.

My first thought on reading this letter was that it reads

exactly like a piece of FBI counterintelligence. Like old COINTELPRO brown mail written by the political police but claiming to originate from some actual or fictitious organization or person, which was sent to a targeted group or person or otherwise publicized, with the purpose of inciting groups against each other and/or to discredit groups and their members in the public eye. These are old and well-established pig tactics, and ones any student of pig covert actions would readily recognize, and that seasoned Comrades would be conscious to avoid using themselves or playing into.

I especially doubted the authenticity of the letter when I considered that leading cadre of the New Afrikan Independence Movement (NAIM) have admonished the Movement against publicly lambasting other groups in this fashion. For example New Afrikan People's Organization (NAPO) Chairman Chokwe Lumumba warned the Movement against this in an article [3] I know the actual AA3 and NAPLA are familiar with, because it was referenced in an article written last year by Comrade Sanyika Shakur which they signed onto. [4] Chokwe stated:

"Publicly blasting revolutionary New Afrikan organizations without prior efforts to resolve conflicts and indeed after declining an opportunity to do so behind closed doors (as Malcolm X suggests) has worked to the detriment of the Black Liberation Movement on countless occasions. Garvey vs. the Afrikan Blood Brotherhood, Malcolm vs. Elijah Muhammad, West Coast Panthers vs. NY 21, Panthers vs. cultural nationalists, the Provisional Government Republic of New Afrika Constitutional Crisis of 1969/70 are all examples of the counter-revolutionary consequence of such behavior. The agents of the enemy are drawn to open "wild west" political shoot outs, between revolutionaries like flies are to feces. This type of debate helped to imprison Garvey, discredit the Blood Brotherhood, kill Malcolm, destroy the Panthers and divide the Provisional Government in the 1970's.

"We emphasize that We do not believe that there should never be public debate or struggle between revolutionary groups. But We do believe that before such exchanges occur, maximum caution should be taken to insure that these debates are not self-destructive."

He also pointed out that his own NAPO:

"has been engaged in political debate recently with many of the Organizations in the Black Liberation Movement... However, these debates have been and continue to be carried out in a secure and productive manner.

"They are occurring in a non-public manner, or publicly after notice of the issues, and with preliminary discussion designed to correct gross misinformation and misconceptions in order to minimize the danger of public comment which mischaracterizes on the basis of distortions or mistakes of fact.

"Among genuine revolutionary groups this process helps to minimize enemy provocation and provides a better opportunity for maximum consideration of all factors involved, before any organization has publicly committed itself to that which might easily be shown to be erroneous information or thinking."

[5]

## INVESTIGATE THEN SPEAK

To the extent this "open" letter is actually the work of AA3 and NAPLA, the NABPP is fully prepared to answer questions or concerns they may have about our organization, line and work. [6] In addition, we can refer them to articles we've written and our media that explain a lot of what is questioned or challenged in that letter, including what our purpose is, our history, why and how we originated within the empire's prisons, why we are an aboveground Party formation and not a clandestine organization, the purpose and functions of leading positions and the election to and revocation of such positions within a revolutionary Party organization, etc. I am also in process of having more of our Party materials posted to my website—rashidmod.com

## REVIVING THE PARTY: A DANGEROUS NOSTALGIA OR A RECOGNIZED NECESSITY?

We can certainly understand Comrades' confusions surrounding the need, role, function and structure of a revolutionary political Party. In fact, Comrade Owusu Yaki Yakubu aka Atiba Shanna spoke to this tendency years ago:

"The movement and its organization must be rebuilt—by cadres. We look to the past and see that one of our major weaknesses was the lack of attention given to properly selecting and training cadres. WE claimed to base ourselves on Marxist-Leninist theory (e.g. with respect to party-building), and to be aware of the class dimensions of the national liberation struggle. Yet, we ignored or overlooked the need to use class-based and vanguard criteria in the selection and training of party members and cadres. In point of fact, we were more ignorant of the process of building revolutionary scientific socialist parties than we realized. (There wasn't much material on this in *The Red Book* or Mao's military writings, and by 1970-71, we'd been so disappointed by Huey Newton & Co., and so misguided by our own petty-bourgeois [and lumpen proletarian—Rashid] mentalities and our misinterpretations of certain South American experiences, that we, in effect, abandoned the *principle* of the need for a party, i.e. *the necessity for a party organization if revolutionary struggle is to be effectively generated and successful.*") [7]

Comrade Safiya Bukhari also recognized and emphasized the need to reconstitute a revolutionary NA Panther Party, as the political vanguard of the NAIM in which she'd long been a leading voice and organizer. Here's Safiya in her own words:

"The [Black Panther Party] does not exist as a Party anymore. We do believe that in order to move our struggle forward, there's a need for a political party. Together we can build a party. But in the interim, Panthers are out there, and people who are committed to build the struggle are out there." [8]

As the "open" letter mentions, various groups since the demise of the BPP in 1982 [9] have assumed the name of the original Party. But as Comrade Mumia Abu-Jamal observed in his study and political memoir of his experiences as a member of the BPP, these groups have not built upon or continued the legacy of the BPP. [10] However, in a 2006 article in support of Comrade Hasan Shakur, the Minister of Human Rights of our NABPP-PC until he was murdered by the State of Texas on Black August 31, 2006, Mumia wrote:

"Hasan has joined the newly-formed New Afrikan Black Panther Party-Prison Chapter, based in Amerika's prisons and in honor of his commitment in the face of death, the NABPP has named him its Minister of Human Rights.

"Hasan, through his politicization, has devoted his life to what the NABPP calls "Pantherism," or a fidelity to the Revolution as taught and practiced by the original Black Panther Party.

"Unlike other recent formations, the NABPP studies the writings of Huey P. Newton Bobby Seale, George Jackson, and other founding and leading members. The words of Malcolm X are important tools for understanding and addressing the challenges of today.

This is refreshing news indeed." [11]

## POLITICAL WORK INVOLVES WIDE PUBLICITY

What defines our work and structure is what sort of organization we are. The NABPP-PC is not an underground (para) military nor a joint political/military organization, but a "legal" aboveground political Party, that aims to be both flexible and adaptable to changing circumstances. From the extremes of enemy repression to permissive conditions where open political agitation, education and organizing are possible, Revolutionary Parties have existed, communicated, thrived and ultimately succeeded in defeating oppressive systems under much worse conditions than we find ourselves in Amerika or its prisons.

In revolutionary struggle, especially in its developmental stages, political work takes primacy, which entails educating, and agitating amongst the People. Many in the Movement have instead long given primacy to armed struggle. A tendency that Comrade Owusu Yaki Yakubu also criticized. [12]

As for widely publicizing revolutionary views and analyses, Mao Tse-Tung noted, in a struggle for liberation:

"there are various fronts, among which are the fronts of the pen and of the gun, the cultural and military fronts. To defeat the enemy we must rely primarily on the army with guns. But this army alone is not enough; we must also have a cultural army, which is absolutely indispensable for uniting our own ranks and defeating the enemy." [13]

This is the principle behind revolutionaries publishing their line and analyses as broadly amongst the People as possible, and is what the critics who wrote the "open" letter see in the wide distribution of my art and writings in various media and my having developed working alliances with a wide range of organizations and People.

## DOING WHAT WE CAN: FILLING A VOID: LEADING BY EXAMPLE

Our critics wouldn't know, because they've admittedly done little study of our literature, but the NABPP-PC has repeatedly recognized and publicly acknowledged the limitations that objective conditions place on our ability to be fully integrated with the masses, and be as effective as we'd like in our work. But as Dialectical Materialists, we struggle to understand and work within the laws and limits of objective external conditions, to achieve as much as we can and create more favorable conditions for greater struggle, toward achieving our revolutionary ends. We don't just "do nothing" because we don't find ourselves in the most ideal conditions. But we could certainly accomplish much more with the unity and support of AA3 and NAPLA, and vice versa. Comrade Safiya made a critical point in her book, *The War Before*, in this respect:

"The basis of the movement now is still the same as it ever was. The primary objective remains the same: to establish political power for Black people. The Black movement is so factionalized today that it's ridiculous, with everyone wanting to be the leader. We're going nowhere. We're dying by leaps and bounds. We're losing our youth and everything else. The prisons are overflowing with us, women and children and men. All the infighting between organizations is leaving the people out there with nowhere to go. So for those of us who are sincere about struggle, about turning this whole mess around, our primary, our immediate, objective is to do something about this factionalism, to come together in some form of unity and organize, so that we can collectively move forward and come back to dealing with organizing our people toward our freedom, to see that we're not annihilated in the next ten years." (pp. 128-9)

We also recognize that today there exists a revolutionary leadership vacuum, and if nothing more we can set an example and offer a blueprint on how a Party organization looks and works, for a Movement that continues to not recognize the fundamental need of a revolutionary Party to lead any revolutionary movement, and for any such struggle to advance and succeed; nor how such an organization is structured and operates. A few articles I've written that might be instructive on these points are: "Unity-Struggle-Transformation: On Revolutionary Organization, Leadership, and Cadre Development," (2012), "On the Vanguard Party, Once Again" (2012), "The New Afrikan Black Panther Party's Organizational Principles, Policy and Practice: The 3-P's" (2012), "The NABPP-PC Rules of Discipline and General Directives" (2005). [14]

In any event, we do appreciate and understand the risks and tactical flexibility that goes with this work, and factor that into our line and policies. We are far from naive, reckless or reactionary.

## START FROM SCRATCH?!

The NABPP certainly looks to carry forward our People's centuries old struggle. But it is impossible to advance any struggle across generations without building on the shoulders of those who went before. Indeed, one reason our movements have met with repeated setbacks is because we don't maintain organizational and historical continuity. Lacking political organizations that retain, build upon, and pass down the memories and lessons of our past achievements as well as failures, and thereby enrich and develop our work, culture and personality, we find ourselves struggling to reinvent the wheel every few years and repeating the same errors over and over along the way. We suffer organizational and political amnesia. And our critics seek to raise this tendency to a political principle [?!]. "Starting from scratch" is what has us never getting past the opening stages of this race—running only a few yards, falling over some obstacles, then turning around, returning to the starting line and repeating this same process again and again. Instead we should be studying and correcting past mistakes, developing winning methods and techniques, mastering the track and its obstacles, training and preparing, lining up our best runners (and having reserves trained and in place), adjusting to and preparing for changes on the track, in the weather, etc., then running the race, staying the course, and passing the torch to each successive generation of runners until the race is won. That's organizing to win!

## ARE WE FLIPPIN' THE SCRIPT OF THE BLM OR NAIM?

The NABPP-PC is a product, part and continuation of the BLM and NAIM, and seeks to link and advance them into the larger struggles to overthrow this imperialist system and to achieve genuine liberation, not just for New Afrikan peoples, but our Afrikan peoples the world over and all others who suffer under the yoke and lash of imperialism. This entails a multi-faceted strategy, that requires the sort of political organization and United Panther Movement (UPM) we are struggling to build, and working in alliance with various other vanguard and mass organizations.

As to our stand on the National Liberation strategy embraced by AA3, NAPLA and other RNA affiliates, the NABPP is no more antagonistic to them than was the original BPP. And as we will show, our line is consistent with ones that have long existed within NAIM, indeed we are part of NAIM, which explains in part why we in the NABPP account ourselves "New Afrikan" (which in any event is our People's Nationality, which exists independent of any organizational or political affiliation.) [15]

Our critics charge that we're changing the ideology of the original BPP to fit the times. Is that wrong? Do they expect us to live in the 1960s? But they accused us of dangerous nostalgia! And yes, we actually have repudiated the lumpen-proletarian ideology that the BPP adhered to (an ideology very similar in any respects to that of the petty bourgeoisie). As we set out long ago in one of our founding documents: "The NABPP-PC: Our Line" [16] we specifically embrace the class line of the revolutionary proletariat in contrast to that of the lumpen. And while we're criticized as "foul" for this, yet another book that AA3 and NAPLA have endorsed also repudiates the lumpen ideology. Namely E. Tani's and Kae Sera's, *False Nationalism False Internationalism*, which was also cited in Sanyika's article. [17]

Are we "lazy" because we've embraced the Black Panther legacy and symbology? Certainly no lazier than were Huey Newton and Bobby Seale, since before they co-founded their BPP, there were two other Black Panther formations, one was the Revolutionary Action Movement (RAM), the underground militant organization founded in 1962 at Ohio's Central State College, of which RNA's first "president" Robert Williams was chairman in exile. The other was the Alabama-based civil rights Lowndes County Freedom Organization, from which RAM adopted the Black Panther symbol. Furthermore, Huey developed the BPP's mass line by struggling ideologically against underground groups like RAM.

And another thing—the BPP didn't begin as a community-based Party any more than did the NABPP-PC. Huey and Bobby started it on the campus of Oakland, California's Merritt Junior College. A setting where they admitted political

work was isolated from the oppressed New Afrikan masses. Only after Huey (who was the BPP's leading theoretician) refined its ideology through extensive study and debate with other campus groups, and procured seed money by selling Mao's *Little Red Book* at the school, did they leave the campus to build the BPP in the oppressed communities.

One might also ask, if the vast numbers of imprisoned people amongst whom the NABPP-PC was founded don't qualify as "the masses", or at least a substantial portion of the oppressed New Afrikan masses, what are they? Especially considering that prisons are the one place in Amerika where New Afrikans are a social majority, and most severely repressed. But with the time we have on our hands, these prisons—which Malcolm X called "the poor man's university"—are also an environment conducive to revolutionary study and learning. Where indeed did Malcolm, George Jackson, Owusu and even myself develop? In fact it was in prison that Sanyika evolved to his present state from an unlettered gang-banger.

So we know, with history and strategy as our guide, that revolutionary cadre and at the very least the nucleus of revolutionary organizing can be developed inside these warehouses of the oppressed, then transitioned to the streets upon these comrades' release. Developed consciously and step-by-step under such conditions our cadre and organizations will be strong, resilient, adaptable, healthy and capable of self-regeneration like a weed, as opposed to those developed under sheltered and plush conditions like fragile hot-house flowers. We will therefore be suited to confront and adapt to any challenge and hardship. Just like Lenin's and Mao's parties became and proved to be the most capable revolutionary leadership by developing and evolving in the teeth of the enemy's most repressive conditions.

And like the BPP, Mao co-founded the Chinese Communist Party from among the cadre of a university study group, and from there rooted it among the Chinese masses. Similarly, Amilcar Cabral developed schools where his Party cadre were systematically trained and organized, then reintegrated them with the masses to lead one of Afrika's most decisive revolutionary national liberation struggles.

We tend to agree with the line advanced by Comrade Huey P. Newton in his September 13, 1969, letter to the RNA, on the occasion of the return of RNA President Robert Williams from exile. In fact we feel conditions today—in particular the replacement of colonialism with today's far more advanced and refined neo-colonialism—validate Huey's position *even* *more*. Based upon various critiques we have read of our line on New Afrikan liberation from Comrades who embrace the RNA line, it seems Huey's letter has been lost or forgotten within RNA circles. It is an important historical document we feel, and therefore bears quoting at length. The letter was entitled *Huey P. Newton to the Republic of New Afrika*, and read:

"This is Huey P. Newton at Los Padres, California 1969, September 13. Greetings to the Republic of New Afrika and President Robert Williams. I'm very happy to be able to welcome you back home. I might add that this is perfect timing. And we need you very much, the people need you very much. And now that the consciousness of the people is at such a high level, perhaps they will be able to appreciate your leadership, and also be ready to move in a very revolutionary fashion.

"Some time ago I received a message from the Republic of New Afrika with a series of questions concerning the philosophy of the Black Panther Party; and very detailed questions on certain stands, and our thinking on these positions. At that time I wasn't prepared to send a message out. I've had to think about many of the questions, and due to the situation here it's very difficult for me to communicate, so this explains the lapse of time between question and answer. I won't be able to expound on all the questions but I would like to give some general explanations of the Black Panther Party's position, as related to the Republic of New Afrika.

"The Black Panther Party's position is that the Black people in the country are definitely colonized, and

suffer from the colonial plight more than any ethnic group in the country. Perhaps with the exception of the Indian, but surely as much even as the Indian population. We too, realize that the American people in general are colonized. And they're colonized simply because they're under a capitalist society, with a small clique of rulers who are the owners of the means of production in control of decision making. They're the decision making body, therefore, that takes the freedom from the American people in general, and they simply work for the enrichment of this ruling class. As far as Blacks are concerned, of course, we're at the very bottom of this ladder, we're exploited not only by the small group of ruling class, we're oppressed, and repressed by even the working class Whites in the country. And this is simply because the ruling class, the White ruling class uses the old Roman policy of divide and conquer. In other words the White working class is used as pawns or tools of the ruling class, but they too are enslaved. So it's with that historical policy of dividing and ruling, that the ruling class can effectively and successfully keep the majority of the people in an oppressed position; because they're divided in certain interest groups, even though these interests that the lower class groups carry doesn't necessarily serve as beneficial to them.

"As far as our stand on separation, we've demanded, as you very well know, a plebiscite of the U.N. to supervise, so that Blacks can decide whether they want to secede the union, or what position they'll take on it. As far as the Black Panther Party is concerned we're subject to the will of the people, but we feel that the Republic of New Afrika is perfectly justified in demanding and declaring the right to secede the union. So we don't have any contradiction between the Black Panther Party's position and the Republic of New Afrika's position it's simply a matter of timing. We feel that certain conditions will have to exist before we're even given the right to make that choice. We also take into consideration the fact that if Blacks at this very minute were able to secede the union, and say have five states, or six states, it would be almost impossible to function in freedom side by side with a capitalist imperialist country. We all know that mother Afrika is not free simply because of imperialism, because of Western domination. And there's no indication that it would be any different if we were to have a separate country here in North America. As a matter of fact, by all logics we would suffer imperialism and colonialism even more so than the Third World is suffering it now. They are geographically better located, thousands of miles away, but yet they are not able to be free simply because of high technological developments, the highest technological developments that the West has that makes the world so much smaller, one small neighborhood.

"So taking all these things into consideration, we conclude that the only way that we're going to be free is to wipe out once and for all the oppressive structure of America. We realize we can't do this without a popular struggle, without many alliances and coalitions, and this is the reason that we're moving in the direction that we are, to get as many alliances as possible of people that are equally dissatisfied with the system. And also we're carrying on, or attempting to carry on a political education campaign so that the people will be aware of the conditions and therefore perhaps they will be able to take steps to controlling these conditions. We think that the most important thing at this time, is to be able to organize in some fashion so that we'll have a formidable force to challenge the structure of the American empire. So we invite the Republic of New Afrika to struggle with us, because we know from people I've talked to, (I've talked to May Mallory, and other people who are familiar with the philosophy of the Republic of New Afrika), they seem to be very aware that the whole structure of America will have to be changed in order for

the people of America to be free. And this again is with the full knowledge and full view of the end goal of the Republic of New Africa to secede. In other words, we're not really handling this question at this time because we feel that for us that is somewhat premature, that I realize the psychological value of fighting for a territory. But at this time the Black Panther Party feels that we don't want to be in an enclave type situation where we would be more isolated than we already are now. We're isolated in the ghetto areas, concentrated in the north, in the metropolitan areas, in the industrial areas, and we think that this is a very good location as far as strategy is concerned, as far as waging a strong battle against the established order. And again I think that it would be perfectly justified if Blacks decided that they wanted to secede the union, but I think the question should be left up to the popular masses, the popular majority. So this is it in a nutshell.

"As I said before, I don't have the facilities here to carry on long discussions. I look forward to talking with Milton Henry [later known as Gaidi Obadele—Rashid] in the near future, if it's possible, (I know that he has his hands full now) or representatives of the Republic of New Africa, so we can talk these things over. There are many things I heard, things I read, I'm in total agreement with. I would like for the Republic of New Africa to know that we support Robert Williams, and his plight at this time; that we support him one hundred per cent, and we're willing to give all services asked of us, and we would like to find out exactly what we can do that would be most helpful in the court proceedings coming up, what moral support we could give. Perhaps we could send some representatives, and we will publish in our paper, "THE BLACK PANTHER," the criminal activities that he's been victim of for some eight or nine years. I would also like to request of the Republic of New Africa to give us some support to Bobby Seale our Chairman of the Black Panther Party. Bobby Seale is now in prison as you know in San Francisco, he has a case coming up in Chicago, and one in Conn., and we invite the Republic of New Africa to come in support. We would like this very much, and whatever moral support they could possibly give, we would welcome it. We should be working closer together than we are and perhaps this would be an issue that we could work together on. The issue is the political prisoners of America, and people as one to stand for the release of all political prisoners; and this might be a rallying point where all the Black revolutionary organizations and parties could rally around. Because I truly believe that some good comes out of every attack that the oppressor makes, so perhaps this will be a turning point in both our organizations and parties. So I would like to say, "ALL POWER TO THE PEOPLE, AND MORE POWER TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF NEW AFRICA, ROBERT WILLIAMS."

So, like the original BPP, the NABPP-PC doesn't negate the right of New Afrikans to secede, the question is at what point is secession a practical and genuine answer to the oppressed condition of New Afrikans—before or after defeating the Amerikan imperialist structure? And in either case the ultimate decision if to secede is one for the People to make. And that decision must be informed so that they know and understand their options pro and contra. Also, consistent with the original Panther line, the NABPP-PC believes—and we have a very developed practical strategy for building a viable movement to deal imperialism the *coup de grace*—that so long as the imperialist system exists, secession right on its border would not "liberate" us. So there is no major line departure from the original BPP as our critics claim, only the NABPP-PC has gone deeper into the question especially in relation to the development of neocolonialism.

Neither is the NABPP-PC an interloper nor outside the NAIM because we advocate building a socialist Amerika as a precondition to any realistic option for New Afrikan secession, if secession be the People's choice. We'll refer to a leading

theoretical voice and veteran of NAIMto make the point viz. Comrade Jalil Muntaqim, whose recently republished book *We Are Our Own Liberators (Liberators)* has been instructive to many in the NAIM, including those grouped around the teachings of Owusu. Indeed, Owusu's own theoretical writings have been based on Jalil's work. [18]

In the very beginning of *Liberators*, Jalil admits that three alternative strategies on New Afrikan Liberation have long existed within NAIM, not just one. They being, in his own words (and presented as questions at that):

"Are we to fight for an integrated Social Democratic capitalist America?

"Are we to lead the fight to build a multi-national Socialist United States?

"Are we to fight for democratic self-determination and independence of a Republic of New Afrika?"

If this be true, the RNA tendency (the third listed by Jalil) is only one of several within the NAIM, and because we in the NABPP-PC promote the second tendency as a precursor to considering or advancing the third one, does not put us outside of nor make us antagonistic to NAIM. Indeed, according to Comrade Jalil our line and we are no less authentically part of the NAIM than the RNA's line and the RNA. This, being true, collapses the entire foundation of the criticisms made in the "open" letter. Also, as we have already demonstrated, by founding a NA Panther Party aspiring to carry forward the work and set an organizational example for political leadership of the NAIM, the NABPP-PC has acted consistent with what leading voices in the NAIM (e.g. Owusu and Safiya) have stated is an indispensable need in our movement. And prominent veterans of the original BPP have recognized our efforts to carry on and advance the work of the original Panthers, standing on the shoulders of those who went before us. That we've taken this initiative while existing under the harshest and most limiting of social conditions, should inspire advanced NAIM elements to join us in building this organization and making it as effective as it can be, rather than attempting to undermine it.

[I should also add as further corroboration that our line and Party work is consistent with the NAIM, a quote from Comrade Jalil's foreword to my 2015 book *Panther Vision*, which book included my "Black Liberation in the 21st Century." Here's what Jalil wrote:

"As had the original Black Panther Party, Rashid and the New Afrikan Black Panther Party work to defend the struggle of national liberation and independence of Black people (New Afrikans). In this defense, it is extremely important to know the relationship between the government, a system of institutionalized white supremacy, and Black people. I believe Rashid capsulizes this antagonistic relationship, a struggle that has been waged for over 400 years, and in so doing, Rashid immortalizes the heroes of our struggle such as Huey Newton, George Jackson and Malcolm X by seeking to synthesize their ideological thinking into a pragmatic theoretical determination of historical relevance to today's struggle.

"The original Black Panther Party for Self-Defense challenged the prevailing socio-political and economic relationship between the government and Black people. The New Afrikan Black Panther Party is building on that foundation, and Rashid's writings embrace the need for a national organization in place of that which had been destroyed by COINTELPRO and racist repression. We can only hope this book reaches many, and serves to herald and light a means for the next generation of revolutionaries to succeed in building a mass and popular movement."

This last paragraph and quote from Jalil were inserted in 2017 for inclusion in the Main Line newsletter—Rashid]

And like Chokwe, in *Liberators* Jalil emphasized that within NAIM those who embrace different strategic views should engage in principled struggle, and not allow these differences to generate division and contention.

## EXPOSURE VERSUS PROTECTING POLITICAL LEADERSHIP

Interestingly, while the "open" letter criticizes us as being too exposed, it goes on to contradict this charge by admitting ignorance of and curiosity as to who our members are, where they are based, etc. Also to question our position or membership with respect to wimyn, gays and transgender people. Since we really have no need to publicize this, not knowing where this letter really originated, we'll answer the letter by quoting from our founding *Rules of Discipline* which state in relevant part:

"2) We will practice and promote respect for the rights of individuals, oppressed nations and peoples, including the disabled, wimyn, children, elderly, gay/lesbian, all ethnic and racial groups, and especially the working classes of all nations and nationalities.

....

"10) We will not practice discrimination within the Party's ranks based upon gender or sexual orientation. All ranks and leadership positions within the Party will be equally available to men and wimyn, and their qualifications being determined by their proven abilities and commitment, and they will be equally respected and obeyed by lower ranks." [19]

For further elaboration of our line on wimyn's oppression and the indispensable role of wimyn in revolutionary struggle, see my 2008 article "Wimyn Hold Up Half the Sky!: On the Questions of Wimyn's Oppression and Revolutionary Wimyn's Liberation versus Feminism." [20]

And I might add, as far as being adventurist and "showing off" with macho posturing, etc., this is something we specifically oppose, and specifically spoke to as counter-revolutionary lumpen tendencies. Again see my 2005 article "The New Afrikan Black Panther Party-Prison Chapter: Our Line." Also "Don't Shank the Guards: Legal Recourse to Guards' Harassment, Brutality and Rape" (2005). [21] Being adventurist and reactionary, by the way, also includes jumping out the window in response to pig provocations, as our critics imply we should be doing, although this was the pig tactic that put Comrade George in their crosshairs.

While we are by no means pacifists and uphold the right to self-defense, we recognize that before one can be a hammer they must first be an anvil. My experience and practice is what has qualified me in the collective judgment of NABPP-PC Comrades to maintain the position of Defense Minister, which is no more an empty "lofty" title than that of the "President" and other "officer" ranks in the PG-RNA. Oddly our critics don't seem to know that within the PG-RNA Comrade Safiya held the "lofty" title of Minister of Defense and Comrade Owusu held that of Minister of Information and throughout the time that Owusu held held this position and was a leading revolutionary theorist in the NAIM, he was *in prison* as well. But we again understand some NAIM comrades' unfamiliarity with the structure of a revolutionary Political Party, in particular the organization of a Central Committee and Political Bureau (Politburo) composed of Ministers who preside over specific civil functions and institutions. As Comrade George noted, all many comrades who come to the struggle from the streets relate to is "the gun." But as all seasoned and successful revolutionary leaders, from Amilcar Cabral to Mao Tse-Tung have emphasized, the gun must be controlled and guided by the Political Party, that indeed the Party is the source of a revolution's success or failure.

Also, our critics seem confused as to whether they want to condemn me as a "macho macho tough guy" or as someone incapable of self-defense. They also accuse me of trusting the pigs' legal system. Again, since they admittedly haven't read much on our line, and have no direct experience with me, their confusion is understandable. In either respect a few points made under our 2005 *Rules of Discipline* [22] might shed some light on our position:

"Another thing we must avoid is falling into the trap of 'Legalism,' and believing that just because our actions are legal that the enemy won't break the law to set us up on bogus charges, violate our rights, or commit illegal acts, including murder, to

silence us. This is a fascist dictatorship! The window dressing of "Legality" and "Democracy" cannot be taken for reality.

"The necessity of doing legal, aboveground work makes us vulnerable, and retaliation only plays into the state's hands and allows them to brand us as 'terrorists' and escalate their attacks. There is no safety in being a revolutionary, even in a non-revolutionary situation, and we have to accept that. We also have to minimize the danger by relying on the masses to defend us, by exposing the true nature of the beast, and by making the enemy pay a high price in exposure when they commit crimes to attack us.

"Millions of people get screwed by the system, get railroaded into jail or prison, or murdered by the police, just because they are Black, Mexican, Indian, or Puerto Rican. These are not revolutionaries, but this is a class dictatorship! Even poor and working class whites... get screwed every day. This class dictatorship is a criminal enterprise through and through, and that is why we need a revolution.

"We have to steel ourselves for struggle and be strong, have courage, and do what must be done. If we worry too much about what they might do to us, they will automatically win, because we will be distracted from what must be done."

And while political leaders are especially valuable, vulnerable and therefore principal enemy targets, we must structure our organizations so when/if they are successfully targeted we have cadre trained, qualified and ready to pop right up and fill their positions. [23] we can't completely insulate our leadership from being targeted by the enemy. But we can organize ourselves so we ensure such collective forms of leadership where losing one or a few won't destroy our organizations, and so that cadre are trained and able to rebuild our organizations' branches from scratch as necessary, and wherever they may find themselves. That's the key. And again that is the sort of organizational example we are trying to establish and set for the Movement.

Applying these principles is one of the most frustrating features of Hamas (although a bourgeois organization), that Israel has confronted in trying to crush Palestinian resistance in Gaza and the West Bank. Israel began its campaign of targeting Hamas's leadership by assassinating its founding leader Sheikh Ahmed Yasin in 2004. But, as in Yasin's case, every time Israel has succeeded in assassinating one of Hamas's leaders, one or more equally qualified members popped right up to fill the position. And Hamas is operating under conditions of military occupation, in what has been called the world's largest open air prison, namely Gaza strip. Conditions in Gaza are many times worse and more regimented than in any U.S. prison. Yet Hamas has devised, as did Lenin under the repression of the Russian Tsar with his Bolshevik Party, ingenious ways of maintaining secure lines of communication between its cadre and leadership in Gaza, the West Bank and Israeli prisons. The struggle for a Palestinian State is closer to realization than at any prior stage in history since their land was stolen in 1947. Their struggle is "against the law" in Gaza, the West Bank, etc. to a much greater extent than is ours in Amerika. In fact participation for them is subject to summary execution, missile strikes, bombed schools, bulldozed and confiscated homes, massacred children, and worse. But they have organized to win. If they can do it so can we!

Dare to Struggle, Dare to win!  
All Power to the People!

## NOTES

[1] My article "Black Liberation in the 21st Century: A Revolutionary Reassessment of Black Nationalism" was first published in Right On!, vol. 19 (Spring 2010), newsletter of NABPP-PC, then reprinted in California Prison Focus no. 38, Spring 2012, www.prisoners.org. It can also be read at <http://rashidmod.com/?p=301>. The article drew its first critical response from Sanyika Shakur in an article "Get up For the Downstroke," posted at [www.kersplebedeb.com](http://www.kersplebedeb.com) to which I am preparing a reply, but have been put off

in completing because of prison officials repeatedly taking texts I am using for references to refute the many erroneous positions taken and arguments made in that article.

[2] To the extent that this "open" letter authentically came from Comrades in the AA3 and NAPLA, it reflects a dangerous tendency, also shown in Comrade Sanyika's article cited in note 1 above, within the NAIM of comrades passing judgments and formulating critiques without performing the slightest investigation of their subject—in this case, the NABPP-PC. One of the slogans that distinguished the original BPP during its most revolutionary stages was, "No investigation, no right to speak." This slogan was drawn from the teachings of Mao Tse-Tung, who was one of, if not the most important (and feared by the imperialists) revolutionary teachers and leaders of the era. In elaborating this slogan, he explained, when you speak on something without looking into its present facts and history, without knowing its essence, "whatever you say about it will undoubtedly be nonsense. Talking nonsense solves no problems..." Mao Tse-Tung, "Oppose Book Worship" (1930).

[3] Chokwe Lumumba, *The Roots of the New Afrikan Independence Movement: Revolution Requires Political Maturity*

[4] Op cit., note 1.

[6] If indeed the letter originated from AA3 and NAPLA, we think the comrades should, in light of Comrade Chokwe's admonition, do a bit of self-criticism, and we invite them to engage in principled struggle with us on any questions or criticisms they may have, beginning with the principle of working in unity, engaging in principled struggle so that we end on a higher level of unity. This is how contradictions within the ranks of the People are resolved, as opposed to contradictions with the enemy.

[7] Atiba Shanna, "Notes on Cadre Policy and Cadre Development," *Vita Wa Watu: A New Afrikan Theoretical Journal*, Book 12 (April 1988), p. 10. In the same volume of *Vita Wa Watu*, Owusu stated conclusively, "We aren't gonna take up space here as if we're engaged in a debate over the need for a party. For us, the need is a foregone conclusion. He went on to add: "It's understood that the party must be suited to our unique conditions and tasks, that its new structure, thought and practice, should be influenced by the lessons acquired from analyses of previous experiences; that it should incorporate those characteristic features of revolutionary parties in other countries which have proven to be essential and relevant, despite differences in time and place, that building the needed type of party is a complicated process which must be undertaken consciously and systematically without skipping any fundamental steps."

Ibid. p. 19, "On What It Means to 'Re-Build'—Part One: Re-Orientation." This is the exact work the NABPP-PC is engaged in, yet our critics, who are supposed to be students of Owusu, dismiss our efforts to build such a party as "dangerous", "nostalgia", and an "unscientific adventure" that the NAIM must close ranks to "rein in."

[8] Safiya Bukhari, *The War Before: The True Story of Becoming a Black Panther, Keeping the Faith and Fighting for Those Left Behind* (Feminist Press, 2010).

[9] Contrary to our critics' position that the BPP ceased to exist in 1980, "[t]he year 1982 marks the official death of the Black Panther Party, since that was when many of the Party's programs, like the once-acclaimed Intercommunal Youth Institute (or primary school), and the publication of the BPP newspaper ceased..." Mumia Abu-Jamal, *We Want Freedom: A Life in the Black Panther Party* (Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 2004), pp. 232-33.

[10] Mumia Abu-Jamal, *We Want Freedom: A Life in the Black Panther Party* (Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 2004), chapter 10, pp. 227-247.

[11] Mumia Abu-Jamal, "No Place to be Reborn: The Awakening," *Right On! Newsletter of the New Afrikan Black Panther Party-Prison Chapter* vol. 4 (Summer 2006), p.4.

[12] Atiba Shanna, "On What It Means to 'Re-Build'—Part Two: Re-Organization," *Vita Wa Watu: A New Afrikan Theoretical Journal*, Book 12 (April 1988), note 6, pp. 39-58.

[13] Mao Tse-Tung, "Talks at the Yen'an Forum on Literature and Art," *Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung*, vol. 3 (Foreign

Language Press, 1963), p. 69. (emphasis added)

[14] The articles can be read online at [www.rashidmod.com](http://www.rashidmod.com): "Unity-Struggle-Transformation: On Revolutionary Organization, Leadership, and Cadre Development" at <http://rashidmod.com/?p=337>, "On the Vanguard Party, Once Again" at <http://rashidmod.com/?p=353>, "The New Afrikan Black Panther Party's Organizational Principles, Policy and Practice: The 3-P's" at <http://rashidmod.com/?p=356>, "The NABPP-PC Rules of Discipline and General Directives" at <http://rashidmod.com/?p=2489>.

[15] New Afrikans are a nation of People whether we have a piece of land we call our own nation-state or not. Political borders, patriotic holidays, national anthems, and a flag are not what makes a people a nation. Chokwe defined a nation thusly: "A nation is a people who have shared a long history of inhabitation in a common identifiable territory, while developing a common culture, language and economy; or with regard to economy, a nation is a people who have been collectively subjugated to an imperialist economic system, which has prevented them from developing and organizing an economic life of their own." Chokwe Lumumba, *The Roots of the New Afrikan Independence Movement: Revolution Requires Political Maturity*, note 3, p. 12. According to the second definition, all the groups oppressed by U.S. imperialism constitute a nation, which would include the multi-national and multi-racial working class; also Afrikan People would constitute a Pan-Afrikan nation (both those in the diaspora and on the continent collectively) under this definition which comports with our analysis set out in my article cited in note 1. As to the first definition, it conforms exactly to that set out by Comrade Joseph Stalin in 1912, which contradicts Comrade Sanyika who, in his article cited in note 1, claimed of the RNA, "We don't import ideas" and disparaged those who do. Here's how Stalin defined the nation: "A nation is a historically constituted, stable, community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life and psychological make-up manifested in a common culture. "Marxism and the National Question," (1912). Actually, Stalin's definition became the standard Marxist-Leninist analysis, and was embraced by Communists and Revolutionary Nationalists the world over. In 1913 Comrade V.I. Lenin wrote that Stalin's work on the national question should be given "prime place" in revolutionary theoretical literature. Lenin, "The Program of the R.S.D.L.P.," (1913). And it was under Stalin's leadership that the International Communist Movement recognized and supported the right of New Afrikans to a national territory in the Southeast U.S.

[16] <http://rashidmod.com/?p=286>

[17] Kae Sera and E. Tani, *False Nationalism, False Internationalism: Class Contradictions In The Armed Struggle, Seeds Beneath the Snow* 1985.

[18] Atiba Shanna, "On What It Means to 'Re-Build'—Part Two: Re-Organization," *Vita Wa Watu: A New Afrikan Theoretical Journal*, Book 12 (April 1988), note 11.

[19] The full document can be read at <http://rashidmod.com/?p=2489>

[20] This article is posted on <http://rashidmod.com/?p=366>

[21] "The New Afrikan Black Panther Party-Prison Chapter: Our Line" is posted at <http://rashidmod.com/?p=286> ; "Don't Shank the Guards: Legal Recourse to Guards' Harassment, Brutality and Rape" is posted at <http://rashidmod.com/?p=453>

[22] <http://rashidmod.com/?p=2489>

[23] Our critics inform us that a Liberation Movement must advance by strategy. True indeed! But what they seem to overlook is the revolutionary Party is the source of the Movement's strategies. And furthermore, the defense of that leadership falls both to the People and the armed component of the Movement, which like the Party must be mass-based. We might also pull our critics coats to the historically proven reality that the old *foco* model has proven only to result in disaster, a lesson the Movement hasn't quite seemed to grasp nor to advance from... again because of the lack of a revolutionary vanguard organization to impart those lessons to it, and formulate more workable and effective strategies suited to the time.