



Laura Whitehorn: free!



geronimo jí Jaga (center): free!



Assata Shakur: free!

we can free our POLITICAL PRISONERS!

Sometimes the state seems all powerful. However, we should never lose sight of what we can win when we work together. The Puerto Rican people have freed two generations of political prisoners from U.S. prisons. In 1979, Irving Flores Rodríguez, Lolita Lebron, and Rafael Cancel-Miranda were freed after spending 25 years in prison for struggling to end U.S. colonial rule of Puerto Rico. In September 1999, eleven independentistas were freed after almost twenty years in prison. Today New Afrikan former political prisoner Assata Shakur lives freely in Cuba despite the efforts of the U.S. to have her killed or imprisoned. We can win! Join the struggle!

From the Palmer raids of the 1920s to HUAAC and the McCarthyism of the 1950s to the F.B.I.'s infamous counterintelligence offensive against the social movements of the 1960s and 1970s, the United States has used law enforcement as a weapon against political dissent. A good place to begin learning this history is with the books: "Agents of Repression: The FBI's Secret Wars Against the Black Panther Party and the American Indian Movement" and "The COINTELPRO Papers: Documents from the FBI's Secret Wars Against Domestic Dissent" both by Ward Churchill and James Vanderwall and published by South End Press. (www.southernendpress.org)



Jericho demonstration, Washington D.C., March 1998



Carmen Valentin: free!



Sundiata Acoli



Leonard Peltier



Sekou Odinga



Marilyn Buck



Mumia Abu-Jamal



Carlos Alberto Torres



Janine Africa

Political Prisoners in the United States?

The women and men pictured on this flyer are a few of the people imprisoned by the United States for political reasons. They are dedicated activists who have fought for justice, like American Indian Movement activist Leonard Peltier, Puerto Rican independentista Oscar Lopez-Rivera, former Black Panther and deathrow writer Mumia Abu-Jamal, and European American anti-racist and anti-imperialist activist Marilyn Buck.

They are incarcerated in U.S. federal and state prisons because of their political beliefs, their political work and organizational affiliations (such as membership in the Black Panther Party). They were arrested, tried in criminal courts, and incarcerated with exorbitant and punitive sentences, to punish them for their politics, not their actions. They have suffered human rights violations, and yet, they continue the struggle from within prison.

Many of them became activists in the 1960s and 1970s, when many Native people, Puerto Ricans, Mexicanos, and black people seeing themselves as colonized nations within the United States, took up the struggle for self-determination. Some political prisoners define themselves as prisoners of war in accordance with resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly and the

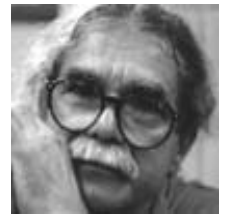
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Geneva Convention, which recognize that the crime is colonialism, not the struggle for liberation. Some of them are European Americans who were also inspired to join this struggle for justice.

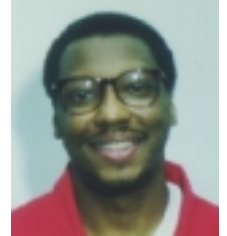
Many of them were targeted by illegal government counterintelligence initiatives, such as the infamous COINTELPRO, the FBI's classified offensive against liberation movements. COINTELPRO was discovered in 1971 when secret files were removed from an FBI office. Freedom of Information requests, lawsuits, and former agents' public confessions have exposed schemes to "misdirect, discredit, disrupt and otherwise neutralize" activists and organizations through infiltration, harassment, intimidation and arrest. Former assistant FBI Director William C. Sullivan told the Senate Select Committee: "This is a rough, tough, dirty business...No holds were barred." This "dirty business" included unauthorized wiretapping, warrantless break-ins and even, in the case of Black Panther Fred Hampton, assassination. FBI agents convicted for counterintelligence crimes were pardoned by President Reagan, but what of those they targeted?

We celebrate the release of Linda Evans in Jan. 2001, Black Panther Robert "King" Wilkerson in Feb. 2001, American Indian activist Standing Deer in Sept. 2001, and the eleven Puerto Rican independentistas in Sept. 1999.

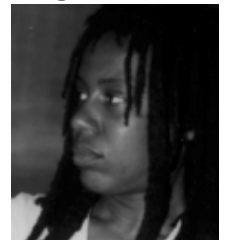
Yet we know that close to 100 women and men remain in U.S. prisons because they have dared to struggle for the liberation of oppressed peoples. When we support these political prisoners we defend our own right to struggle for justice.



Oscar Lopez-Rivera



Zolo Agona Azania



Debbie Africa



Jalil Abdul Muntaqim



Ray Luc Levasseur



Dr. Mutulu Shakur



David Gilbert