

Letters from Prison

Kuwasi Balagoon

1983-1985

Contents

The Trial	3
The Left	4
Anti-Imperialism, Nationhood and National Liberation	9
Anarchism	11
The Enemy	14
Prison Life	16

The Trial

April 12 1983

We've been dealing with the public movements so much with explaining our stance and perceptions that it has twisted me to the point where i've written very little suitable for publication for *Bulldozer*. Having to unify with M-L [Marxist-Leninist] and Nationalist and to defend the rights to nationalist aspirations have pulled me a bit out of line with my predilections...

December 9 1983

That bullshit about seventy five years wasn't designed to effect me, i had been sentenced to twenty five to thirty before. Dec 22, i'll be 37 years old. That sentence was to effect others to frighten others into giving up their lives altogether without fighting for real control of their lives. But if i worked thirty years at the post office and went bowling on Thursdays or doing anything but opposing the U.S. i'd be worse off, it would be like making a rope so my children and myself could be tied up.

Jan 25 1984

The federal trial ended with the five most politico people taking the most principled position getting convicted of conspiracy, two others convicted basically for not turning their backs on their friends once they were wanted (aiding and abetting) and two acquitted altogether, one which all they had was a traitor cocaine fiend's word on, the other who had two traitors words against him—and had fled to Belize (British Honduras) and extradited back. So people called it a victory—but i really don't think so, the government didn't get all they wanted but 4 out of 6? and the two most politico, getting the highest convictions?

The line i put forth is that the question of if it's a victory, lies with how many people are mobilized by it the same with our portion of it. i am glad for the people who are home now, but legally didn't that much happen, simple math. Politically i feel a bit disappointed, but at the same time i know that the weight of what went down and what we said, etc. should grow, people will get better at explaining it, that just our defiance in the face of what the state says is life, will have more impact as life progresses.

The Left

May 31 1983

We had to hassle with the *Guardian* to get one article countering some reactionary shit they were saying and the rest of the "left" has disassociated themselves from us like most of the left in Canada disassociates themselves from the Vancouver Five. We took Prisoner of War positions to forfeit the illusion of the state being able to judge enemies of the state. In the first place most of the left didn't even speak to it, the "establishment" press mentioned it first and a lot of the folks who protest U.S. involvement in Central America condemn us for, get this, shooting three working class people. You know who they are talking about, a sweat hog guard and two outright pigs.

Two papers especially, the *Village Voice* and the *Rolling Stone* are mistaken for left because they cover anti-nuke rallies and etc., had it in for us from the beginning. They would print accounts by police and creeps nowhere near the underground and at the same time refuse to print anything any of us had to say. It's still their policy. The *Voice* demanded the inside scoop on one person's sex life after they sent in a political article, the *Rolling Stone* wrote a series on the Weather people at about the same time the national news agencies were doing a number on us, dripping with sexual accounts, even a picture (a drawing).

May 31 1983

i think we tend to use the term "left" too loosely, everybody left of Reagan ain't left. Basic self-determination, the means of production being in the hands of the workers, should be the criteria of recognizing an ideology as left. Just because someone doesn't want some fool in Washington to blow the world to pieces doesn't make them left. Everybody who protests the curtailing of civil liberties that effect them, ain't left. And we make a mistake when we assume that they are, and they let us know we made mistakes when the basic issues arise.

May 31 1983

When a gay group protests lack of police protection, by making an alliance with police to form a gay task force, they ain't making a stand against the system they are joining it. Putting more power in the hands of those who attack them for being what they are in the first place. Those women's organizations with members with underpaid Black, Puerto Rican and Mexican maids, who decided to vote differently when the Equal Rights Amendment was defeated, can't be called Left, just as Blacks mobilizing to field a presidential candidate aren't left. Left is the land and means of production in the hands of the masses and Right is land and the means of production in the hands of a few pigs. As i am writing this it occurs to me that it sounds rigid, but dealing with land and the means of production in a different manner calls for a different system. This is not to say that we should sabotage anti-nuke... organizations that call themselves "left"... but we should keep the basics constantly in debates and we should establish the working definition.

Xmas Night, 1983?

The point is that there are only a few people in the “left” about armed struggle and self-determination, so although i personally think they are ideological imperialist, i will work with them as i do with nationalist, even though they are hierarchical and righteous Muslims even though i am anti-religion. i think it’s OK as long as you don’t get lost in the sauce, so to speak—that is abandon anarchist principles and the objective of building anarchist organizations.

Xmas Night, 1983?

It’s a very dangerous period we have been going through, the state is quickly consolidating fascism on the one hand and on the other hand there’s no mass movement. All kinds of laws are being passed with no debate, and people are looking to Jesse Jackson to change the focus of things, and not only is he electoral (which goes without saying) but he’s reactionary. He stands up in front of rallies and says things like “if we (got that we, that tells you he’s an uncle tom right away) can’t have enough marines in Lebanon to do the job, we should bring the americans home. Bring our boys back.” Well, if we have any boys in the Marines then obviously our boys have gone astray. What in the fuck are they doing over there in the first place? Why are there so many ads in Black magazines and in the commercials at basketball and football games and boxing matches with Blacks and the phrase “Be all that you can be” for the U.S. Armed Forces? There’s nobody Black addressing that.

Xmas Night, 1983?

Not since the Western Federation of Miners and the Wobblies in the 30’s, have workers been struggling for actual control and in fact ownership, but in the past couple of years Greyhound Bus Company, National Baseball League and some other unions have been kicking it around. At the same time all the public movements—since they are too elitist to even want to organize the working class and they fear them like the plague because the public movements are largely petty bourgeois, college students, white collar workers, etc.—have been debating each other in a vacuum, instead of really going out to work.

Xmas Night, 1983?

After that ass-kicking in Southeast Asia you can bet your life they went through a lot of mass psychological preparation before going to Lebanon, or invading Grenada, but their calculations proved true. There has been no real response from the black colony here—and culturally and historically the Grenadians are so similar to us that it’s incredible. They’ve been able to do all of this because there’s been no real mass movement and so many outright reactionaries like Jackson, who has the blessings of all the egghead, pencilneck, armchair Marxist and black cop-out artist posing as progressive. The only high points occur when the United Freedom Front or United Fighting Group or FALN strikes, which at least has been happening fairly consistently.

Jan 22 1984

It’s a small circle of revolutionaries in this hemisphere or in the Northern half of it, we can’t just deal within the same small circle, at some point new recruits must be won over, youth must be ignited: all the rallies have got basically the same people showing year after year. i ask do these activists talk to people outside the movement, obviously they don’t talk to people about the movement—we got to build a movement of activists who... address people

who are already committed as well as people who are into other things. “The revolutionary war is a war of the masses: it can be waged only by mobilizing the masses and relying on them.”

Jan 25 1984

[...] the sad thing is those white M-Ls who are really few in number—when it comes to supporting armed struggle, have no foothold in the white working class, and being mostly of a petty bourgeois background not only don't know where to begin but are contemptuous of the working class—even though the petty bourgeoisie as a class is at least as reactionary. Plus they are just beginning to be clear as to the fact that New Afrikans are indeed colonized and what that means and just beginning to accept their role in the struggle to initiate the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of a dictatorship of the proletariat—they ain't really Marxist and morality has been their line rather than the nuts and bolts of what is really going on. That in itself wouldn't be so bad but the fact is the Nationalist on this coast, where the [Brink's] trial actually took place, simply refuses to organize in the black community, no survival programs which New Afrikans need, no challenging the neocolonial Uncle Toms, like Jackson-Washington, etc., no showing up at police brutality hearings to declare that the issue is not a few mad dog cowboy cops, but a mad dog cowboy empire, no going to the New Afrikan colonies at all. To them, it is enough to tell people what is happening with us, which is ridiculous when people are starving, freezing and getting shot themselves, but they believe in magic words.

May 2 1984

There's a lot of Islamic influences in our movement now—there always have been—but now more than ever. i am flooded with Islamic propaganda through the mails that i pass on to Muslims, and at the same time i am a bit shook up about it, but rather than counter this, i intend to cooperate when it's principled, continue to argue when points of difference arise and busy myself with what i am up to my neck with and let the people decide.

Jan 9 1985

i hope this finds you in the best of health and spirits as it leaves me feeling OK, considering everything. At least except for the last round of busts nothing of consequence has happened and at the same time there's been a lot of busts. Supposedly support is growing, people from other movements have been shook up by the indictments for thought crime and there has certainly been enough grand jury subpoenas to constitute a witch hunt (28 this far to my count) and the black colony is stirring behind it, but i don't know what the movement is doing inside the colony. i've heard they have vowed to do more grassroots organizing and i hope so because people are upset about the pigs who've really been getting away with the grossest murders as well. In one case they tortured a guy to death for allegedly writing on the subway walls and in another they shot a sixty year old woman while evicting her. So any retaliation action should have the nod.

Jan 9 1985

[T]he part of the “left” that has no interest in what is happening to prisoners and prisoners of war, is not left. If the difference is that we believe in the decentralization of wealth, the redistribution of land and armed struggle—and those of the right believe in amassing more wealth, building empire and repression—then these are the lines by which we should

define “left” and “right”. We can’t go by other people’s definitions—even their definitions of themselves—suppose Rev Sun Myung Moon declares he’s left, against the establishment and has been victimized by racism. The left here is small in proportion to the population no matter how you define it—but when you talk about redistribution, freeing the colonies, etc. it’s micro and when you talk doing and actually do something—people look at you as if you’re from Mars—RARE SPECIES. You put that same measure to Canada, I’d bet it’s micro too. So if we limit our propaganda to people in the left and *Bulldozer* reaches a small percent of that, people who are down already—Martians.

Revolution

May 31 1983

When a principled conscientious public movement is developed there’s no problem finding soldiers, and in terms of being as best as you can, figure what the revolution needs: there’s a lot you can do that can’t be taken for granted. The speech you make at the rally would be impossible to give if you were underground and you would have to hope that someone else would. All of us who agree would have to hope also. Meanwhile by the time the public movement gets built to the point where you know those things will be said, and there’s comrades out organizing people to take their lives into their own hands, there will be an army to play its historic role.

i never was happy with the amount of input i could contribute when i was in the underground. There’s little chance to debate with people doing aboveground organizing, and if you don’t agree with how they are going about things there’s not much you can do. That problem is not unavoidable, but it is a problem.

May 2 1984

And although there’s been a lot of bombings, i think that the hierarchy embedded in the consciousness of the movement prevents the type of attacks we used to stage with the sole purpose of punishing pigs with death. There’s not enough real [punishment] for them kind—translated into a body count, that registers in the population—that these creatures can indeed be dealt with, and the way i see it retaliation will have to be common place for a long time before people are really prepared to support revolution. With all kinds of things happening to revolutionaries and people who just mind their own business and nothing happening to the pigs and very little happening to turds like [Samuel] Brown—just doesn’t seem to be a balanced and attractive occupation.

July 28 1984

Reaction has been moving on a grassroots level uncontested. Here the Klan says that illegal aliens take jobs, while Ford, IBM and so many other corporations move plants to South Africa, England, Korea, etc. There’s plants operating in Mexico where U.S. corporations ship parts to be assembled and shipped back to the U.S.—why don’t the corporations get blamed for stealing jobs? What’s the difference, except that the corporations pocket the difference in wages? The Klan, Nazis, etc. spread their crap uncontested as champions of the white workers, when it’s clear that they are dupes of the ruling class. If we really adopt the preamble to the wobblies’ constitution, that the working class and the ruling class have absolutely no common interest, we will beat them on the ground level, we will out-organize them—and as they are tools of the empire, we will begin to be out-organizing the empire.

Once the fragments of the working class are united in hostilities against reaction instead of each other—the tide will begin to shift.

An anarchist underground will develop in turn, with the only connection to the above-ground being anarchist ideology which is enough. The relatively simple tasks the pigs have now of peeking into the visible and exposed sections of the movement, to aim their gadgetry for suspects, will be fruitless, with really widespread mass mobilizations. With a federated army of collectives, striking at whatever is opportune in the area of monopoly capital, imperialism and repression, we will be settled down in a long protracted people's war, that can't be nipped at the bud, until the governments simply cannot exist and authority and economies collapse. To of course be replaced by one built around collectives, rather than capitalism or state capitalism. All railroads, ship lines, airlines, phone companies, oil, gas and electric companies will be socialized, all trucking will be put into the collective ownership of drivers, all overseas possessions left to sink, all textile mills collectivized, all military industries and arms manufacturers taken over by militias. A people's referendum is set for Native, New Afrikan, Chicano and Puerto Rican nationals in the mainland, to decide on autonomy with 1.7 acres set aside in a common area for all that vote for Nationhood. As well as a referendum for Whites who wish to live separately. The chemical companies, banks, etc. and other capitalist residue being the province of the will of the people who live in certain areas.

If we don't already have an established territory and perhaps if we do, we set another people's referendum for those of us who want no government. A federation of collectives would conduct the referendum, the local militias would mop up the reactionary residue. With no public capital in private hands there wouldn't be any ruling class to suppress in the anarchist areas, where people choose state socialism, there would be no interference from us. Just what i envision, but the idea of doing away with money—just arranging things so that everyone who wants gets necessities, food, clothing, housing, education—knocks me out. If we needed a transitional period we determine that reefer is currency...

Anti-Imperialism, Nationhood and National Liberation

May 2 1984

The Native American struggle is against imperialist occupation. Because the present movement doesn't know how to deal with this doesn't make it any less so. That's just a shortcoming of the movement, but a second's thought would have to tell us that Native Americans were indeed the first victims of imperialism in this hemisphere and if we are to be anarchist in the here and now and thus be anti-imperialist as one cannot be an anarchist and not be against imperialism, we got to accept the Native struggle as our own. If the greeds had not put the Natives in their position, none of us would be in the position we are in.

May 2 1984

It's clear to anyone that Native peoples are repressed more so than anyone else, that genocide has been practiced against them more so than any people who still exist as a people. Well that means we got to defend them—fight alongside of them just like they fought alongside of the slaves. People shouldn't be able to forget for a moment that this land was under the guardianship of Native Americans for centuries before anyone else arrived. Anyway the way to start is by recognizing if you're supporting land and liberation for Native Americans, you're anti-imperialist and should be in a movement that recognizes and includes that and if there's no movement—well, you got to build one.

May 2 1984

[T]o me it's the ultimate meddling... for a white person supposedly for the revolution to oppose tendencies for third world people confined to various reservations in the present U.S. It seems rather clear to me how our history here would kind of inhibit us from wanting to continue to be outnumbered and surrounded by whites.

July 28 1984

This is the place to begin erasing borders, not only because the U.S. uses up 40% of the world's resources and the bottom fifty percent of the population controls only eight point two percent of the economy (nationally) but on top of it five percent of the population controls seventy percent of the land. Peoples from the South whose land and resources have gone into this empire are coming to get it and are entitled to it just as the West Indians and East Indians are entitled to the portions of the British Empire they were forced to donate as colonial subjects. Anti-Imperialist struggle grows out of anti-capitalist (class struggle) just as imperialism is a development of capitalism.

Jan 9 1985

Right now i am into a slight struggle, with a comrade who put forth the proposition of whites supporting national liberation as i (especially after reading *Mythology of the White Proletariat*) believe in parallel development, complete movements engaged in national liberation and class struggle Civil War inside the oppressor nations. The fact that this is now only beginning to happen, that whites are striking blows at the colonial apparatus is one thing—but colonial subjects should be free to attack monopoly capital [...] phone companies rip everyone off, but these policies in the black community are really different, when i lived in a predominantly white neighborhood i never was pressured to pay like friends living in the colonies and whereas the defense industrial complex may rip everyone in the confines, it murders us. i've read the *Mythology of the White Proletariat* and know what i would write in a book review now... it's enlightening, but i would hope that it wasn't used as an excuse by a lot of whites to not attempt to organize inside the oppressor nation...

Anarchism

April 12 1983

i hope this letter finds you in good health and high spirits as it leaves me none of the worst for wear and really happy to hear from you as *Bulldozer* is my favorite political publication. i really hope we can work well together and promise to make a sustained effort in keeping the lines out and open and working as although i share a lot of feelings and principles with the Nationalist and Anti-Imperialist movements i am an Anarchist and feel rather isolated ideologically and low for not pushing my politics as much as i should. This has mostly been due to a lack of connection with the anarchist movement due again for my being on the lamb and working with who i could readily see were opposing the state.

Xmas Night, 1983?

i think that throughout this hemisphere we should unite with real get down anarchists first and then others, and recognize that the so-called left doesn't really represent a lot of people. The politics of the so-called left hasn't reached a lot of people and their elitist airs are actually turn offs—there's not much mention of "serving the people". If we start putting things together that actually do serve people the day when Anarchy is seen as a viable way of life rather than chaos will not be far away, because most people when they stop and think of it have to admit that the empire sucks.

Jan 22 1984

Tonight i am up eating peanut butter sandwiches, just putting the stale bread over steaming water, when for years i automatically threw it out and fed it to the birds (this being one of the few times the birds might be better off for it). i think that waste and bourgeois thinking really affects how we operate, both in terms of perceiving strong points and weak points and effectiveness, when it comes to acting after we make our observations. In Viet Nam, G.I.s had to burn, bury and grind the stuff they sent to the dumps, because the Cong would use the tin cans, wire, bottles and whatever else against them. They can't do that here because they're always encouraging people to consume more and make more waste.

On the other end i think that making the most of everything is exemplified pretty well by working in a collective setting and living in a co-op, and it seems like it would be an easy thing to found an anarchist food co-op somewhere in Toronto. As time goes on Anti-Imperialist Anarchism will prove to be the only anarchism, since others will need to make alterations. We should push the idea of collectives and federations while continuing to support anti-imperialist struggle with the aim of not merely building a real movement that really supports armed struggle, but an actual infrastructure.

Jan 22 1984

[T]he idea of collectives was alien to the Panther Party. We had different survival programs and people were involved to be part of them, to donate time, afford to git things/stuff

[from] businesses operating inside the community, to use the space of institutions such as churches. But the Party being a hierarchy simply could not simply initiate alternatives—it felt it had to lead them—it was to be in its mind and words not just the leading party but the sole representative of the Black colony. So there was not any organized effort to take space in the colony and to actually produce (only to distribute) or to provide transport or a militia. It was miles away from all of that because it was a hierarchy. To fully take on the power structure in a given area, you got to not only provide alternatives, but institutions that render the old ones useless. Just completely take their place, that provide the [goods] itself so it's not a question of a merchant giving material aide to our operation or being boycotted, but a mechanism where one by one, the outlets become collective, because the economy evolves to the point where the corporate fingers just cannot pull the strings. You don't call a checker cab when an outlaw gypsy cab service will take you where you want to go cheaper, you don't shop at Safeway if you can buy what you want cheaper at a co-op. People are putting all kinds of co-ops together—the trick is to form a federation that takes care of the needs of its members and invites more. That teaches self-reliance and demonstrates it. That supports and practices Anti-Imperialism and demonstrates that you don't have to be a party to it and that Imperialism is not necessary because capitalism is not necessary, rather than necessary evils they are just evils. This sounds like preaching, but without examples how would you expect it to sound.

Jan 25 1984

Why ain't an Anti-Imperialist Anarchist organization—that's pro-armed struggle + self-determination for oppressed nations + socialism and liberty and complete egalitarianism been formed? With collectives in areas wherever there's enough individuals to put one together and an International Hemispheric program? A "Committee to Promote Anarchy". That way at least people who think similar to us would at least have a unified voice inside and outside the prisons. The Network for all its looseness does cover a lot of territory—rather than debut with the anarchist who ain't about what we are about or compromise with M-Ls and Nationalist, we should start building something to take directly to the masses. That doesn't mean everybody who thinks similar to us, isolating themselves, the way i am, not dealing with M-Ls, Nationalist and Anarchist or even trying to ignite reformist—but it means putting something of our own on the ground.

May 2 1984

What's as bad is that public movements can't grow into mass movements, not because of the apathy that they claim everyone else has but because of a fantastic elitism. If they organize a mass movement, they'll lose their identities. They won't be so much smarter than the people they're supposed to be organizing and providing models for. Of course there's other real reasons too, the almighty media and state floods peoples minds with the centuries of chauvinism and diversions coupled with an economy that makes rent too much to think about. But the main thing that effects people is that they know no other way and have no access to a living breathing ideology or a movement that does things differently. But there's no public movement that recognizes this, and i think that that is partly because the next step would be doing things differently... at the same time what you do shapes how you think, so it's a vicious cycle.

Anarchy is the ideal way to break out of it, but since it's been defined as chaos, by every other proponent of every other ideology on one hand, and defined by too many people who define themselves as anarchist as "whatever", it is simply not being presented for people's inspection. A collective is not only (for lack of a better word) a propaganda organ because its members may say or print certain things, it's a propaganda unit [...] If a collective chooses to recycle and accumulate capital for a co-op of sorts, people will see people working together [...] they will see a process that can be duplicated. [...] With eggheads sitting around spinning yarns and isms you have something that can be duplicated, but for what? The masses are smart not to get involved in any more bullshit.

July 28 1984

The crazy thing is that there are no anti-imperialist organizations with a class analysis or program. Of the "communist" who speak of (their only support of) strikes, none of them really make a stand for self-determination of oppressed and super-exploited colonies, of the anti-imperialist organizations who do support self-determination, there are none that explain the exploitation of the working class in terms of its relation to imperialism.

If an anti-imperialist anarchist organization establishes itself and calls for an end to imperialism abroad and within the borders of this hemisphere and supports self-determination for oppressed nations and supports the working class struggle against the same monopoly capitalists who reap the lion's share of super-profits from the colonies, it will be the only organization with a complete ideology. If this same organization begins modest programs in the most depressed areas, centered around survival, turning waste into capital, taking over spaces and occupying them for the good of the community, offering services denied to the communities like food co-ops, clothing exchanges and book exchanges and then extended this into taxis and a militia to deal with the Klan and other predators, but on top of this supports auto workers, hospital workers, etc. when they are on strike, etc. and reports and explains why, we will soon have an international community-based organization that people will support. They will not only buy a paper that could expand into an international paper with its own distribution system, but cultural activities, because they will see what's happening with their support and more importantly they will have access to a new way of living.

July 28 1984

Maybe i've been sitting around thinking of the same shit too long, but it seems to me that Anarchy would have to be anti-imperialist, that there's no other ideology that refuses to recognize borders. Every communist regime has degenerated into a narrow nationalist state capitalism, almost as if and i tend to think that they couldn't help it. Stalin might have been a bastard but he wasn't corrupt, or Mao for that matter, the masses were certainly willing to make sacrifices, but what do we have now, the very first communist state invading another country "to protect its borders," and the second making a treaty with the U.S.

The Enemy

August 18th 1983

... a physical propaganda offensive has been escalated against supporters and other aboveground legal people. About a month ago two sisters and three children, one only two years old, came to visit. At first the cops gave them a run around about how they dressed, which was bullshit and then they gave them a run around about ID. Their ID works out OK when they visit other jails, but after being held up and insulted by pigs with no name tags or badge numbers, they were told to leave. When they went back to their car and drove off they were stopped by a pig who went through their papers and mumbled some sap rap and let them go. This made them really paranoid, and they drove way under the speed limit which saved their lives, because a wheel started to wobble. Once they wobbled into a gas station and had it checked out they discovered that the bolts between the wheel and the axle had been loosened. Had they driven on the highway at 55 miles an hour they would have had an accident and with five people in the car, three of them children, there's no telling how bad it would have been. One accident occurred like that after the John Brown conference in Chicago last year and another at a conference in Texas a bit before that, you would think by now people would automatically check wheels. About two weeks after that one of the sisters, _____, after going to court, where her old man is on trial, went shopping and then caught a subway not far from her home, when she got off and decided to catch a bus to get closer, two white guys stepped in and asked her for directions. When she took her attention off them, one of them started punching her while the other acted as a lookout. The one punching her knocked her down, continued to punch her, took her pocket book with rent and bill money, and then kept on punching her in the face, while sitting on her. Just before he stopped and left, he said, "Your husband can't help you now." There's been the usual break-ins and women running into guys they find out later are cops. Right-wing underground harassment (so far it seems) groups have been stepping up their activities. So that's the general tone of things.

Xmas Night, 1983?

There's a conservative wave sweeping the U.S., lots of mob attacks on Third World people, lots of police killings, one cracker in Detroit got two years probation because he beat a Chinese guy to death and the judge said the punishment should "fit the criminal, not the crime". Vietnamese in Boston and Texas are being attacked at random. In Western Massachusetts the Feds were called in to investigate attacks on women, and started investigating the women's links with "terrorists", at the same time there's been 30 fires in a women's dorm and they've arrested a Black woman who lived there and kicked her out of the school, a white guy who is charged with rape still goes. The local pigs have raided the projects (public housing) with slug hammers twice under different pretences that didn't pan

out, the feds did security for the United Technologies Corporation, which has been having a secret conference there—as if those turds can't afford to hire Pinkerton. And ROTC, the young Republicans, S.H.U.N. (Stop Homosexual Unity Now) and every other type of Nazi is running rabid and that's just one town. And as i said there's a wave of conservatism.

Xmas Night, 1983?

i think that you got to stop thinking in terms of the U.S. and Canada as separate and literally in terms of the hemisphere as far as organization goes—which the Network is definitely right in doing—and i think politically we should attack the whole of imperialism, that is not only dealing with a particular government force that's involved in, say El Salvador, but any ruling class power involved in Imperialism. This means not only noting South African involvement with IBM and ITT's involvement in Chile, but every link in the Fortune 500.

May 2 1984

Here, some new laws have been passed that make support for “terrorists” a crime, and to change the feds into a more clearly military outfit. There was an even more outrageous murder in NYC, a brother was beaten to death, supposedly for putting graffiti on a subway car. Not a murder where a guy gets hit on top the head one too many times and dies, but torture and overkill. There's been forty blacks murdered this year and a general upswing throughout the country. No retaliation, though, no pigs caught up and filled full of holes.

July 28 1984

i think that we simply have to be clear about the fact that the media is part of the state's arsenal, they never contradict the state. They universally and totally miss the point of the matters that pertain to the opposition of the state. For instance the Watergate shit that happened here a few years ago made the press look good but there was never any print about all the lawyers' offices that were broken into, when left-wing clients were involved. They never talk about the things that DINA or Alpha 66 has gotten away with, they covered our case without mentioning colonialism one time even though our position was/is that New Afrikans are colonized and have a right to defend against colonial oppression. [Associated Press] quoted a statement by me, after i handed it to them, as i did every paper that covered the trial, but nobody thought it newsworthy to make a clear statement about our position. So it's not just a thing about a press ban on the proceedings involving the Armenians. The press knows their job and they know it's not to do our propaganda for us, the *New York Times* couldn't address U.S. corruption in Quebec, when the separatist was clearly challenging the ruling class of the entire hemisphere! A guy with a trench coat doesn't meet with all the reporters overnight, to tell them what to write or their editors what to print. These caffeine crazed patriots censor themselves.

Prison Life

August 18th 1983

Meanwhile i am freer to write and will be writing this week for sure—the only thing that will hold me up is a lack of stamps if i can't work out some kind of deal with the commissary guy tomorrow. The food is so bad here that when the order blanks come around i don't think of anything besides getting enough to eat. However my discipline shall improve.

December 9 1983

As to the seventy five years i am not really worried, not only because i am in the habit of not completing sentences or waiting on parole or any of that nonsense but also because the state simply isn't going to last seventy five or even fifty years. If there's not a revolution in thirty years—in which case i really don't care to live anyways, or an atomic war, the environment will for all practical purposes resemble the aftermath of an atomic war. The jerks in charge now are not only committing genocide but destroying the biosphere.

Xmas Night, 1983?

There's nothing to be amazed of as far as continuing to struggle in jail, what else can you do? The struggle continues and if you don't, if you give up, you die, you are damned, because it takes effort just to be in contact and when they put you in isolation, fuck with your mail, etc. you have all the proof you need that whatever it was you did, it was of consequence. "As long as you fight, the decision is still up in the air," Ruchell Magee. They only win when we are convinced to let them have their way.

Xmas Night, 1983?

[W]hereas i would be up writing at night i am going to the movies, they had "Flashdance" and "Raiders of the Lost Ark", i've been telling myself that it's impossible to know whats been effecting the masses if you don't check out what they have—nothing superfragalistic has been revealed to me—but i figure as long as i ain't betting football games or some nonsense like that a little diversion doesn't hurt.

Jan 22 1984

Well due to the storm we've been locked in for two days, which in and of itself wouldn't be such a big deal but i am locked beside one motherfucker who plays oldies twenty four/seven and on the other side is a Cuban who Castro kicked out of the country for singing. He starts right after breakfast most mornings and continues each time he comes back to the cell, until he falls out sometime around eleven, so last night i kept him up a bit longer with some of my singing.

July 28 1984

i've meant to write you for a long time but i guess a combination of factors have slowed me down in correspondence, for one thing the pace of writing two or three letters a night and feeling like i've been sentenced to writing, kinda worn me out. Then of course, i am still

going to trial. Since eighty two there's been some kind of bullshit with legality. i am tired of it, but must pay attention to what's happening in court, cause no matter what we must preserve the position that the state simply has no right to try us. At the same time these bastards got over sixty suspects in this case, including every busted B.L.A. member, a statement by a traitor that they want to act as if they never had and a hundred thousand dollar reward. It's outright disgusting how people were turning in ex-employees, drinking partners and etc. So it's an ideal opportunity to show in detail how the pigs are trying to change New Afrikan culture into a snitch culture, ready to support fascism.

But every time i go to court i really fall behind in letters, last time they moved me six times in six days, cuffed and shackled, it was impossible to git visits because i was never at a jail during a time when visiting was allowed, a third to half of the time in bull pens or in a van, the few letters i did write are just getting where they were addressed. Added to the court time is the trip we go through once we return. It's a week before you git any addresses or even legal papers, another week confined to the cell, last time i went to the hole for a day, because there wasn't any empty cells and for some reason i always git the same cell, which isn't for anyone else, and it's pretty possible that the whole thing will be happening again before the 31st. So in letters i'll be even further behind.

July 28 1984

Over the weekend a pig shot a brother down in the yard. The official version is that he was swinging a baseball bat at another prisoner and some pigs and to protect lives the pig in the tower had to shoot. Of course that's bullshit, there was no one close to the guy when he got shot, he had gotten stabbed just before and the pigs broke camp. Prisoners had to pick him up and carry him to the door and demand he receive medical care for the M15 wound, which you know is difficult because the bullet tumbles to make wounds large and break bones, to make more missiles inside the body to penetrate more organs. Anyway after the shooting, a hundred and eighty men refused to lock in—you got to be literally mad to see someone shot and risk your lives just to make a point. Meanwhile the pigs have everyone who witnessed the crap first hand locked down...

Nov 29 1985

Friday they told me to go back to the block (and i immediately thought transfer) when i got back to my block they said i was to be kept locked, when i said "for what?" they said "investigation," then within a half hour or so, this pig comes to tell me i am being transferred. Then i was brought here, kept in lockup until yesterday at noon and released into population. But that has just meant another day with the same underwear, only one blanket and asking over and over about my stuff. i got a chance to talk to one of my comrades personally, and in the process of doing some chin ups some turkey lifted my coat, so i couldn't go out tonight and am basically in limbo. Tomorrow night there's no yard or opportunity to use the phones in the yard. So basically i'll be stuck with whatever i have after wading through bullshit in broad daylight. i can't remember a similar situation but it kinda feels like sitting around a dusty empty apartment waiting for the landlord to put the heat on—walkin' to the pay phone never catchin' him, looking forward to next to nothing.

find each other.



edist.ro

anti-copyright
creative commons zero (cc-0)
do whatever you want

Kuwasi Balagoon
Letters from Prison
1983-1985

A Soldier's Story: Writings by a Revolutionary New Afrikan Anarchist (Montréal:
Kersplebedeb, 2003; pages 101-125)

lib.edist.ro