

# Let Your Motto Be Resistance

A Handbook on Organizing New Afrikan and Oppressed Communities for  
Self-Defense

Malcolm X Grassroots Movement



March 2013

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# **General Text**

# The Crisis We Face

## Organizing

### Short Definition

Organizing is the process of uniting people around a common set of interests and beliefs, and building the structures they need to carry out democratically agreed upon strategies and programs of action to exercise their power to solve social issues or address their material needs.

New Afrikan people<sup>1</sup> are in a heightened state of crisis. Since being brought to the shores of North America as captives from European wars of aggression we have constantly battled one crisis after another. However, there are times that are more critical and intense than others. We are presently living through one of these super-critical periods.

Since the 1980's and the start of the rollback of the social and material gains won by our people in the 1950's and 60's, New Afrikans have been confronted with the crisis of a slow, but calculated, genocide. After the urban rebellions of the 1960's capital (mainly multi-national corporations) contributed to this genocidal assault by introducing more computers and robots into the productive process and moving more and more of their factories overseas to eliminate the need for New Afrikan workers.<sup>2</sup> These moves displaced large sectors of the New Afrikan working class and turned many of our people into a disposable surplus population. To survive, large sectors of the New Afrikan working class were forced to engage the underground economy (drug dealing, hustling, prostitution, gambling, fencing, bartering, etc.) in the 1980's and 90's.<sup>3</sup> The government's strategy to deal with the problem of managing this growing population surplus was to criminalize more aspects of the underground economy, militarize domestic law enforcement,

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<sup>1</sup> A New Afrikan is a person of Afrikan descent, particularly those historically enslaved and colonized in the Southeastern portion of the North American continent, that presently live under the colonial subjugation of the United States government. New Afrikan is the connotation of the national identity of this Afrikan people that recognizes our political aspirations for self-determination, national independence, and sovereignty.

<sup>2</sup> See "Persistent Inequalities: Globalization and the Economic Status of African Americans," by Clarence Lusane at [http://racism.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=1145:economic06-2&catid=50&Itemid=173](http://racism.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1145:economic06-2&catid=50&Itemid=173) and "Race, Crime, and the Pool of Surplus Criminality: Or Why the War on Drugs was a War on Blacks," by Kenneth B. Nunn at <http://scholarship.law.ufl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1178&context=facultypub>.

<sup>3</sup> See "The Underground Economy of the Urban Poor," interview with Sudhir Venkatesh at <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=6195673>, "Hiding in the Shadows: The Growth of the Underground Economy," by Friedrich Schneider and Dominik Enst at <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/issues/issues30/index.htm>, and "Inside the Shadow Economy: A Growing UnderworldBazaar", by Andrew Leonard at <http://newamericamedia.org/2011/09/inside-the-shadow-economy-a-growing-underworld-bazaar.php>

limit reproductive rights and warehouse increasing numbers of the disposable sectors of the working class in prisons.<sup>4</sup>

Since the financial and economic collapse of 2008 and the reaction of sectors of the white settler population to the 2008 presidential election, the level of these genocidal assaults has intensified. We have been hunted and killed in cold blood by the US government in increasing numbers and herded into prisons like cattle in record numbers.<sup>5</sup> We are confronting the cold reality of a jobless future and permanent economic exclusion being imposed upon us by the forces of white supremacy, capitalism and imperialism and our youth are fighting among themselves and with the internalization of hopelessness with deadly consequence not seen since the late 1980's and early 90's during the height of the "crack wars."

Why we face genocide now:

- **The rapidly changing demographics of the US continental empire.** For the first time since the 1700's, within the next 15 to 20 years, the white settlers of North America will be out-numbered by non-whites.<sup>6</sup> A significant portion of white people are not only concerned about becoming a minority, they are outright scared. These fears stimulate different reactions, one of which is increased hostility to non-whites and targeted violence directed at New Afrikans and other colonized and oppressed people.
- **The militarization of society.** The US government started militarizing its domestic law enforcement agencies in the 1960's in response to the Black Liberation Movement. This escalation of repression expanded with the so-called "wars on drugs" and "gangs." This internal militarization expanded exponentially after the events of September 11, 2001. Since then the national security apparatus has grown unchecked and racial profiling has become accepted doctrine and practice targeting not only New Afrikans, but also Latinos, Arabs, South East Asians, and Muslims. These developments have fostered a "seek and destroy" mentality amongst the police and various other law enforcement agencies. The militarization of law enforcement has expanded to the rest of society so we find armed guards in schools and hospitals and transportation centers. Instead of seeking humane social solutions to social problems, the government and communities rely on the military and police.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> See "Incarceration rate for African Americans now 6 times the national average," see Russia Times at <http://rt.com/usa/incarceration-african-black-prison-606/>, "Genocide Against the Black Nation" by Mutulu Shakur, et al, in *Schooling the Generations in the Politics of Prison*, "The Third World at Home: Political Prisons and Prisoners in the United States," by Ward Churchill in *Cages of Steel: The Politics of Imprisonment in the United States*, and "Deadly Symbiosis: Rethinking race and imprisonment in 21st century America," by Loic Wacquant at <http://bostonreview.net/BR27.2/wacquant.html>.

<sup>5</sup> See "Report on the Extrajudicial Killing of 120 Black People," by Kali Akuno and Arlene Eisen at <http://mxgm.org/report-on-the-extrajudicial-killings-of-120-black-people/>.

<sup>6</sup> See "The End of White America?," by Hua Hsu at <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2009/01/the-end-of-the-last-white-election/>," by Mike Davis at <http://newleftreview.org/II/79/mike-davis-the-last-white-election>, "Civil War Over Gun Rights? Sheriffs war Obama they'll die to protect second amendment," by Megan Greenlaw, and "Civil War: Obama denies states' petitions to secede from the Union," by Tea Party.org at <http://www.teaparty.org/civil-war-obama-denies-states-petitions-to-secede-from-union-18579/>.

<sup>7</sup> See "When the Police Go Military," by Al Baker at <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/12/04/sunday-review/have-american-police-gone-military.html>, "How the War on Terror has Militarized the Police," by Arthur Rizer and Joseph Hartman at <http://www.theatlantic.com/national/archive/2011/11/how-the-war-on-terror-has-militarized-the-police/24804/>, "The Militarization of Local Police," by Brad Lockwood at <http://www.forbes.com/sites/bradlockwood/2011/11/30/the-militarization-of-local-police/>, "How the Feds fueled the militarization of the Police," by Justice Elliott at

- **Downsizing from the financial and economic crisis.** One of the major outcomes of the economic crisis is the implementation of severe austerity and the downsizing of social services and many police forces throughout the empire. Austerity measures place a greater strain on the police, as they have to do more with less to protect the have's from the have not's. These strains generate a siege mentality within law enforcement seeking to justify its funding and existence by engaging in more extreme patrol and control tactics in oppressed communities.<sup>8</sup>
- **The promotion of reactionary and irrational politics.** Conservative political forces, particularly forces like the Tea Party and the Religious Right, have been escalating the promotion of their hostile and increasingly openly racist propaganda. This is creating an atmosphere of pervasive racial hostility and resentment throughout the empire.<sup>9</sup>
- **Racial resentment and revenge.** Perhaps the greatest expressions of racial hostility are the countless attacks against US President Barack Obama as a symbol of Black progress and equality. Many forces associated with the military and the police throughout the country have been openly saying that they refuse to follow the orders of Obama's Justice Department and that they will take extreme measures to prevent their privileges as whites from being further eroded. Add this to the narrative that New Afrikans and Latinos are being awarded unjust privileges thru "affirmative action," are stealing decent jobs, and bankrupting the country with "special entitlement" programs, and it is clear that there is a climate of racial hostility the likes of which hasn't been seen expressed this openly since the late 1970's and early 80's.<sup>10</sup>
- **The repression and criminalization of dissent.** In the wake of the various social eruptions against austerity like the Wisconsin workers fight back initiative and the Occupy Movement in 2011, the government responded by intensifying repression in 2012. It smashed the Occupy movements encampments throughout the empire, infiltrated it on a massive scale, intensified raids in immigrant communities, and escalated and intensified its "stop and frisk" and racial profiling operations and tactics in New Afrikan communities.<sup>11</sup>

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[http://www.salon.com/2011/12/24/how the feds fueled the militarization of police/](http://www.salon.com/2011/12/24/how_the_feds_fueled_the_militarization_of_police/), and "A decade after 9/11, Police Departments are increasingly militarized", by Radley Balko at [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/09/12/police-militarization-9-11-september-11\\_n\\_955508.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/09/12/police-militarization-9-11-september-11_n_955508.html).

<sup>8</sup> See "Cutbacks force police to curtail calls for some crimes," by Kevin Johnson at [http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/nation/2010-08-25-1Anresponsecops25\\_ST\\_N.htm](http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/nation/2010-08-25-1Anresponsecops25_ST_N.htm), and "The impact of the economic downturn on American police agencies," by the US Department of Justice Office of Community Oriented Policing Services at [http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/files/RIC/Publications/e101113406\\_Economic%20Impact.pdf](http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/files/RIC/Publications/e101113406_Economic%20Impact.pdf).

<sup>9</sup> See "Yup, the Tea Party's Racist Study Finds (But, its Not Alone)," by Seth Freed Wessler at [http://colorlines.com/archives/2010/10/the\\_tea\\_party\\_is\\_racist.html](http://colorlines.com/archives/2010/10/the_tea_party_is_racist.html), and "Tea Party Nationalism" by the Institute for Education and Research on Human Rights at <http://www.irehr.org/issue-areas/tea-party-nationalism>.

<sup>10</sup> See "The Persistence of Racial Resentment," by Thomas B. Edsall at <http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/02/06/the-persistence-of-racial-resentment/>.

<sup>11</sup> See "What the FBI's Occupy documents do-and don't — reveal," by Gavin A. Aronson at <http://www.motherjones.com/mojo/2013/01/occupy-fbi-documents-naomi-wolf>, "FBI surveillance of Occupy Wall Street detailed," by Jason Cherkis and Zach Carter at



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[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/01/05/fbi-occupy-wall-street\\_n\\_2410783.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/01/05/fbi-occupy-wall-street_n_2410783.html),  
“FBI investigated Occupy as possible terrorism threat, internal documents show,” by Alice Hines at  
[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/12/23/fbi-occupy-wall-street\\_n\\_2355883.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/12/23/fbi-occupy-wall-street_n_2355883.html), “*Is stop-and-frisk spreading to other cities?*,” by Cristina Costantini at [http://abcnews.go.com/ABC\\_Univision/bill-bratton-bring-stop-frisk-oakland/story?id=18314831](http://abcnews.go.com/ABC_Univision/bill-bratton-bring-stop-frisk-oakland/story?id=18314831), and “*Stop and Frisk may spread to other cities*,” by Jamar Hooks at  
<http://www.colorofchange.org/blog/2013/feb/7/stop-and-frisk-spreads/>.

# A Massive Movement to Fight Our Way Out of this Crisis

These and other factors have created a political and social environment extremely threatening to New Afrikan people, particularly to our youth. The only way we are going to defend ourselves against these genocidal challenges is to create a massive social movement. We need a movement that strategically takes on the systemic oppression and exploitation that prevent New Afrikans from exercising self-determination and human rights.

In effect, the only way we are going to end this crisis is to fight our way out of it. In order to fight effectively we have to organize ourselves on a higher level. One of the critical areas where we have to step up our organizing efforts to be qualitatively more effective is in the area of *self-defense*. We have to be clear that we cannot and should not count on our enemies — like the courts, and other forces of the US government or transnational corporations — to protect us. We have to protect ourselves.

The Malcolm X Grassroots Movement (MXGM) believes that an essential part of our movement for survival must be *Self-Defense Networks*.

We think there are two types of Networks that we have to build:

- **New Afrikan Self-Defense Networks**
- **Peoples' Self-Defense Networks**

**New Afrikan Self-Defense Networks** are alliances, coalitions, or united fronts of New Afrikan organizations whose purpose is to defend the New Afrikan community from external (the police, FBI, white terrorist organizations, etc.) and internal (agent infiltration, intra-communal violence, etc.) threats to its safety and security.

**People's Self-Defense Networks** are multi-national (or multi-ethnic and/or racial) alliances, coalitions, or united fronts whose purpose is to defend their communities against mutual enemies and threats and advance a common agenda based on shared interests, hopes, and aspirations.

The concrete information in this Handbook will help to organize Self-Defense Networks that have the capacity to challenge the containment strategies of the police and other government agencies and to transform our communities and the world by positively redirecting the political focus and energy of our youth.

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Any unarmed people are slaves, or subject to slavery at any given moment.

Huey P. Newton

# Real Organizing to meet Real Threats

Let's be clear about the real threats we face. This clarity will shape how we unite people into organizations capable of effective self-defense.

- *External Threats.* These are threats that emerge outside of the New Afrikan community by institutions and organizations designed to serve the interests of the US settler-colonial state, white supremacy, capitalism and imperialism. These institutions and organizations – namely government institutions like the police, sheriffs, FBI, Homeland Security, NSA, CIA, etc., and “civilian” organizations like the KKK, Skinheads, Minutemen, White Militias, and the Tea Party – are the greatest threats to our people. The governmental institutions have the power and ability, by virtue of their unlimited resources and social legitimacy, to control our life circumstances such as a how and where we live, work, play, and pray and restrict our movements and access to food, water, housing, education, health care, transportation, employment, democratic processes and human rights (particularly as it regards incarceration and deportation). These forces also have the power and ability to significantly impact and alter the internal dynamics within our community by privileging a few over the many with material and social rewards, getting a few of us to serve their interests against our collective interests, and creating confusion and disruption through agent provocateurs, set ups, and well coordinated strategies of disruption and counter-insurgency (like the promotion of crack cocaine into our communities in the 1980's).
- *Internal Threats.* These are threats that emerge from within the community. They emerge largely from antagonisms and contradictions over resources, status, and power. Turf Wars, for resources and respect, are the most publicly graphic example of these threats. These wars are once again on the rise due, in large part, to the deepening economic and social crisis confronting our people. Gender based violence, including domestic violence, rape, sexual assaults, harassment and other assaults on women and LGBTQI members of our community are also on the rise, in large part due to the hyper-masculinity fueled by the economic and social crisis in this patriarchal society and aggressively encouraged by the glorification of war and militarization over the decades, and promoted by virtually all of the dominant communicative institutions of the empire to protect and promote its established order.
- *Inter-Communal Threats.* These are threats that arise from antagonisms and contradictions between different peoples (nationalities, races, ethnicities) largely over resources, status, and power. They are also largely contradictions between competing classes that exist amongst the peoples, not entire peoples themselves – like the New Afrikan petit bourgeoisie competing with Latino and Asian petit bourgeois forces for control over access and position within small retail, service, or production markets. Most of these contradictions are created by the dynamic of hostile competition structured within the capitalist

system to keep oppressed and exploited people from uniting against their common oppressors and exploiters. One particular inter-communal contradiction that New Afrikans need to pay particular attention to is between ourselves and Latinos. Latinos should be considered our strategic allies, given many of our common interests and shared histories of oppression and exploitation at the hands of the US government. But, there are many forces, both external and internal to our community, working diligently to keep us divided and antagonistic to each other.

We cannot meet these threats by ourselves alone. Given these complicated, inter-locking threats, we need to organize at three different levels to make our Self Defense networks strong enough to be effective.

- *Build Our Independent Organizations.* Each of our organizations needs to reach, incorporate, and consolidate more people to enhance our individual capacities and effectiveness to implement our own political and social programs and make broader and deeper contributions to the liberation of our people.
- *Build Alliances, Coalitions, and/or Fronts.* None of our political and social formations has the ability to successfully defend our people from the external and internal threats that we face on their own. This means that we have to rely on each other to expand our overall reach, capacity, and power. This calls for building solid alliances, coalitions, and/or fronts based on a shared agenda, strategy, and principles to meet the needs of our people.
- *Build the Broader Movement.* Alliances, Coalitions, and United Fronts are also limited in their capacity and ability to create the broader social transformation that we need. Our organizations and coalitions must build and inspire mass movements that appeal to millions of our people. Those millions are not in political organizations. Only a mass movement will change their views of the system and compel them to act in concrete ways to transform it by organizing directly against its interests (copwatch, self-defense networks), disrupting its functioning (non-compliance campaigns), directly confronting its policies and structures (direct action and demonstrations of various kinds), or building autonomous institutions (people's assemblies).

Our organizing must aim for a balance between two strategic goals. First, we need initiatives to radically transform the social structures of the world to eliminate the systems of oppression like capitalism, imperialism, white supremacy, patriarchy and heterosexism that confine us to states of oppression and exploitation. Second, we need initiatives to transform ourselves and our communities through autonomous, self-reliant institution building, resource maximization, resource development, and community care.

# Honoring Our History and Building Unity in the Present

It is war to the hilt against our rights and liberties, and against our very existence! With us it will be a fight for life as well as for rights. And to the race fighting against mighty odds for its existence the use of any and every weapon at hand is not only permissible but compulsory. With the murderer clutching at our throats we can ill afford to choose our weapons, but must defend ourselves with what lies nearest whether that be poison, fire or what. As soon as it is demonstrated that the United States government will not protect us in our rights, right then we must take steps to protect ourselves.

Cyril Briggs

Self-defense strategy and organization in the year 2013 must take into account a set of challenges that were unknown in the 1960's. Today, *we live in an era defined by the "perpetual war" which the US government hypocritically labels the "war on terrorism."*<sup>1</sup> *The US government is waging perpetual war on the various peoples', social, and religious movements that resist the imperialist world- system and the vicious neo-liberal capitalist order it is intent on imposing on everyone.* One of the by-products of this perpetual war is the creation of the largest and most invasive surveillance and spy systems in human history.<sup>2</sup> These systems include everything from spy satellites, police and FBI operated surveillance drones, and electronic tracking and monitoring via our cellphones, computers, smart tablets, passports, drivers licenses, email, Facebook, etc. The astronomical increase in incarceration of our people is an institutionalized aspect of this perpetual war. Add to this the extensive spy networks operated by the US government and you quickly realize that we don't live in a democracy, but a Garrison State.

The social and material interests of New Afrikan people are fundamentally irreconcilable with those of the US empire. And since the Black Liberation Movement has long been a target of

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<sup>1</sup> See "Repealing Obama's Perpetual War: Revoking the authorization for use of military force," by Norman Solomon at <http://www.globalresearch.ca/obamas-perpetual-war/5323590>, "How Perpetual War became US ideology", by James Joyner at <http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2011/05/how-perpetual-war-became-us-ideology/238600/>, "The President of Perpetual War," by David Sirota at [http://www.truthdig.com/report/item/the\\_president\\_of\\_perpetual\\_war\\_20130125/](http://www.truthdig.com/report/item/the_president_of_perpetual_war_20130125/), "The Sources of Perpetual War," by Slouching Towards Columbia at <http://slouchingcolumbia.wordpress.com/2013/02/07/the-sources-of-perpetual-war/>.

<sup>2</sup> See "Giving in to the Surveillance State," by Shane Harris at <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/08/23/opinion/whos-watching-Everybody-is-a-Target-in-the-American-Surveillance-State>," by John W. Whitehead at [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/john-w-whitehead/utah-data-center\\_b\\_1380033.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/john-w-whitehead/utah-data-center_b_1380033.html), "US Terrorism Agency to tap a vast database of citizens," by Julia Angwin at [http://online.wsj.com/article\\_email/SB10001424127887324478304578171623040640006-1MyQjAxMTAyMDEwMzExNDMyWj.html?mod=wsj\\_valettop\\_email](http://online.wsj.com/article_email/SB10001424127887324478304578171623040640006-1MyQjAxMTAyMDEwMzExNDMyWj.html?mod=wsj_valettop_email), and "FBI's abuse of the Surveillance State is the real scandal needing investigation," by Glenn Greenwald at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2012/nov/13/petraeus-surveillance-state-fbi>.

suppression by the US government, we should be clear that *our people and our movement are some of the prime targets of this perpetual war*. We should not be blinded by the government's rhetoric about "protecting us against (Muslim) terrorists." We are also the targets of the Garrison State.

To protect its colonial possessions in North America, the US settler-colonial government has built the most self-penetrating and full-spectrum network of repressive enforcement in human history. They include the Police, Sheriff's, Rangers, Customs, FBI, Homeland Security (including INS), CIA, Secret Service, prison guards, as well as the numerous private security and other protective services employed in the service of protecting their possessions and the system of private property at the heart of capitalist production.

And to protect the imperialist system against the threats of national liberation and socialist revolution, the United States government has built a network of more than 1,000 military bases throughout the world, which it fortifies with a military budget greater than all the world's military expenditures combined and the most destructive arsenal ever created.<sup>3</sup>

Domestic containment and international containment are two sides of the same coin. Working in tandem to crush both internal and external resistance, these institutions and mechanisms have enabled the United States government to act as the imperial hegemon for nearly 70 years. US imperialism cannot be adequately understood, resisted, let alone defeated, unless both sides of this coin are addressed and confronted simultaneously.

However, the US government killing machine has never gone unchallenged. Repression breeds resistance and the peoples', workers', women's and other social movements have always resisted the US Empire, both within its claimed territories and throughout the world.

The threat of our resistance is evident in the extent the United States government goes to suppress it. One glaring example is the prison-complex built by the settler-colonial Garrison state. The US government has built the most extensive prison-system — with the highest incarceration rates — the world has ever seen. This system serves two purposes. First, it aims to contain the resistance of the national liberation movements of Indigenous, New Afrikan, Xicano, and Puerto Rican people. Repression of the organized resistance of these liberation movements has resulted in the imprisonment of hundreds of political prisoners and prisoners of war from organizations like the American Indian Movement (AIM), Revolutionary Action Movement (RAM), Black Liberation Army (BLA), the Black Panther Party (BPP), Provisional Government of the Republic of New Afrika (PGRNA), MOVE, Armed Forces of National Liberation (FALN), etc. Second, it aims to warehouse and repress the more unorganized resistance of oppressed peoples to their economic dispossession and other forms of superexploitation. This repression takes the form of the extensive criminalization of the underground economy and various strategies of survival

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<sup>3</sup> See <http://www.globalissues.org/article/75/world-military-spending>, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_countries\\_by\\_military\\_expenditures](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_military_expenditures), and <http://www.fas.org/irp/budget/index.html>. One also has to factor in that the US government maintains a secret budget for military and intelligence expenditures that is not disclosed to the public, see [http://www.theregister.co.uk/2009/05/08/us\\_dod\\_black\\_budget/](http://www.theregister.co.uk/2009/05/08/us_dod_black_budget/) and <http://www.wired.com/dangerroom/2009/05/pentagons-black-budget-grows-to-more-than-50-billion/>. See also "The Discrediting of US Military Power," by Tom Englehardt at <http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2012/10/discrediting-us-military-power-tom-engelhardt>, "Ron Paul says US has military personnel in 130 nations and 900 overseas bases," by Truth-O-Meter at <http://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2011/sep/14/ron-paul/ron-paul-says-us-has-military-pers> and "737 US Military Bases + Global Empire," by Chalmers Johnson at [http://www.alternet.org/story/47998/737\\_u.s.\\_military\\_](http://www.alternet.org/story/47998/737_u.s._military_)

employed therein (including immigration). Mass incarceration has resulted in the imprisonment, state supervision, or deportation of nearly 10 million people in 2012 alone!<sup>4</sup>

As in the past, with the slave patrols, the Klan raids, the enforcement efforts of the apartheid police, the disruption and assassinations of COINTELPRO, etc., the US government uses every means at its disposable to contain and repress us. As we-organize our people on a higher level to defend themselves and remove the settler-government from our internal affairs, we must be prepared for even greater repression. This is why we must learn from the errors of the past, particularly those of the COINTELPRO era, and take our time to dig deep into the organizing of our communities in a systematic fashion.

When many think of self-defense within the Black radical tradition they think of individuals like Ida B. Wells-Barnett, Robert F. Williams, Malcolm X, Huey P. Newton, Kathleen Cleaver and Assata Shakur and paramilitary organizations like the Fruit of Islam, Black Armed Guards, Deacons for Defense and Justice, the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense, the Black Legionnaires, etc. These types of formations have lost none of their relevance and we must learn everything they have to teach about their accomplishments and their weaknesses. But attempting to reproduce them is not where we should start or center our defensive organizing initiatives.

In our present era romantic and often hyper-masculine notions of self-defense centered on militaristic images, practices, and traditions can be very problematic. They can sometimes be a deterrent or a turn-off to large sectors of our people seeking to avoid unwarranted confrontations with the state. They invite an influx of agent provocateurs into our organizations and communities, and give the state an easy target and excuse for intensified repression before we have built the movement we need to defend ourselves. Their often- undemocratic practices have historically fostered hierarchy, patriarchy, and heterosexism. Rather, we must have a broad and dynamic understanding of self-defense that addresses the material and social needs of our people first and foremost and intentionally incorporates the positive and negative lessons of our historic legacy of struggle against white supremacy and genocide. And we must resolutely address the limitations and possibilities of our present era as determined by the interrelations between time, space, and social conditions (material conditions and the balance of political forces in particular).

Today, the foundations of our self-defense organizing must first and foremost be about *building community*, by intentionally and systematically struggling to forge “common unity” amongst our people on questions relating to our survival and overall well-being. This restorative orientation must start by acknowledging the reality that while New Afrikan people are still linked by the structural confines of white supremacy and national oppression and our common history, heritage, and collective interests, we have become more fragmented over the last 40 years.

This fragmentation expresses itself in the political divides that derive from the increasingly varied experiences and diverging interests produced by the growing class divide within our community. This divide forms along two lines. One is between the working and bourgeois classes of our people. The second is between the various sectors of the working class itself, those still

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<sup>4</sup> See “Obama’s unprecedented number of deportations,” by Tanya Golash-Boza at <http://www.counterpunch.org/2013/01/25/obamas-unprecedented-number-of-deportations/>, “Incarceration Nation,” by Fareed Zakaria at <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,2109777,00.html>, “The cost of a nation of incarceration,” by Martha Teichner at [http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-3445\\_162-57418495/the-cost-of-a-nation-of-incarceration](http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-3445_162-57418495/the-cost-of-a-nation-of-incarceration), “New high in US prison numbers,” by N. C. Aizenman at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/story/2008/02/28/ST2008022803016.html>.

incorporated into the wage-bound labor markets of the empire and those largely confined to the underground economy and its various enterprises and systems of survival.

Fragmentation also manifests in increased provincialism between individuals and sectors rooted in urban or suburban areas of New Afrikan concentration and those who live or were reared in more nationally, racially, and ethnically diverse environments, predominantly in suburban areas. Increasing religious, sexual, and gender diversity also has played a factor in our fragmentation. The incorporation of other communities of Afrikan descent from the continent, the Caribbean and Latin America striving to maintain distinct Afrikan identities and cultures based on their immigrant experiences complicate the task of building unity. We want to emphasize that the diversity of people from the Diaspora reflects variations of the genius and beauty of Afrikan people, which can only be negative if it is manipulated by the forces of imperialism and reactionary elements within our own communities to keep us divided and fragmented based on ignorance, false positioning, and short-term material gains.

This fragmentation can and must be overcome to stop the genocide being perpetuated against us by the forces of white supremacy and imperialism. However, we should not be under any illusion that we will ever unite all New Afrikan people. But, we must strive to unite the overall mass of New Afrikan people following the principle of “*uniting all that can be united!*” to win self-determination.

Overcoming fragmentation as a critical element of self-defense *starts with community organizing*, but community organizing with clear goals and objectives. One of the goals is overcoming the increasingly divergent views our people have about the US government and the role of the state in general. Prior to the 1970’s, there was a broad consensus amongst New Afrikan people that the US government was not an entity to be trusted, particularly as it related to respecting and protecting New Afrikan life.

As the legal structure of US apartheid was defeated in the 1960’s and neo-colonialism became the new means of governing and controlling New Afrikan people, this perception began to shift. Many started to see the settler-colonial government as something that could be reformed to handle our problems, as New Afrikan congressional members, mayors, and city council members were elected and New Afrikan police were hired and incorporated into the colonial governance structures. With the growth of the underground economy and the predatory and misogynist anti-social activities and behaviors associated with it, many petit bourgeois and working class sectors of the community turned to the police to protect them. They considered the police and other government agents as the only “legitimate” force capable of protecting their lives and possessions. And to solve the social ills of “Black on Black” crime, intra-communal violence, gang wars, drug abuse, and sexual exploitation many began to support government initiatives like the “war on drugs” and “get tuff on crime” measures. Since the 1980’s, many New Afrikan politicians’ have voted to support the drug war, in addition to three strikes legislation, mandatory minimum sentencing, and increased prison spending. They have also supported other government strategies of containment, like the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 and the Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996 that advanced the militarization



of the police and promoted the warehousing of millions of our people in the prison gulags of the empire.<sup>5</sup>

Our organizing work has to address and ultimately defeat this false notion. But, it must start by demonstrating that we can both curb police violence directed against us and solve our own problems relating to intra-communal conflicts and contradictions without the intervention of the state (like calling the police to address our disputes). In order to do this, we are going to have to organize a broad range of interlocking structures, like block committees, neighborhood councils, elder's councils, people's assemblies, and people's tribunals to jointly address our internal and external problems. These structures are just as important, if not more so in the present era, than the Copwatch, security teams, and militias that we need to fortify and/or (re)build.

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The poison and pollution of capitalist cities is choking us. We need the strong medicine of our foremothers to make us well again. We need their medicines to give us strength to fight and the drive to win. Under the guidance of Harriet Tubman and Fannie Lou Hamer and all of our foremothers, let us rebuild a sense of community. Let us rebuild the culture of giving and carrying on the tradition of fierce determination to move on closer to freedom.

Assata Shakur

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<sup>5</sup> See [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Violent\\_Crime\\_Control\\_and\\_Law\\_Enforcement\\_Act](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Violent_Crime_Control_and_Law_Enforcement_Act)], [[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antiterrorism\\_and\\_Effective\\_Death\\_Penalty\\_Act\\_of\\_1996](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antiterrorism_and_Effective_Death_Penalty_Act_of_1996), and "*Another Crime BIT*, by Mutulu Shakur at <http://www-personal.umich.edu/~chunyun/CrimeBill.html>.

# Self-Defense: Strategic Goals and How we Reach Them

With the realities of our present age in mind, we propose the following strategic orientation for our self-defense organizing.

- *Self-awareness*: We must elevate the national-consciousness of our people. On a community level, raising national consciousness entails deepening our collective sense of ourselves as a people who share a common history, identity, and destiny. On the individual level it also entails raising our consciousness on the practicalities of strengthening our personal and collective security practices (like sharing information, communicating with external forces, etc.). Self-awareness also entails:
  - Understanding the basis of internal and external contradictions (who’s interests conflict with whom, who has historic differences with who, and why).
  - Addressing unequal power relations internally (between men and women, heterosexuals and Queers, etc.) and externally (between bourgeoisie forces and the working class, and between oppressor nations and oppressed nations and peoples).
- *Self-reliance*: Given that the imperatives of this work run counter to the interests of the state, capital, and the forces of white supremacy, we must rely on our own efforts and resources to achieve our goals. This does not mean that we should not accept the aid and solidarity of friends and allies, but any and all aid can only be accepted without conditions. In an era with non-profits and non-governmental organizations flooding the social-movements, we must be clear about not becoming dependent on funding from philanthropic capital to sustain and advance this work. And just as important, we must reject the non-profit model of organization building. We should reject the current expectation that we need grants and paid organizers to advance our work. If we are going to have paid organizers, these organizers must be paid the old fashioned way, from the dues we gather from the members and fundraisers we organize. The money and labor we need to be successful in these endeavors must come from the committee’s, councils, and organizations themselves and supportive autonomous structures, like economic cooperatives, that we build to exercise our self-determination and eliminate the capitalist institutions that exploit us. We also reject the non-profit orientation towards politics that implies we can reach our goals through “polite work” rather than hard struggle.
- *Mutual Aid and Community Accountability*: Building a successful self-reliant movement depends on how well we build a movement that cares for itself materially, socially, and emotionally. We need systems that address our material and social needs ranging from housing to psychological support. We also need accountability mechanisms that support

people in rectifying their errors and transgressions against other members in the community via counseling and other methods of self-transformation. These systems will enable us to build the trust needed in the community for individuals and groups to make the material and social sacrifices needed to sustain and grow the autonomous and self-reliant organizations we need to liberate ourselves.

## Education Initiatives

The political and technical education of our people is essential to the long-term success of our Self-Defense (or any other transformative) organizing initiatives. Our educational initiatives must not be top down, or purely expert driven initiatives. All of our people have skills and experiences, and it is incumbent upon the organizers to draw these out from our organizing drives and structure our exchange sessions in a manner that draws on our collective experiences and brilliance. In workshops, people may learn about and decide to join one of the other self-defense formations.

- *Know Your Rights* — These workshops are specifically tailored to educate people about what protections they have and what they can and cannot do in engagements with the police and other law enforcement agencies according to US Federal, State, and Municipal law. These workshops should also highlight the various contradictions between many of the policies and tactics being employed by many local law enforcement agencies what is allegedly protected by the US constitution.
- *Human Rights Workshops* — These workshops should focus on educating people about their rights as human beings, particularly their rights to resist and to be self-determining that are above and beyond those stated in the US constitution.
- *Security workshops* — These workshops should focus on providing people with a framework on how to share information securely, how to be mindful of one's environment, and how to assess dangers and threats. They should also focus on providing people with a framework on how to effectively respond to threats.
- *Intelligence Gathering* — These workshops should focus on providing people with a framework on how to gather and share information and intelligence in a manner that is not accusatory and lending itself to the presentation of false accusations against others (such as agent baiting).
- *Self-Defense workshops* — These workshops should focus on providing people with the technical basics of how to defend themselves and others in their communities. This includes trainings in martial arts, firearms, etc.
- *Security workshops* — These workshops build on the self-defense workshops and focus on providing people with a framework on how to work in units or teams, and how to secure facilities, crowds, marches, and mobilizations against threats,
- *Emergency Response* — These workshops should provide people with a framework on how to establish mutual support networks to address various crises, how to communicate during these crises, and what goods and materials (like clean water, durable food goods, heat

sources, weather resistant clothes, etc.) are needed in order to survive and overcome crises. These workshops should also develop essential triage and emergency medical skills amongst the people, so that they can effectively deal with health crises such as heart attacks, strokes, asthma attacks, complications related to diabetes, gunshot wounds, etc.

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I had reasoned this out in my mind, there was one of two things I had a right to, liberty or death. If I could not have one I would have the other.

Harriet Tubman

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## Formations

In addition to building progressive and revolutionary organizations that address multiple issues, like the New Afrikan United Fronts, or multi-national People's Fronts, we must also build independent organizations that address specific self-defense needs:

- *Block Committees* — These Self-Defense units on the level of an urban or suburban block and/or street should be the foundation of all our efforts. This type of organizing entails building deep relationships with our neighbors and their families, identifying mutual interests, and building clear lines of communication.
- *Neighborhood Councils* — These Councils are scaled up extensions of the Block Committee's, that unite several Block Committees into a joint structure that addresses the shared interests and needs of the community, including addressing complaints against the police or the government in general and resolving disputes within the community itself.
- *City Councils* — These Councils are scaled up extensions of the Neighborhood Committees that serve to unite the strategies and activities of New Afrikan forces throughout a city.
- *Elders Councils* — These Councils are composed of respected elders in a community that are organized primarily to offer advice on strategies of engagement with the state (particularly the police) and mediate intra-communal contradictions and disputes amongst the people.
- *Youth Councils* — Youth Councils are safe spaces for youth to assemble to both resolve their own issues and disputes and to formulate their issues and concerns relative to the health and well being of the larger community.
- *Survivors or Family Councils* — These Councils are composed of the victims of police violence, including the family members of those who were killed by the police or other law enforcement agencies. These Councils represent the interests of the victims to the community and should take the lead in the formulation of demands on the government, and the strategies and tactics that will be employed to attain justice.

- *Women's Councils* — These Councils are safe spaces for women to organize themselves to address their specific needs and issues. One of its primary functions will be to address issues of abuse and/or violence (domestic violence, assaults, rape, etc.) committed against women either by the police or other government agencies or by men in the community, including determining processes of rectification and healing.
- *People's Assemblies* — The Assemblies are designed to be dual power instruments that serve as direct vehicles of People's Power. These Assemblies would be called to develop and institute autonomous solutions to various social issues and contradictions and to develop and advance various demands on the state.
- *People's Tribunals* — These Tribunals are extensions of the Elder Councils, City Councils, or People's Assemblies and are communal spaces to gather evidence regarding police brutality and state repression to shape a People's response to these crimes against humanity to secure justice through the administration of Peoples Power via boycotts, divestment measures, and various types of sanctions that bring the state and capital to heel or transform them altogether.
- *Copwatch* — These are collectives drawn from our independent organizations and the various suggested committees that focus on monitoring the police and other law enforcement agencies operating in our communities, documenting their activities, and when necessary, intervening to prevent state abuses and repression. Copwatch initiatives should also provide various types of self-defense and security trainings, including “know your rights” trainings, and political education for the community.
- *Security Teams* — These are units that should be developed from our independent organizations and the aforementioned committees to secure our communities from various threats at public gatherings and events, to respond to forces that pose threats to the community, and to respond to social and natural crises that confront the community.
- *Militias* — Are in part extensions of our Security Teams, and serve similar social purposes. However, unlike the Security Teams they are organized more explicitly to educate and train the community in the arts of self-defense, defensive fortifications, and military operations. The other major function of the Militia should be to respond to major crisis like the floods in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina and the rebellion in Oakland, CA following the murder of Oscar Grant., to make sure our people's safety is secure and that the state is not abusing our people.
- *Emergency Social Response Teams* — These Teams should respond to social crisis such as that posed by Hurricane Katrina, to make sure that in the midst of a crisis that our people are physically safe, treated with dignity, have food to eat, clean water to drink, are medically treated and provided with adequate housing. These Teams should be prepared to set up autonomous clinics and other emergency response operations following a catastrophe, like the Common Ground Collective and Peoples' Hurricane Relief Fund in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina, or Occupy Wall Street after Superstorm Sandy in New York City.

All of the formations mentioned above are intended to be the essential building blocks and/or components of the New Afrikan or Peoples' Self-Defense Networks. These are ideal structures.

Which ones you will be able to build in your community and cities will depend on the state of your community's collective will and capacities to act. And further, our will and capacity, however inexhaustible, will be shaped by structural dynamics, in particular the social conditions and social histories in each community, city, state, etc. What we have offered in this handbook are mere suggestions and/or guides to establish a firm foundation for this protracted work based on the best examples drawn from our peoples' history of revolutionary struggle and examples from revolutionary movements around the world.

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These facts the colored people, both North and South, should be hastily apprized of. They should be aroused from their sluggish indifference and drowsy dreaming, in every direction, and faithfully forewarned of the danger that approaches. Sound the alarm! Let the tocsin be heard in the rustling of every wind! Brethren, awake! Danger is at your door. Let us not destroy our cause by vain expectations, but stand ready for any emergency that may arise.

Martin R. Delany

## **Basic Outreach Methods to Facilitate Organizing**

In order to build the above mentioned formations, *we must reach and recruit people where they live, play, pray, and work.* What follows are a few basic pointers on how to do outreach.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This diagram was adapted from a diagram originally developed by the Center for Third World Organizing (CTWO) reprinted in "*Stir it Up: Lessons in Community Organizing and Advocacy*," by Rinku Sen, Jossey-Bass Press, 2003

<b>Method</b>	<b>Door Knocking</b>	<b>Street Outreach</b>	<b>Personal Visits</b>	<b>Meeting or Presentation</b>
<b>What</b>	Going Door to Door in a Community	Meeting people where they hang out, gather, play or work	Meeting someone at their home or agreed upon venue for one on one or meeting with their family and/or friends	Meeting people during or after a meeting or presentation to a group of individuals or an organization
<b>Role of Organizer</b>	Have solid rap and talking points and hold peoples attention for short conversation and ask for a commitment	Have solid rap and talking points and hold peoples attention for short conversation and ask for a commitment	Build a deeper relationship by getting to know people, letting them get to know you, and engaging in deeper discussions on demands, programs, and campaigns and ask for deeper commitments	Share demands, programs, and campaigns with the group or organization and ask for commitments

## Community Organizing Services

The organizing and provision of various services like legal aid, communications, media mobilization, and documentation form another critical dimension to the success of our Self-Defense organizing initiatives.

- *Legal Aid* — We must organize a network of lawyers and legal aids that are willing to work in support of our organizing initiatives pro bono or at very affordable rates to give legal support to our community organizers and to those victimized by the police and various law enforcement agencies,
- *Human Rights Monitoring and Documentation* — Monitoring, that is assessing the compliance of the state or a corporation with human rights norms and law, and Documentation, focusing on presenting the abuses and exploitative dynamics and practices of these entities can be a powerful tool in the fight for justice. Monitoring and documentation can be used in courts of law, domestically and internationally, educating and informing broader audiences and shaping public opinion on various issues. We must always organize critical monitoring and documentation teams as part of our Self-Defense organizing work to ensure that the people's memories and reflections are not lost.

- *Communication Teams* — Communicating with our people, via autonomous media, social media, websites, newspapers, graphic art, music, etc., is fundamental to our education work, but just as important to our mobilization efforts whenever needed to confront police abuse and state repression. These teams must also be organized to facilitate ongoing communication between the various organizing committees listed in a given area, and where and when possible, regionally and nationally.
- *Media Teams* — Our Media Teams must facilitate our engagement with the corporate media. These Teams should help develop our mass messaging to make sure that much of our politics and principles if reflected in the mainstream coverage as possible. These Teams should also develop workshops that provide a clear orientation on how to develop everyone's skills to be effective spokespersons and to avoid the various traps and distortions that the capitalist media wants to pigeonhole is in.

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I advocated violent self-defense because I don't really think you can have a defense against violent racists and against terrorists unless your prepared to meet violence with violence, and my policy was to meet violence with violence.

Robert F. Williams

## **Elementary Demands and Campaigns**

A campaign is an organizing drive intended to attain a particular strategic objective. The suggestions listed below are not exhaustive, rather they are but a few of the many campaigns that could and ultimately must be waged to educate people, recruit new movement members, build mass support, and challenge the prevailing narrative that perpetuates the garrison state.

- *Police Control Boards* — Grassroots Police Control Board's are intended to serve as directly elected oversight and disciplinary committees on a city or municipal level. They have the power to monitor and reform policies and to discipline, fire, subpoena and prosecute police or other law enforcement agencies operating within their jurisdiction. Campaigns to institute Police Control Boards are designed to avoid the pitfalls of Citizen Review Boards. Over the last 50 years various movements and communities have demanded Citizen Review Boards that have been taken over by Mayors and other local officials. Mayors have appointed their own political cronies to protect the police and the status quo. We propose that our movement organize electoral campaigns or referendums that transform the Charters of Cities and Counties to establish Police Control Boards via the limited democratic means that presently exist. Electoral campaigns for Police Control Boards become vehicles for extensive outreach and education to move our base and shape public opinion. Campaigns of this nature will require grassroots fundraising to retain the integrity of the initiative and pay for media ads, etc. They will also require forming alliances with various forces in the city or region that share similar interests and the development of a comprehensive strategy that builds enough power to institute this structural reform.



- *Anti-Containment Campaigns* — These campaigns focus on stopping local, statewide, and national policies and programs that repress and displace our communities like racial profiling, check points, stop and frisk, weed and seed, gang injunctions, drug war policies, three strikes and zero-tolerance policies, etc. In addition to stopping these reactionary policies, we should also engage in proactive campaigns, like those that seek to abolish prisons.
- *Anti-Surveillance Campaigns* — These campaigns should focus on forcing the state to become transparent about its extensive surveillance infrastructure and operations, and organizing campaigns that demand that they be wholly dismantled. These campaigns can start with initiatives that publically expose the methods and tactics used by various government agencies to monitor our social activities. We must also develop and effectively utilize a national database that exposes the undercover agents and provocateurs used by the government to infiltrate, disrupt, and discredit our social movements (this must be done through extensive factual documentation and not innuendo which can be and is very destructive to our movements).
- *Demilitarization Campaigns* — These campaigns should focus on ending the military weapons and tactics used by domestic law enforcement. Law enforcement agencies throughout the US empire have enhanced their military capacities since the 1960's, primarily focused on containing and repressing the national liberation and progressive social movements. For their arsenals they have acquired and incorporated military assault rifles, tanks, combat ready helicopters, grenades, hollow point bullets, camera and satellite integrate surveillance systems, infrared equipment, and sonic and microwave crowd control equipment, etc. Tactically, they incorporated various strategies of counterinsurgency and pacification, including envelopment tactics that surround communities, check-points that control traffic in and out of a community, “weed and seed” programs that deliberately divide communities, gang injunctions that criminalize social relationships and customs (youth fashions, informal associations, etc.), “stop and frisk” tactics that allow for illegal searches and seizures on a massive scale, and initiatives like “Operation Ghetto Storm” intentionally designed to terrorize oppressed communities. These campaigns are intended to heighten the contradictions between the people and the state (i.e. the government) and put the questions of institutional racism, national oppression, and US imperialism at the center of public debate within the empire.<sup>2</sup>
- *Anti-Drone Campaigns* — The introduction of surveillance and military drones over US held territories marks a critical new phase in the development of the repressive capacities of the US government. In order to preserve any notion of democratic space, we must launch local campaigns to resist the use of drones at the local and municipal levels and join or start campaigns that challenge their legitimacy and utilization throughout the empire.
- *Prisoner Defense Campaigns* — These campaigns should focus on defending a) our political prisoners, prisoners of war, and political exiles from ongoing prosecution and violations of international law, b) our prisoners from unjust prosecution and human rights abuses, and c) community members from entrapment, false imprisonment, and false prosecution. These

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<sup>2</sup> See “Overkill: The Rise of Paramilitary Police Raids in America,” by Radley Balko for the CATO Institute at [http://www.cato.org/doc-download/sites/cato.org/files/pubs/pdf/balko\\_whitepaper\\_2006.pdf](http://www.cato.org/doc-download/sites/cato.org/files/pubs/pdf/balko_whitepaper_2006.pdf).

campaigns should employ every means of struggle we have available to us, but should rely first and foremost on methods of mass struggle, rather than legalistic methods that appeal to the enemy's courts rather than the people.

- *Truth and Reconciliation Initiatives* — Dr. Mutulu Shakur and other New Afrikan political prisoners, prisoners of war, and political exiles are demanding that the US government commit to a process of Truth and Reconciliation similar to that employed in post-Apartheid Azania (South Africa) to address the governments human rights violations during the COINTELPRO era and provide amnesty for the political prisoners, prisoners of war, and political exiles whom the US government transgressed against during this era. These Truth and Reconciliation campaigns can and should be launched on a local and regional level, following the model of organizers in Omaha, Nebraska regarding the Defense of the Omaha 2, which have targeted the role of local police forces in collaboration with the FBI in infiltrating organizations like the Black Panther Party and the Revolutionary Action Movement, and setting these organizations up via provocateur actions. These campaigns are essential to holding the US government accountable and fortifying the will and confidence of the people in their right and ability to successfully resist. On the Federal level people should link with and support the Truth and Commission organizing process being driven by Dr. Mutulu Shakur.<sup>3</sup>
- *National Plan of Action for Racial Justice and Self-Determination* — This campaign should be focused on building a movement with enough strength and power to force the Federal government to implement broad social reform program based on international law to combat institutional racism and its various manifestations and legacies in the US empire. The National Plan of Action for Racial Justice and Self-Determination is an outgrowth of the World Conference Against Racism (WCAR) in Durban, South Africa and the Durban Declaration and Program of Action (DDPA), and calls on the Federal government to commit to a transformative program of action to combat inequality caused by the legacies of colonialism, genocide, enslavement, and economic exploitation. In addition to campaigning for this demand on Federal level, we should also demand that city, county and state governments pass similar measures that respect, protect, and fulfill the full human rights of oppressed and exploited peoples.

## General Strategies and Tactics

In order to win the basic demands listed above, we must develop comprehensive, but practical strategies and tactics to attain them.

One of the primary first steps for waging a winning campaign is clearly determining who supports what your advancing (your friends), who opposes it (your opponents and/or enemies), who is fundamentally indifferent, and who can possibly be moved to support your aims and objectives.

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<sup>3</sup> For more information on the “*Truth and Reconciliation*” process being organized by Dr. Mutulu Shakur see <http://mutulushakur.com/site/2011/05/towards-a-truth-and-reconciliation-commission-for-new-africanblack-political-prisoners-prisoners-of-war-and-freedom-fighters/>. For some information on the Omaha 2, Ed Poindexter and Mondo we Langa, see <http://www.examiner.com/topic/omaha-two-1/articles>.

With all of these forces you must then determine what are their strengths, what are their weaknesses, and what resources do they have at their disposal. Similarly, we must be equally clear about our strengths, weaknesses and resources. In order to do this, we strongly encourage everyone interested in building self-defense formations to engage in *Balance of Forces* or *Power Mapping* exercises to answer these questions. What follows is a sampling of how to conduct these exercises.

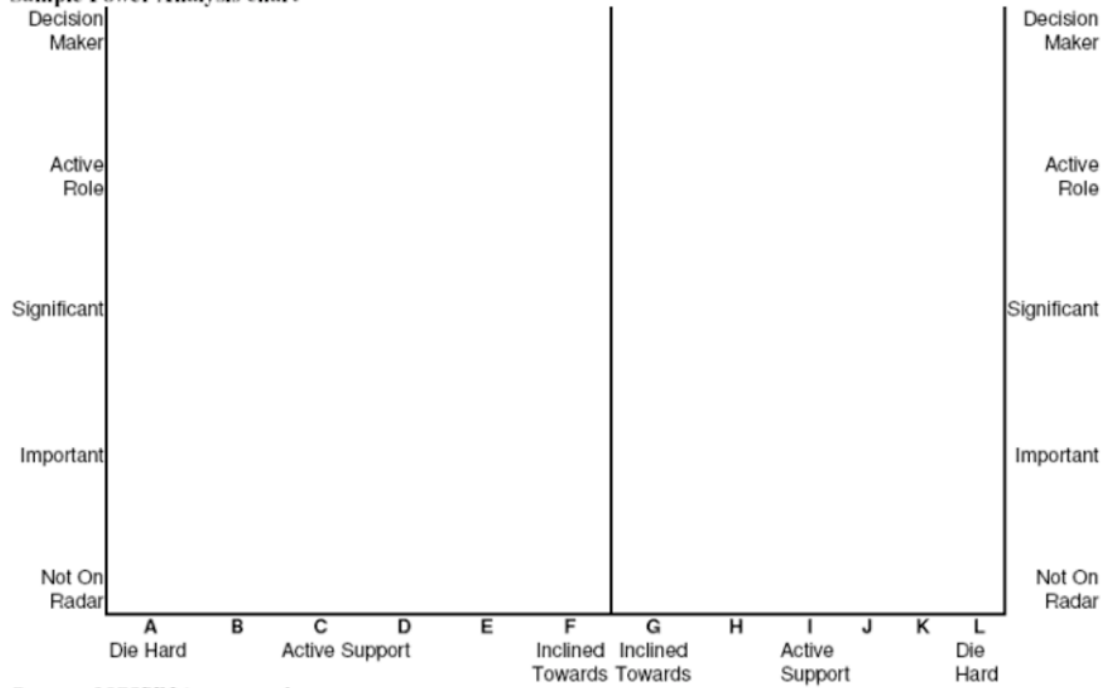
Balance of Forces or Power Mapping exercises chart a community's power structures and identify places of power and influence. This exercise also helps you determine the individuals and groups in your community who are affected by the issue and who can impact or influence your opponent and/or enemy (like the police and the politicians who support them) via various strategies and tactics of resistance. You start the exercise by identifying all the individuals and groups in your community (like tenant organizations, homeowners organizations, community organizations, non-profits, unions, religious organizations and communities, politicians, political parties, professional associations, government institutions and organizations, businesses, etc.) who have or can be organized to exercise power or influence over your opponent and/or enemy.

A framework for doing this exercise and analysis is provided below:<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> This chart is taken from the website of the Praxis Project, but was originally developed by SCOPE based in Los Angeles.

**Sample Power Analysis chart**



Courtesy of SCOPE LA [www.scopela.org](http://www.scopela.org)

There are multiple ways to use this exercise. But, as it relates to formulating demands and campaigns the primary way to use this tool is to start by analyzing your enemies and/or opponents and what power and influence they have in general and over the issues you are specifically waging struggle over. You can start by asking some of these fundamental questions:

1. What power does your enemy/opponent have to meet your goals and/or demands? And by what authority?
2. What is your enemies/opponents history and background? Include significant individuals, specific organizations, and key social forces.
3. What is your enemies/opponents position on your goal and/or agenda? Why? How have they related to this goal and/or agenda in the past?
4. What is your enemies/opponents self-interest relative to this issue? And in general?
5. Who and what (as in organization, institution, socio-economic class, etc.) are your enemies/opponents base and sources of support (i.e allies)?
6. Who are your enemies/opponents rivals and opposition?

This type of exercise can and should be done in a collective to deepen its analysis, including an analysis of your friends and allies and also of forces that are or appear to be indifferent.

In order to effectively use this exercise, you have to be able to determine the social connections that you've documented and uncovered to be able to figure out how to organize and mobilize people via your strategy to accomplish your goals. Figure out what forces have in common, where they differ, why they differ, and what can and will move them to alter or change their position. These are just a few of the questions that need to be answered. For a more thorough list of strategic questions please see the attachment listed as "*A Strategic Thinking Primer*."<sup>5</sup>

Once you have determined the interests of your enemies and friends, and clear on what are their strengths and weaknesses, you can then start developing and implementing an effective strategy and corresponding tactics.

The chart provided below is a starting reference for the development of general strategies and tactics.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> The "*Strategic Thinking Primer*" was developed by Kali Akuno for the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement (MXGM) in 2000.

<sup>6</sup> This chart is adapted from one developed by Joan Minieri and Paul Gestos in "*Tools for Radical Democracy: How to Organize for Power in your Community*," published by Jossey-Bass, 2007.

<b>Method</b>	<b>Goal</b>	<b>Organizational Work</b>	<b>Organizational Capacity</b>	<b>Skill Development</b>
<b>Direct Action</b>	Concentrate enough force to you're your enemy do what you want, via disruptions like demonstrations, strikes, boycotts, occupations, etc.	Building and mobilizing a substantive base	Turn out base for actions and make sure they have the training and ability to coordinate and manage confrontational actions	Outreach and Organizing Skill Development, Political Development to sustain engagement, and training and direct action tactics and coordination
<b>Legislative</b>	Move elected offices to support our agenda and demands via policy recommendations	Building relations with politicians and lobbying them	Organize the base to sustain protracted initiatives of engagement via phone calls, letters, action blasts, etc.	Skill development in how to lobby and how to engage elected officials on the basis of equality
<b>Legal Advocacy</b>	Challenge various injustices via domestic or international legal remedies	Recruit lawyers and legal workers to support the organization, its program, and its leadership	Develop in-house legal analysis skills and capacity, make sure legal workers follow organizational strategy	Skill development in how to engage with professionals like lawyers and academics, and development in legal analysis, legal proceedings, and how to serve as plaintiffs, etc.
<b>Alliance Building</b>	Build alliances or fronts with organizations that share your politics, program, and principles to move your agenda, program, and campaigns	Build solid relationships with allies, engaged in joint work based on principle and shared interests	Members trained and prepared to engaged in relationship building and diplomacy	Skill development in how to be diplomatic, how to build alliances, and how to develop agendas, facilitate meetings, etc.
<b>Media and Public Education</b>	Get the media to cover your issues, work, and demands to educate the general public and gain support for the cause			Skill development in writing, doing media work, and public speaking

## Mass Tactics

Tactics are means of struggle employed in a campaign to achieve one's strategic objectives. What follows are some basic mass tactics that concentrate on non-violent and democratic means of struggle to gain the greatest degree of support and engagement from the masses of our people as is possible. These tactics can and should be employed to support our campaigns, and when appropriate to demonstrate our power to the state and capital to force them to make concrete concessions to meet our demands.

- *Boycotts* — This tactic calls on the masses to cease engagement with various state agencies and/or corporate entities. During boycotts, people withhold their support and/or patronage to disrupt their activities, curtail their operations, and hurt their profits in order to force them to comply with various demands for justice or systemic change. For example, we may not shop at various businesses or purchase various brands, or refuse to attend school or utilize services like public transportation, etc.
- *Divestment* — This tactic calls on the masses to cease investing their resources and labor in corporations and institutions that play a role in repression or are essential for the maintenance of the status quo. The primary objective is to interfere with the profits of corporations and to disrupt the financial flows of various institutions in order to force them to comply with our demands for justice and systemic change.
- *Sanctions* — In our current context, this tactic is a spin off from boycotts and divestment initiatives, wherein we seek to isolate various institutions and corporations by utilizing boycotts against other institutions and corporations that seek to do business with these entities. This tactic largely calls for shaming these corporations and institutions by highlighting their complicity with our main targets, and utilizing the boycott against them until they cease doing business with these entities to retain their brand name and market share.
- *Non-Compliance Campaigns* — This tactic calls on the masses to refuse to comply with certain laws, norms, and standards and calls on them to engage in mass civil disobedience by refusing to obey the government until it complies with various demands. In practice, non-compliance campaigns can range from refusing to leave an occupied space when ordered to refusing to pay taxes, and a broad range of tactics in-between.

# Addressing Intra-Communal Violence

Every great dream begins with a dreamer. And always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars to change the world.

Harriet Tubman

Think and act on independent lines in this behalf, remembering that after all, it is the white man's civilization and the white man's government which are on trial. This crusade will determine whether that civilization can maintain itself by itself, or whether anarchy shall prevail; whether this Nation shall write itself down a success at self-government, or in deepest humiliation admit its failure complete; whether the precepts and theories of Christianity are professed and practiced by American white people and Golden Rules of thought and action, or adopted as a system of morals to be preached to heathen until they attain to the intelligence which needs the system of Lynch Law.

IdaB. Wells-Barnett

Despite the overwhelming containment strategies employed against New Afrikans by the US government and the forces of white supremacy, the cold and sad reality is that for decades many more New Afrikans have been killed at the hands of other New Afrikans than by agents of the state (regardless of nationality and race) or other enemy forces. Here we are speaking of direct killings, not the slow death being systematically committed against us by our enemies. This intra-communal violence is a product of our colonial socialization, the competition for scarce economic resources produced by our subjugation, and the internalization of white supremacy, patriarchy and other systems of oppression. The scale of the carnage we reap on each other makes us unintentional participants in our own genocide (for instance the most prevalent type of homicide against women is by partner or husband<sup>1</sup>). If the intra-communal violence and killings are going to stop then we are going to have to stop it, and not ask or depend on any outside entity to do it for us.

In order to address the question of intra-communal violence among New Afrikan people — turf wars, interpersonal violence, domestic violence, etc. — we must first expand our existing tools and strategies of self-defense and conflict resolution, and devise new ones. One means to do so, is to give special focus within our Self-Defense Networks to questions of community healing and conflict resolution in relationship to resource maximization and economic development. In order to end the violence, we are going to have to address the material constraints imposed on our people with the resources we have at hand. This means that we are going to have to do a

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<sup>1</sup> See “*Domestic violence homicides*,” by Domestic Violence Resource Center at <http://www.dvrc-or.org/domestic/violence/resources/C61/#hom>.



much better job of organizing ourselves internally to maximize the use of the limited resources we do possess and use them strategically to access and produce more resources that will address our need for adequate income, housing, education, health care, food, water, and a healthy environment. This will require the creation of various types of cooperatives, land trusts, credit unions, and mutual aid societies.

We are also going to have to draw our political and social leadership from new sources. We have to be intentional about uplifting and developing those members of our community who are the general victims of intra-communal abuse and violence, particularly women and members of the LGBTQI<sup>2</sup> sectors of the community. Building communities and movements that center the knowledge, wisdom, and skills of these sectors of the community are critical to the development of more holistic conflict resolution and healing strategies to quell the violence in our communities.

Campaigns to prevent intra-communal violence can target “set” or “gang” members and those on their periphery to produce community agreements, truces, and codes of conduct to mitigate and ultimately end community violence.<sup>3</sup> Education and moral persuasion campaigns can also be engaged when violence is committed. These campaigns can entail vigils, speak outs, community marches, and organized peace patrols to help prevent against retaliatory actions. Community building initiatives, such as cookouts, block parties, cultural festivals, talent shows, sporting events, etc., that promote collaboration, social solidarity, and cultural dignity and combat the ills of rugged individualism and crass materialism that foster various kinds of violence should also be employed.

However, we have to recognize and be prepared to engage in substantial risk in this day and age in taking on this type of internal community organizing. We should have no illusions as to why more of it has not been done. The fact is a great deal of it hasn’t been done because it often entails putting oneself in harm’s way as a result of disrupting the economic activities and survival of various class and social sectors of our people. So, any serious organizing initiative of this type must be prepared to engage and address this risk.

However, given that the very survival of the New Afrikan community is in question, the risk is more than worth it. Community violence is a major obstacle and destabilizing factor in our organizing work and community building. To end intra-communal violence it is imperative that we take on this work guided by the teachings of George Jackson and his comrades in the California prison system in the 1960’s and 70’s. They aimed to “*transform the Black criminal mentality (meaning anti-social, capitalistic, and predatory) into a Black revolutionary mentality.*”<sup>4</sup> We have to move the Street Sets and the predominantly lumpen and disposable (to the capitalist system of production) class forces they represent from constituting a largely antisocial force into a revolutionary force committed to engaging in mass struggle and transformative social production for self-determination and liberation. This remains one of the primary tasks of the Black liberation movement as it continues to struggle to recover from the political defeats of the 1970’s and 80’s and the ongoing low-intensity, counterinsurgency warfare being waged against us from the 1960’s to the present.

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<sup>2</sup> LGBTQI stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Intersex.

<sup>3</sup> See “*Code of the Thug Life*,” by Mutulu Shakur and Tupac Shakur at <http://www.assatashakur.org/forum/open-forum/9011-code-thug-life.html> as an example.

<sup>4</sup> This quote is taken from “*Blood in My Eye*” by George Jackson.

When we think about external violence perpetrated by the state and intra-communal violence it is important that we don't draw rigid dividing lines. A great deal of intra-communal violence associated with Turf Wars and competition for market share in the underground economy is directly tied to the United States government and its dominant role in managing the global economy. The government and the financial system it represents and protects are directly tied and profit from the lucrative underground economy ("illicit" and generic drugs, the sex trade, and various forms of indentured or slave labor). The government operates through various agencies, including the police, to ultimately control these markets. They employ means like spreading rumors and lies, set up operations and killings, jailhouse snitches, and market deals that favor one set over another, etc. So, in all reality, these two forms of violence are not as separate and distinct as they are portrayed.<sup>5</sup>

## Internal Community-Building Measures to Prevent Intra-Communal Violence

- *Youth Organizing* — In order to curb intra-communal violence amongst our people, we are going to have to make some heavy investments in our youth, as the violence is centered more and more amongst those between the ages of 12 and 25. It is imperative that we start providing avenues of social connection and validation for our youth that addresses questions of their identity and build sense of self, solidarity and community worth from the cradle on. Some means to do this include creating rites of passage and gender based groups, or sports teams and initiatives like the New Afrikan Scouts.<sup>6</sup>
- *Cultural Work* — In order to reach the youth and sustain their attention, we have to commit ourselves to engaging in a more aggressive and robust struggle over the cultural products and images that are engaged and consumed by our people, and our youth in particular. We absolutely must not underestimate the power of popular consumer products like commercial rap and r & b, or the individualistic and culturally negating messages being promoted by Hollywood and corporate television that promote various forms of dysfunctionality to our youth. These influences profoundly affect the socialization of our youth, and the development of their aspirations, politics, and worldview. We have to be more deliberate about countering the anti-Afrikan and antihuman messages—especially of individualism, materialism and misogyny being perpetrated in popular culture. If we are to promote a culture of solidarity and resistance to oppression, we need to become more effectively organized in the area of cultural production and consolidate and focus our limited financial resources to begin to have a visible cultural impact. One example of revolutionary cultural production is the *Every 36 Hours CD project* produced by Nu Afrika Entertainment and the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement to support and promote the "*No More Trayvon Martins*

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<sup>5</sup> See "Whiteout: The CIA, Drugs, and the Press," by Alexander Cockburn and Jeffrey St. Clair, Verso Press, 1998, "Cocaine Politics: Drugs, Armies and the CIA in Central America," by Peter Dale Scott and Jonathan Marshal, University of California Press, 1991, "The Politics of Heroin in Southeast Asia," by Alfred W. McCoy, et al, Harper and Row, 1971, and "Dark Alliance: The CIA, the Contras and the Crack Cocaine Explosion," by Gary Webb, Seven Stories Press, 1998. See also "Allegations of CIA Drug Trafficking" at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Allegations\\_of\\_CIA\\_drug\\_trafficking](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Allegations_of_CIA_drug_trafficking) for additional sources.

<sup>6</sup> See <http://www.cadnational.org/> for more information on Camp Pumziko and the New Afrikan Scouts.

*Campaign: Demanding a National Plan of Action for Racial Justice and Self-Determination.* This project brings home the fact that in 2012, “**Every 36 Hours**” a New Afrikan woman, man or child is executed at the hands of the police that occupy our nation and communities. This project memorializes our dead, calls for resistance to the occupation of our communities, and promotes concrete solutions to end our oppression.<sup>7</sup>

- *Health and Healing Work* — Next to Indigenous Peoples, New Afrikans suffer from the afflictions of chronic diseases — hypertension, heart disease, diabetes, asthma, cancer, STI’s, HIV/AIDS, etc. — more than any other people living within the US empire. New Afrikans also suffer an extremely high rate of mental illness and drug and alcohol addiction. These afflictions are a direct result of the stresses, strains, and exposures (from environmental racism primarily) produced by the colonial subjugation and the institutional dynamics of white supremacy that New Afrikan people are subjected to. Intra-communal violence is often a means employed by the oppressed to deal with the stresses of subjugation and the afflictions it produces. To reduce stress induced violence (as it will not be eliminated until national and social liberation are fully realized) it is critical that we promote individual self-care, community care, a healthy diet, exercise and physical training (yoga, martial arts, etc.), and non-toxic environments. It is also essential that we build our own clinics and health facilities to provide holistic, accessible and affordable health care for our people. These can be organized like the many free health clinics organized in our people’s history, or the detox center organized by Dr. Mutulu Shakur, or the Health Missions organized by the Cuban government as part of their mutual aid and solidarity in places like Haiti, Venezuela, and throughout the Afrikan continent.<sup>8</sup>
- *Prison Reentry Programs* — Developing and operating effective reentry programs are going to be essential towards ending intra-communal violence in our communities. A key part of these programs must be providing the men and women reentering society with viable economic means and substantive social engagement. We must create alternative economic networks, institutions, and systems that these brothers and sisters can plug into like urban gardens, farmers markets, cooperatives of various kinds, and cooperative workers’ initiatives and unions. If we don’t work to provide these alternatives, we leave our people with the reality of the streets and its economic cycles that are highly dependent on interpersonal violence and super-exploitative means of exchange and production. In addition to the social aspects of cooperatives and other economic programs, prison reentry programs also must, on a cultural level, deliberately facilitate peoples’ creativity and solidarity. For example, popular education and creative writing workshops are essential.

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<sup>7</sup> See <http://mxgm.org/every-36-hours-the-cd/> for more information on the Every 36 Hours CD Project.

<sup>8</sup> See “About Dr. Mutulu Shakur” at <http://mutulushakur.com/site/about/> for more information about his Detox work. For an example of a BPP Free Health Clinic see [http://www.itsabouttimebpp.com/Unity\\_Support/pdf/Dr\\_Tolbert\\_Small\\_Interview.pdf](http://www.itsabouttimebpp.com/Unity_Support/pdf/Dr_Tolbert_Small_Interview.pdf), and for other examples of BPP Health and Community Programs see <http://www.stanford.edu/group/blackpanthers/programs.shtml> and “*The Black Panther Party: Service to the People Programs*,” by David Hilliard, University of New Mexico Press, 2008. And for information on Cuba’s Health Missions see “Cuban medical internationalism” at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cuban\\_medical\\_internationalism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cuban_medical_internationalism) and “The Cuban Revolutionary Doctor: The Ultimate Weapon of Solidarity,” by Steve Brouwer at <http://monthlyreview.org/2009/01/01/the-cuban-revolutionary-doctor-the-ultimate-weapon-of-solidarity>.

- *Conflict and Community Mediation* — These processes entail identifying and addressing interpersonal and intra-communal conflicts and contradictions, and devising mutually agreed upon methods to rectify and overcome these problems. These processes must be widely promoted and integrated into the core practices of our Block Committees, Neighborhood Councils, Community Councils, Elder's Councils. The committee's must stay attuned to the social activities and developments within their respective fields of operation and proactively seek out means to engage and resolve them.

I met Marx, Lenin, Trotsky, Engels, and Mao when I entered prison and they redeemed me. For the first four years I studied nothing but economics and military ideas. I met Black Guerillas: George "Big Jake" Lewis, and James Carr, W. L. Nolan, Bill Christmas, Torry Gibson, and many, many others. We attempted to transform the Black criminal mentality into a Black revolutionary mentality.

George Jackson

## Closing Notes

Given the cold facts demonstrating the systemic genocide being perpetrated against New Afrikan people, it is clear that we are in a state of war. In order to survive, and ultimately thrive, we must move from the passive state of being “*in war*,” into the active, conscious, and engaged state of being “*at war*.” To be “*in war*” means to be conscious of the aggressions being waged against us, both by external forces, in our case the US government and transnational corporations (i.e. capital), and internal forces as a result of the contradictions of our oppression or at the bidding of our enemies, but to be in a state of active denial and therefore unorganized to confront them. To be “*at war*” means to not only be conscious of these threats but also to be organized to engage, counter, and overcome them.

We believe this handbook provides an outline for how we can move from the position of being “*in war*,” to being proactively organized to defend our persons and our rights. We also believe it provides a conceptual foundation for some of the basic infrastructure needed to advance our struggle for national and social liberation. However, the structures and institutions listed in this Handbook are in their elementary forms only vehicles of “*survival pending revolution*.”<sup>1</sup> They are suggestions that provide means for us to push back and survive the genocidal onslaughts being waged against us, but won’t eliminate them in and of themselves.

We cannot be satisfied with half-measures and half victories. Being able to defend ourselves, having the right to vote in a settler-colonial empire, having access to employment under the capitalist system, are all necessary for our present survival, but do not amount to liberation.

We must never forget that capitalism and imperialism are and have been more than willing to make various compromises, just as so long as they didn’t ultimately wind up breaking the system. The defeat of US apartheid between the 1950’s and 70’s, which eliminated the visible

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<sup>1</sup> “*Survival pending revolution*” is a phrase made popular in 1970’s by Huey P. Newton and the Black Panther Party. He sums them up with this quote: “... We recognized that in order to bring the people to the level of consciousness where they would seize the time, it would be necessary to serve their interests in survival by developing programs which would help them to meet their daily needs. For a long time we have had such programs not only for survival but for organizational purposes. Now we not only have a breakfast program for schoolchildren, we have clothing programs, we have health clinics which provide free medical and dental services, we have programs for prisoners and their families, and we are opening clothing and shoe factories to provide for more of the needs of the community. Most recently we have begun a testing and research program on sickle-cell anemia, and we know that 98 percent of the victims of this disease are Black. To fail to combat this disease is to submit to genocide; to battle it is survival. All these programs satisfy the deep needs of the community but they are not solutions to our problems. That is why we call them survival programs, meaning survival pending revolution. We say that the survival program of the Black Panther Party is like the survival kit of a sailor stranded on a raft. It helps him to sustain himself until he can get completely out of that situation. So the survival programs are not answers or solutions, but they will help us to organize the community around a true analysis and understanding of their situation. When consciousness and understanding is raised to a high level then the community will seize the time and deliver themselves from the boot of their oppressors. ‘All of our survival programs are free. We have never charged the community a dime to receive the things they need from any of our programs and we will not do so. We will not get caught up in a lot of embarrassing questions or paperwork which alienate the people. If they have a need we will serve their needs and attempt to get them to understand the true reasons why they are in need in such an incredibly rich land. Survival programs will always be operated without charge to those who

manifestations of white supremacy while leaving its colonial and economic foundations in tact, was one such bend but don't break compromise, as was the so-called "New Deal" of the 1930's and 40's. *Ultimately, in order to eliminate police terrorism, state repression, economic exploitation, national oppression, patriarchy, white supremacy and imperialism we need a revolution — a national revolution to end our colonial subjugation and a social revolution to transform the economic, social, and ecological relationships we have with everything around us.* Despite its obvious shortcomings in regards to advancing a revolutionary program to address the limitations of our present state and conditions, this Handbook was written with the clear understanding that revolution is in order, and that order for it to happen, we are the ones who are going to have to make it happen, one step at a time.

Let's get to work!

Free the Land By Any Means Necessary!

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...Any time you beg ANOTHER man to set you free — YOU WILL NEVER BE FREE!"

El Hapalik El Shabazz, Malcolm X

# **Addendum**

# General Principles and Protocols

None of the structures outlined in this work or the strategies and methods of struggle mentioned above will work without the establishment of clear operating principles and protocols. Principles and protocols are essential tools for building structure and accountability in our work.

To address our internal organizing needs principles and protocols should establish codes of conduct, how to raise constructive criticism, how to provide honest and reflective self-criticism, how to surface subjective issues like differing beliefs and opinions, and objective issues such as material limitations. They should also outline what dispute or conflict resolution mechanisms will be employed and how accountability processes and procedures will be structured and managed.

Our principles and protocols should also address how we aim to engage with the external world, particularly the US government and its agencies like the police. These principles and protocols should be designed to ensure our safety by providing concrete means on how to avoiding unnecessary conflict with the police and other law enforcement agencies, and how to respond appropriately in a collective manner when conflict does arise. Some of the things that should be addressed are how to respond to police aggressive and provocation, how to address police violence, how to deal with arrests, and how to maintain collective solidarity and mutual support in the face of government repression and imprisonment.

Each community should democratically determine its own principles and protocols. However, it is not always necessary to recreate the wheel in this field. There are numerous examples of general principles (which are called Operating Norms or Community Agreements by some) and protocols that organizers and communities can reference and borrow from to incorporate into their work.

For example, here are few of the general Operating Principles and Protocols employed by the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement.

1. Establish clear responsibilities, roles, and divisions of labor. Create space for everyone to participate in meaningful ways.
2. Establish clear lines of communication, be clear about what is public information and what is strictly internal and on a need to know basis.
3. Do your homework and be prepared on all occasions — know your enemy, know yourself, know your surroundings, and your socio-historic context.
4. Respect the rules and structures of the organization. Channel disagreements and disputes to the delegated individuals and structures designed to handle disagreements and disputes.
5. Honor everyone's time and commitment. Start engagements on time and end them on time.



6. Respect everyone's right to speak. Equal speaking time for everyone.
7. Challenge people's actions, ideas, and statements, not their character.
8. Challenge sexist and homophobic actions, statements, and assumptions.
9. Challenge liberalism — meaning don't go along to get along in the face of inappropriate or unprincipled behavior.
10. Assume responsibility for your statements and actions.
11. Honor Agreements.
12. Complete Tasks.

# Present Models of Organizing and Resistance

What follows are three examples of where elements of the organizing framework described in this Handbook have been practiced over the past 15 years. More extensive case studies can and should be done on all of these examples. But, what follows here are just short summaries of the histories and models of struggle employed in these cities with references for further study and modeling.

## New York City, NY

In response to the February 4, 1999 extrajudicial killing of Amadou Diallo by the New York Police Department (NYPD) — who fired 41 shots at Diallo, striking him 19 times — a broad multinational mobilization occurred that posed the first major challenge to the NYPD since the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense and the social movements of the late 1960's and early 1970's. This mobilization employed mass demonstrations, sit-in's, and occupations, and incorporated a number of cultural workers, primarily hip hop artists, to produce cultural works that reached and educated millions. Out of this mobilization the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement (MXGM) and its allies, formed the People's Self-Defense Campaign (PSDC) and initiated Copwatch programs in several boroughs of the city. Over the past 13 years, PSDC and Copwatch have organized several permanent committees throughout the city, trained thousands in Know Your Rights advocacy, pursued hundreds of cases against police abuse, and fought against reactionary policies like “stop and frisk.”

Resources:

1. Watch for Criminals, Watch for Cops <http://www.indypressny.org/nycma/voices/190/briefs/bri>
2. Ethnography as Resistance <http://year0.org/2013/02/02/ethnography-as-resistance-these-s>
3. Telling Our Stories <http://revolutionaryfrontlines.wordpress.com/2012/10/26/telling-our-stories-mxgm-member-talks-nypd-violence-and-calls-for-passage-of-the-community>
4. Copwatch: MXGM 3 on Brooklyn Review <http://mxgm.org/copwatch-mxgm-3-on-brooklyn-review>

## Oakland, CA

In response to the extrajudicial killing of Oscar Grant by Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) police on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009, a broad, multinational mobilization occurred that shut down the operations of the city on several occasions in January and February of that year with massive demonstrations that brought the downtown area to a standstill, blockades of major intersections to curtail traffic and trade, sit-in occupations to direct the proceedings at city hall, and direct action on several

select targets throughout the city to demonstrate the necessity for justice. Over the course of several months, core elements of the mass mobilization organized

themselves into a broad multi-national coalition to sustain the mass mobilizations, initiate a citywide organizing drive, and develop a unified strategy and program of action. This coalition was one of the first forces to call for and organize a general assembly, similar to those utilized by the Occupy movement in 2011, and to call for a “general strike” to ensure that its demands were met. This broad coalition, in addition to various organizations taking individual initiative, built a statewide “Justice for Oscar Grant Movement,” that had a national and international following. Throughout 2009 and 2010 this movement employed a diversity of tactics to keep the pressure on the government, and ensured that the trial of Johannes Mehserle, the police officer who murdered Oscar Grant, was a political trial, even after it was moved from the Bay Area to Los Angeles in the attempt to protect the police. This movement and the pressure it was able to employ was the determining factor in ensuring the conviction of Johannes Mehserle in 2010.

Resources:

1. Documents written and compiled by the organization Advance the struggle <http://advancethestruggle.org/>
2. “An Open Letter to the Oscar Grant Movement” by Kali Akuno <http://navigatingthestorm.blogspot.com/2010/07/open-letter-to-the-oscar-grant-movement.html>
3. “Open Letter” Part 2 by Kali Akuno <http://navigatingthestorm.blogspot.com/2010/07/open-letter-to-the-oscar-grant-movement-part-2.html>

## Anaheim, CA

In response to the Anaheim, California Police Departments extrajudicial killings of two Latino men, Manuel Angel Diaz, 25 and Joel Acevedo, 21 on July 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2012 respectively, the Latino community in Anaheim engaged in a sustained direct action mobilization against the Police department and Anaheim city officials for well over two weeks. Latino residents and their allies used a range of tactics including marches, rallies, sit in’s, a picket of Disneyland and occupations of intersections and police and city offices to ensure that business could not proceed as usual to guarantee that their issues were addressed. In addition to the intolerable police killing of at least five Latinos in the past year, the mobilizations drew attention to the vast inequality between white and Latino communities in Anaheim and the colonial status of Latinos who comprise 54% of the population and have virtually no representation in City government. Over the course of several months this mobilization for justice for the two stolen lives turned into a sustained political drive to transform the city by putting more Latino’s into

key political offices. As of February 2013, the drive for justice and accountability for the extrajudicial killings committed by the Police continue, as does the drive for political representation and more power within the framework of the Anaheim government.

Resources:

1. Anaheim: A Tale of Two Cities <http://youtu.be/Nao4z6Dghco>.
2. Latino protests in Anaheim continue <http://www.latinopov.com/blog/?p=5891>.
3. Can Anaheim repair a broken trust with Latino community? [http://www.voiceofoc.org/oc\\_north/anaheim](http://www.voiceofoc.org/oc_north/anaheim)
4. Unrest in Anaheim could lead to more Latino representation in the city <http://www.voxxi.com/anaheim>

5. Anaheim rejects proposal aimed at boosting Latino representation <http://latino.foxnews.com/latino>
6. Another Injunction aimed at Anaheim gang <http://www.ocregister.com/articles/gang-383703-me>

# A Strategic Thinking Primer

1. What is the issue/struggle?
2. What is the nature or make up of this issue/struggle?
3. What are the contradictions pertaining to this issue/struggle? What is the primary contradiction? What is the secondary contradiction?
4. What are the objective factors of this issue? What are the subjective factors of this issue/struggle?
5. Who or what are the motive forces of change in this struggle? (Primary)
6. Who are the opposing forces involved in this issue/struggle?
7. What are the contradictions between these forces? The primary contradictions? The secondary contradictions?
8. What is the history of struggle on this issue? What have been the critical moments of decision in this struggle?
9. What are the general aspects, tendencies, and features of this struggle? What are the specific aspects, tendencies and features of this struggle?
10. Why is this issue important to us? (Afrikan people, MXGM, etc.)
11. What are our interests in addressing this issue/struggle?
12. What are we fighting for in addressing this issue/struggle? In the short term? In the long term?
13. What are our strengths in addressing this issue? What are our weaknesses?
14. How do we build on our strengths? How do we address and correct our weaknesses?
15. Who or what are the motive forces of change in this struggle? (Secondary)
16. How do we relate to these motive forces or change agents?
17. Who are our friends? Why are they our friends? What are their expressed and real interests in this struggle? What are their short and long-term objectives? What are their strengths? What are their weaknesses?
18. Who are our enemies? Why are they our enemies? What are their expressed and real interests in this struggle? What are their short and long-term objectives? What are their strengths? What are their weaknesses?

19. Who are the neutral forces? Why are they neutral on this issue? Can they become our friends? How do we keep them from becoming enemies?
20. What factors in this struggle can we independently impact, manipulate, or change?
21. What do we need to know more about in this struggle? How do we obtain this information and knowledge?
22. What is the current balance of forces in the struggle? Who's winning or in possession of the momentum and initiative? Who's losing? Why?
23. How has this balance of forces shifted from the past to the present? What were the causes of the shift? What shifts can we anticipate in the future?
24. What space do we independently operate in?
25. What factors in this struggle can we independently impact, manipulate, or change?
26. What are our operating principles in this struggle? What are we willing to compromise? What are will unwilling to compromise?
27. Who should we be forming alliances with? Why? In the short-term? In the long-term?
28. Who should we be forming tactical alliances with? Why? In the short-term? In the longterm?
29. What space can we operate within with our friends and allies?
30. What factors can we collectively impact, manipulate or change?
31. What are our priorities?
32. What is our present capacity for action? How do we build our capacity? How do we not tax our exhaust our capacity?
33. What actions can we take? What actions should we take? What are the goals of our actions?
34. What are the positive possibilities of our actions? What are the probable negative constraints?
35. Who in our ranks will do what? When? Where? How? With what resources and supports? What additional resources and supports are needed?

# Know Your Rights Handouts

## **Knowing Your Context**

ONLY use the MXGM – NYC People’s Self-Defense and Copwatch materials attached as guides and examples.

Be clear that you have to do your own research on what is currently “legal” or “illegal” in your area regarding the provision of legal protections, i.e. your “rights.” In practice, your civic right to monitor and document the police is largely determined by local political conditions. Given the uneven state of political organization throughout the empire, civil codes and laws are not uniform throughout the United States in this area. Rather, they differ from state to state, from county to county, and from city to city.

So, do your homework to clearly determine the limits of “legality” in your area of work and struggle so you are as clear as can be on what you’re facing. We also strongly encourage you to develop your own Copwatch and Know Your Rights materials to suite your local political and legal dynamics.

Finally, be sure to consult with local progressive and radical legal services in your area, get in contact with local legal clinics, or groups like the National Conference of Black Lawyers (NCBL), the National Lawyers Guild (NLG), and the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), etc., to get their advice and bring them into the fold of supporting your organizing work.

# A Short History of Self-Defense Organizing in the New Afrikan Community

The following articles are only a brief sample of some of the critical works that explore our history of protracted struggle to defend ourselves from the forces of white supremacy and capitalist exploitation. These articles are from Akinyele Umoja from the New Afrikan People's Organization and the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement and New Afrikan Political Prisoner Russell "Maroon" Shoatz.

## Akinyele Omowale Umoja

Akinyele Omowale Umoja is an educator and scholar-activist.

Dr. Umoja has varied experiences as an educator. He has taught in secondary schools, alternative schools, and colleges and universities, as well as developed Afrikan-centered curriculum for public schools and community education programs.

Currently, he is an Associate Professor and department chair in the Department of African-American Studies at Georgia State University (GSU). At GSU, Umoja is responsible for teaching courses related to the history of people of African descent in Georgia, the Civil Rights Movement and other Black political and social movements, courses on the enslavement of African people in the New World, African religion and philosophy, and 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century Black political and social movements.

Dr. Umoja's writing has been featured in scholarly publications as *The Journal of Black Studies*, *New Political Science*, *The International Journal of Africana Studies*, *Black Scholar*, *Radical History Review* and *Socialism and Democracy*. Umoja was one of the contributors to *Blackwell Companion on African-American History*, edited by Alton Hornsby; *The Black Panther Party Reconsidered*, edited by Charles Earl Jones; *Liberation, Imagination, and the Black Panther Party*, edited by Kathleen Cleaver and George Katisaficus; and "Malcolm X: A Historical Reader," edited by James Conyers and Andrew Smallwood. Umoja's first single authored book titled WE WILL SHOOT BACK: ARMED RESISTANCE IN THE MISSISSIPPI FREEDOM MOVEMENT is due to be published by New York University Press in April 2013.

Umoja has been active over thirty-five years in the liberation struggle of Afrikan people, particularly working with the New Afrikan Independence Movement. He is a founding member of the New Afrikan Peoples Organization and the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement. Brother Umoja has represented both organizations nationally and in international forums in the Caribbean, Africa, and Europe. He is particularly committed to work to support and gain amnesty for political prisoners and prisoners of war and to win reparations for Afrikan people. Umoja has also involved himself in the solidarity movement for democracy and self-determination of Haiti.

Dr. Umoja has been a contributor to commercial and popular documentaries on the Umoja has been active over thirty-five years in the liberation struggle of Afrikan people, particularly



working with the New Afrikan Independence Movement. He is a founding member of the New Afrikan Peoples Organization and the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement. Brother Umoja has represented both organizations nationally and in international forums in the Caribbean, Africa, and Europe. He is particularly committed to work to support and gain amnesty for political prisoners and prisoners of war and to win reparations for Afrikan people. Umoja has also involved himself in the solidarity movement for democracy and self-determination of Haiti.

Dr. Umoja has been a contributor to commercial and popular documentaries on the experience of the Black Freedom struggle. Umoja was a featured commentator on American Gangster Dr. Mutulu Shakur Season 3, Episode 6, which aired on November 8 2008. He also appears in "Bastards of the Party" (2006), produced by Anthony Fuqua and directed by Cle "Bone" Sloan, and Freedom Archives "Cointelpro 101" (2010).

## **Russell Maroon Shoats**

#AF-3855

175 Progress Dr.

Waynesburg, PA 15370

Russell Maroon Shoats is a dedicated community activist, founding member of the Black Unity Council, former member of the Black Panther Party and soldier in the Black Liberation Army. He is serving multiple life sentences for an attack on a police station, which resulted in an officer being killed.

### ***Personal Background***

Russell was born August 1943 in Philadelphia. He was one of 12 children. At the age of 15 he became involved in a gang and was in and out of reform schools and youth institutions until the age of 18.

As a young man he married twice and became the father of seven children. In the mid 1960s Russell started becoming active in the New Afrikan liberation movement. He founded the Black Unity Council, which merged with the Philadelphia Chapter of the Black Panther Party in 1969.

Tensions were high in Philadelphia in the summer of 1970 because Philadelphia Police Chief Frank Rizzo had ordered a crackdown on militant groups in the run-up to the national convention of the Black Panther Party in Philadelphia on September 5, 1970.

Tensions intensified when police killed a black youth in Philadelphia. A retaliatory attack was carried out on a police station, killing officer Frank Von Coin and injuring one other.

The shooting of Von Coin prompted a 2 a.m. raid on the Black Panther headquarters in North Philadelphia. After the raid police officials allowed news photographers to take humiliating photos of the Black Panthers being strip searched on the street.

Russell and four others (who became known as the "Philly Five") were immediately charged with the attack. They went underground and continued to struggle for New Afrikan self-determination as part of the Black Liberation Army.

### ***Legal Case***

In January of 1972 Russell was captured. He was convicted of the attack on the police station and sentenced to life.

### ***1977 Prison Escape***

Russell escaped with three others from Huntingdon State Prison in 1977. Two were recaptured and the third was killed during the escape. Russell remained at large for 27 days, leading to a massive manhunt by local, state and federal forces, as well as citizen recruits from nearby white, rural areas.

From his capture in 1977 until 1989 Russell was shipped from state, county and federal prisons, kept in long-term solitary confinement the entire time. In 1979 he was forcibly transferred to the Fairview State Hospital for the Criminally Insane. While at Fairview he was forcibly drugged, which in one case lead to him being hospitalized when he was overdosed.

### ***1980 Prison Escape***

In March of 1980 he escaped prison with a fellow revolutionary after a New Afrikan activist smuggled a revolver and sub-machine gun into the institution. Three days later all three were captured after a gun battle with local, state and county police, and FBI agents.

### ***Camp Hill Prison Riot***

In 1989, Pennsylvania prison Camp Hill erupted in a riot because of overcrowding and inhumane conditions. Despite being held in a Dallas prison and having nothing to do with the incident, Russell was implicated in it and as a result was transferred to the notorious Marion Supermax prison over 1,000 miles from friends, family and supporters.

Supporters fought to have Russell removed from solitary confinement in Marion and released into general population. They were finally successful in December of 1989.

### ***Russell Returns to Solitary Confinement***

Unfortunately Russell was placed back into long-term solitary confinement in 1991 at SCI Greene in Waynesburg, PA. Despite still being held in 23 hour a day lockdown, Russell remains a committed New Afrikan freedom fighter.

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2. *All Power to the People: The Black Panther Party*, a documentary film about the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense produced by Lee Lew Lee. See <http://youtu.be/gO1gPD2G-4>.
3. *Bastards of the Party: The History of LA's notorious Bloods and Crips*, by Cle "Bone" Sloan and Antoine Fuqua.
4. *COINTELPRO 101*, a documentary film by the Freedom Archives.
5. *COINTELPRO: The FBI's War on Black America*, a documentary about the FBI's COunterl-NTelligence PROgram. See <http://youtu.be/Zwdx1ewLBYA>.
6. *Deacons of Defense*, dramatization featuring Forest Whitaker.
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10. "*Let it Burn: The Coming Destruction of the USA*," a documentary about Robert F. Williams. See <http://youtu.be/ryJiMk1aLiY>.
11. "*The Making of a Crip (Eight Tray Gangsta Crips)*", featuring "Monster" Kody Scott and "Lil Monster" Kershaun Scott.
12. "*Negroes with Guns*", documentary about Robert F. Williams and the Black Armed Guard. See <http://youtu.be/CNDMkPt1zCk>.
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# Know Your Rights in a Police Encounter

If we're going to talk about police brutality, it's because police brutality exists. Why does it exist? Because our people in this particular society live in a police state."

Malcolm X

## What is the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement?

The Malcolm X Grassroots Movement is an organization of Afrikans in America/New Afrikans whose mission is to defend the human rights of our people and promote self-determination in our community. We understand that the collective institutions of white-supremacy, patriarchy and capitalism have been at the root of our people's oppression. We understand that without community control and without the power to determine our own lives, we will continue to fall victim to genocide.

Therefore, we seek to heighten our consciousness about self-determination as a human right and a solution to our colonization. While organizing around our principles of unity, we are building a network of Black/New Afrikan activists and organizers committed to the protracted struggle for the liberation of the New Afrikan Nation — By Any Means Necessary!

## What is the Peoples Self-Defense Campaign

**The Peoples' Self-Defense Campaign (PSDC)** observes, documents, and prevents incidents of police misconduct and brutality through educating and organizing our community and supporting survivors/victims of this misconduct.

PSDC recognizes the right of all people to live free of oppression and human rights violations, as well as any community's right to observe and document abuse. People in communities of color are routinely stopped, searched, and detained without probable cause or reasonable suspicion. We believe that increased community control is one solution to this problem.

## Your Rights in the Streets

"The Police must obey the law while enforcing the law"

(Earl Warren, Supreme Court Justice from 1954–1969)

People's experience when dealing with the police may vary. Whether those experiences are positive or negative, it's important that you know your rights. Knowing your rights can help you identify illegal conduct by the police, and help you decide when it's in your interest to talk to them.

This handbook describes many of your rights when approached by the police, including when it's legal for the police to approach, stop, and arrest you. It gives you tips on how to deal with these situations, and what to do if you feel like your rights have been violated. It also answers many commonly asked questions about street encounters with the police.

**Always Remember:**

- Police can always approach you and ask basic questions, like your name and address.
- If you don't want to talk to cops, you can always ask them if you are free to leave.
- You always have the right to remain silent, and in most situations you should exercise that right.

## Some of your constitutional rights

The constitution of the United States includes 27 amendments. Some of these amendments, were added in order to provide additional rights to US citizens-rights that were not originally included in the constitution. Below are the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> amendment rights, which are more important amendments that relate to police encounters on the street.

**The Fourth Amendment: Police cannot unreasonably search or seize (take) you and/or your property.**

*“the right of people to be secure in their person, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and in no warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by the Oath or affirmation and particularly describing the place to be searched, and person or things to be seized.”*

**The Fifth Amendment: You always have the right to remain silent when dealing with police!!!**

*“No person shall be held to answer for a capital or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a grand Jury... nor shall any person ...be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process of the law: nor shall private property be taken for public use without just compensation ”*

## The 4 levels of Police Inquiry

In New York, there are 4 different levels of street encounters with police. At each level, there is a different degree of police interference with your freedom: Level 1 is the lowest, and Level 4 is highest.

### 1. Request for Information

A level 1 request for information is when cops ask you for basic information like your name and address. Legally, cops need to have a reasons before they can stop you, but that reason doesn't have to be suspicion of a crime.

## 2. **Common Law Right to inquiry**

Level 2 inquiries generally include questions that are more detailed than level 1 questions. Police need a “founded suspicion” that criminal activity is going on.

## 3. **Stop and Frisk**

Level 3 stop means not only can the cops ask you many more questions, but at this point, you are not free to leave.

- Cops need reasonable suspicion before they can stop you.
- Cops have reasonable suspicion when they believed that you are involved in criminal activity that has occurred, is occurring, or is about to occur.
- Cops can only frisk you (pat you down) when they have reasonable suspicion to believe you are armed and dangerous.

## 4. **Arrest**

For a level 3 stop to become a level 4 arrest, cops need probable cause. Probable cause means that the cops are sure that you have committed a crime.

# **Level 1: Request for Information**

During a Level 1 request for information cops can ask things like your name, address, and your reason for being where you are at that moment. Although cops have the right to answer you other questions, you do not have to answer questions other than name and where you live. You can refuse to answer other questions.

Examples of level 1 questions:

- “What’s your name”
- “Where do you live”
- “What are you doing here”

**Tip:** In level 1 and 2 stops you are free to go at anytime. Always ask, “Am I free to go” If they yes, than you should leave, IF not than ask why (you have entered level 3)

# **Level 2: Common Law Right to Inquiry**

In a Level 2 encounter cops can questions you when they suspect that you have committed a crime or know something about one. Level 2 inquiries are more detailed questions designed to get answers related to whatever crime it is the cops think is going on. These questions may seem more confrontational than Level 1 questions. Again, ask if you are free to go, if so you do not have to answer these questions.

Examples of Level 2 questions:

- “Have you and your friends been getting into trouble lately?”



- “Who is selling drugs here?”
- “Do you have drugs on you?”

But: you should know that cops can detain you if they have evidence that raises their suspicion to level, which is on the next page.

Tip: You should never lie to a cop. Don’t make up a name, address, or lie about your age. You can get into a lot of trouble. If you don’t want to answer, you should ask if you are free to go. If you are, then you can walk away without answering questions.

### **Level 3: Stop and Frisk**

At Level 3, you are no longer free to leave. To get to a level 3 stop and frisk cops must have reasonable suspicion, which means they think you have committed, are committing, or about to commit a crime. Once this is established, they can detain (stop) you to frisk you on the outside of our clothes (pat you down) if they believe that you are carrying a weapon.

**HOWEVER THEY CAN ONLY LEGALLY GO INSIDE YOUR POCKETS WITH YOUR CONSENT!!!!**

It is illegal for cops to frisk you for drugs or anything else that is not a weapon. When frisking you, it is illegal for cops to go through your pockets unless they think that what they’ve felt is a weapon.

Tip: If the cops ask to go in your pockets, say that you do not consent to a search, if they continue to go into your pockets this is a violation of our 4<sup>th</sup> amendment rights.

Tip: If you are a female being detained, always ask for a female officer to frisk you, police officers must make an attempt to have a female officer frisk you.

### **Level 4: Arrest**

Cops need to have probable cause to arrest you. Cops have probable cause when they have evidence that makes them believe that you have committed, or about to commit a crime. When you are arrested, you are definitely not free to go. Cops have to read you your Miranda rights before they are going to question you about the crime that you are committing.

**But remember even under arrest, you do not have to answer their questions.**

Tip: just because you are in handcuffs does not mean you are under arrest. Handcuffs can mean that you are detained temporarily

Tip: Exercise your right to remain silent and DO NOT discuss your charges with the police. Only give name, address and Date of Birth. If you give a false name you can be charged with “False Personation,” which is an A Misdemeanor.

### **Arrest-Arraignment Chart**

When taken to Precinct

- Police will ask you for name/Addy/SS/ DOB

- Police will search you and voucher (store) your property
- *You will be given a paper for your vouchered property you can pick up later. You Must have ID to get property at precinct*
- **Note: contraband: (weapons, drugs,) will not be returned and will be held as evidence**
- Police will process your information (to verify who
- you are and check for outstanding warrants)
- You are allowed up to 3 in-state phone calls (**DO NOT discuss your charges on the phone**)
- If you have been injured by the police, ask to go to the hospital.

#### **NEXT STEPS: (Desk Appearance Ticket (DAT) or Central Booking)**

If you receive a DAT, you will be released from the precinct, but required to show up to court. If you do not get a DAT, you will be taken to Central Booking

Tip: If you don't show up to court for a DAT, it will turn into a warrant, and you will be arrested next time you are stopped by the police, even if you are not doing anything illegal!!!!

## **Central Booking and Arraignment**

(page 21 has phone numbers for NY central booking units)

- Each borough has a central booking, where you will wait for arraignment
- You will be given a meal (cheese sandwiches if you don't eat meat)

**Arraignment:** Formal court process where you are read the charges against you.

- Your Lawyer (court appointed or private) will discuss criminal charges and explain what you should expect when you go before the judge
- If the case isn't disposed of in arraignment, the judge may set bail based on
  - A. The seriousness of the case and/or
  - B. Your previous contacts with the criminal system.

If you've had recent bench warrants issued for not returning to court, even though the warrant was vacated, bail will likely be set.

- Unless you take a plea, you won't be asked to speak, so if you want to say something tell your lawyer. It's always a bad idea to say anything incriminating on the record hoping the court will understand.

**Tip: Arraignments go by fast, so if something happens that you don't understand or think may result in an unfavorable outcome, don't hesitate to ask your attorney and always get your attorney's name and number!!!!!!**

## Police and Car Stops

If the cops legally stop you (i.e., you did not signal for a turn, speeding) they cannot search the trunk or glove compartment without your consent. To protect yourself do not consent to a search of your trunk or glove compartment.

When stopped, give the proper identification (license, registration, insurance) and always asked why you were stopped. If they refuse to tell you continue to ask in a calm fashion. YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO KNOW WHY YOU WERE BEING PULLED OVER. If you feel afterwards that the reason for car being pulled over was illegal please see page...

Anything illegal the police see in plain view of your vehicle, allows them to search your vehicle and possibly arrest you.

Tip: Always keep your doors locked and windows rolled up, so the police cannot come into your car without your consent.

Tip: If contraband (drugs, weapons, open containers of alcohol are found in the car, everyone in the car can be arrested, even if it's not yours.

## When Police come to your house

When police come to your house, they will either have a warrant, or there will be a call about activity in your house.

If they have a search warrant, that means they can legally search in your property for evidence (physical or a person) related to a criminal investigation.

- ask them to slide the warrant under the door
- read the entire warrant, to see where they can search and where they can
- understand that anything illegal in plain view can get you arrested (even if it is not in the warrant)

If they do not have a warrant (for example there was calls about noise complaints, or domestic violence), police can arrest you for anything found in your house. Always step outside your door to speak with police so that there might be other witnesses outside of your house that can verify if police misconduct happens.

Exigent Circumstances: These are the only times you have to let police into your house.

If:

- The police are chasing someone and they run into your house
- The police believe that evidence is being destroyed
- The police believe that a crime is occurring your house when they arrive

**These are called exigent circumstances, where the police are allowed to search your house without a warrant!!!!**

## **When cops break the rules: what can you do**

### **File a complaint with the CCRB. New York City Civilian Complaint Review Board**

**The CCRB is an independent non-police city agency (all members are non-police civilians). It has the power to receive, investigate, deliberate and recommend action on complaints against the NYPD misconduct (including: excessive or unnecessary force, abuse of authority)**

#### **Who can file a complaint?**

##### **You can file a complaint:**

- at any age
- in any language
- if you are in jail
- anonymously
- If you witnessed police misconduct (but are not the victim)

#### **There are 5 ways to file a complaint**

- Call 1-800-341-CCRB (2272)
- Call 311
- Go to the CCRB office 40 rector street 2<sup>nd</sup> floor NY, NY 10006 (M-F 8am-6pm)
- Send a letter to the above address
- File a complaint online at [www.nyc.gov](http://www.nyc.gov)

## **The Role of the Community**

Since the question of police abuse is a community issue, it is in the interest of the community to prepare for the ever-increasing incidents of police brutality and wrongful death.

1. Institute a Rapid Response Team (this includes):
  - Doctors and lawyers who will respond quickly in these emergencies
  - Journalists who will come out to the scene and report these incidents as soon as they occur.
  - Develop and identify experts such as independent pathologists and investigators.
2. Raise Funds to pay for services needed to assist families and individuals who may need assistance. This kind of community support was used extensively in the South during the Civil Rights Era.

3. Community Patrols; Organize community members to do weekly patrols of the police while they are in the community. Take down badge numbers, names and take pictures so that you can keep a record of the known police in the community. Further get a cam-corder and a scanner so that you can respond to police calls and monitor their behavior in the community.

**To get involved, call the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement:  
718.254.8800**

## **Resources if you feel you are the victim of police abuse**

### **Legal Help**

- Civilian Complaint Review Board 800.341.CCRB (2272) or call 311
- L.D. Favors Law Group 347-713-7061 [www.ldfavorslawgroup.com/](http://www.ldfavorslawgroup.com/)
- New York Civil Liberties Union 212.607.3300
- Neighborhood Defenders Service (Harlem Residents Only) 212.876.5500
- Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund 212.966.5932
- NAACP Legal Defense Fund 212.219.1572
- National Lawyers Guild New York Office 212.679.5100
- Lambda Legal Defense Fund 212.809.8585
- South Brooklyn Legal Services 718.237.5500
- Sylvia Rivera Law Project 212.337.8550

### **Specifically for Youth**

- Urban Justice Center Lesbian and Gay Youth Project 646.602.5600

### **Non-Legal Hotlines and Community Groups**

- Malcolm X Grassroots Movement 718.254.8800
- Justice Committee: 212-614-5343
- CAAAV Organizing Asian Communities 212.473.6485
- AudreLorde Project Center for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered and Two-Spirited People of Color 718.596.0342
- Gay and Lesbian Anti-Violence Project 212.714.1141

***If you need information about a friend or relative who has been arrested t Central Book-  
ing in your Borough***

Bronx	718.374.5880
Brooklyn	718.875.6586
Manhattan	212.374.5880
Queens	718.268.4528
Staten Island	718.876.8490

**This workshop handbook was developed by the Malcolm X Grassro Movement and made possible by the generous support of:**

The Members of the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement  
The New York Foundation  
The Union Square Award Community Training & Assistance Center  
The North Star Fund  
Active Elements Foundation

# Do You Get Harrased, Stopped, or Arrested by the cops? Know Your Rights!

Malcolm X Grassroots Movement

Every year thousands of people are improperly stopped, detained, arrested, brutalized and even murdered by the police. Young people of Afrikan descent are frequent targets of the cops. Although most cops don't respect them, you do have legal rights.

## IF THE COPS STOP YOU ...

- Stay calm; don't physically resist or run — you might get shot!
- Ask: "Am I free to go?" If they say yes, walk away calmly. If they say no, ask if you are "being detained."
- If you are being detained, you cannot leave until the cops say so, otherwise you will get arrested.
- Remember the badge number, name, and physical description of the cop(s) who stopped you.
- You are not legally required to show your ID or give personal information. However, if you do decide to talk, say as little as possible, and only answer their basic questions (name and address). Talking to police will NEVER help you.
- They can only LEGALLY search you if they think you are armed and dangerous.

## IF THE COPS SEARCH YOU

- They can only LEGALLY search you for weapons, NOT for drugs.
- Say loudly "I DO NOT CONSENT to this search" so that others around can hear you.
- Cops may search you illegally, but your lawyer might be able to get the evidence thrown out in court if the search was illegal.
- If you are a woman, you may request that a female cop search you (although this is not guaranteed).

## **IF THE COPS ARREST YOU**

- Don't say ANYTHING — Just ask for a lawyer! Don't talk to the police, speak on videotape, talk to a District Attorney, or other inmates about anything that has to do with the crime you may have been arrested for.
- You will be handcuffed, searched, photographed, and fingerprinted.
- Do not sign anything!! Cops are trained to trick you.
- You may not find out what you are being arrested for until your arraignment or desk appearance.

## **IF THE COPS INTERROGATE YOU**

- Say the following: "I want a lawyer" AND "I am going to remain silent." These are your Miranda Rights and you MUST make those statements in order to exercise them. Don't forget!
- After making the above statements, the cops MUST stop interrogating you.
- Cops MUST read you your Miranda Rights before they interrogate you.

## **IF YOU ARE IN A CAR ...**

- If cops legally stop you and see something illegal in "plain view," they can search your car without a warrant.
- If cops legally stop you they can frisk the driver and search the passenger compartment — they CANNOT search your trunk. Even if they arrest you — they CANNOT search your trunk on the scene.
- However, if cops have reasonable suspicion that something in your trunk contains illegal contraband OR if the car is impounded, cops can search the ENTIRE car (including the trunk).
- Never consent to a search of your car — even if you have nothing illegal.

## **IF YOU ARE UNDER 16 ...**

- Cops have to make a "reasonable effort" to reach your parent/guardian before they can start interrogating you. Your parent/guardian is allowed to sit in the room with you while you're being interrogated.
- Remember that even if your parent/guardian is there, you should still ALWAYS ask to speak to a lawyer before answering questions.
- Cops can stop you if you are hanging out during school time or if they suspect you are a runaway.



## **Need info on a friend/relative who's been arrested?**

Call Central Booking in that borough:

Bronx: 718-681-0406

Brooklyn: 718-834-5318

Manhattan: 212-374-2921

Queens: 718-268-4498

Staten Island: 718-876-8493

“If we’re going to talk about police brutality, it’s because police brutality exists. Why does police brutality exist? Because our people in this particular society live in a police state.”

~ *Malcolm X*

If you need legal representation or advice on a police abuse or brutality case please call one of the following organizations:

Malcolm X Grassroots Movement: 646-481-8136

Neighborhood Defenders Service of Harlem (Harlem Residents Only): 212-876-5500

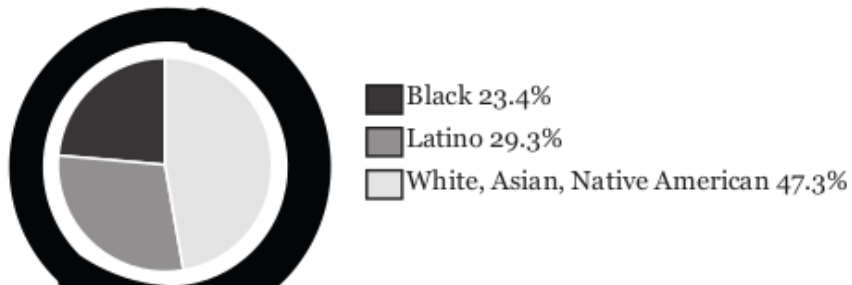
National Lawyers Guild: 212-679-5100

New York Civil Liberties Union: 212-607-3300

Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR): 212-614-6464

## **NYPD Data 2010–2011**

## Total NYC Population (Census 2010)



## Total NYC Police Stops (Stop-and-Frisk 2011)



**Total NYPD Stop-and-Frisks  
2011**



**Total NYPD Stop-and-Frisks  
2002**



97,296

684,330 (603% increase)

Data taken from NYCLU  
New York Civil Liberties Union (<http://www.nyclu.org>)

## **Malcolm X Grassroots Movement**

The Malcolm X Grassroots Movement is an organization of Afrikans in America / New Afrikans whose mission is to defend the human rights of our people and promote self-determination in our community. In order to survive as a people, it is necessary that we not only **UNDERSTAND OUR RIGHTS** but also **DEFEND THEM**.

MXGM's People's Self-Defense Campaign (PSDC) observes, documents, and prevents incidents of police misconduct and brutality through educating and organizing our community and supporting survivors/victims of this misconduct.

### **The Goals of PSDC**

1. Immediately convict all police officers guilty of misconduct in our community.
2. Fire Ray Kelly and make the role of Police Commissioner an elected position.
3. Community Control: we determine how our community is policed.
4. Independent investigations of ALL Police killings.
5. End to militarized anti-crime programs such as Operation Impact.

*This program is not intended to engage police in conflict. It is geared to see that we are protected from widespread abuses that have become commonplace and have largely gone without punishment.*

### **Malcolm X >Grassroots Movement**

PO BOX 471711  
Brooklyn, NY 11247  
<https://www.mxgm.org>  
(646) 481.8136

# Cop Watch Program

Malcolm X Grassroots Movement

## Equipment Required:

QUANTITY	ITEM
2	Camcorders
3	Walkie Talkies/Cell Phones
3	Tape Recorder
1	Cellular Telephone
1	Police Scanner
2	Copies of Police Patrol Guide
1	Mic Transmitter
1	35mm Camera (optional)
2	Binoculars
6	Whistles (optional)

## Team Descriptions & Duties

There are three teams. When each team is operating at full capacity, total Police Watch personnel should total (9). There must be a total of (9) team members including one **legal panel member** in order for the program to operate. Under no circumstances will the program operate with less than a total of (9) team members.

**Team One** is the primary team and consists of four members (A, B, C, & D). They are the first level of engagement. This team will be the first on the scene and will determine if further involvement during police activity is necessary. Once they decide to activate Cop Watch, all eyes are on them.

**Team Two** is the secondary team and consists of three members (E, F, & G). They are “back-up” for team one and will capture footage from a distance.

**Team Three** is at the base and consists of two members (H & I).

**Team Member Criteria** – Persons participating in teams must:

- Be a member of the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement (except legal panel)
- Be 18 years or older
- Have no outstanding warrants in the United States or abroad
- If convicted of a crime, have completed sentence, parole or probation

- Be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident
- Have 20/20 vision or wear corrective lenses

***All Cop Watch Team Members/Patrollers must meet these criteria. However, there are ways that people who do not fit these criteria can and should participate***

**Team Member Equipment & Duties**

- **Team One**

- **Team Member A**

- \* *Equipment:* Camcorder and extra battery
- \* *Duties:* Direct filming of agreed upon police encounters. Team member A must know confrontation statement verbatim. He/she should also be skilled in conflict resolution.

- **Team Member B**

- \* *Equipment:* Mic Transmitter, Tape Recorder, Political Education Materials
- \* *Duties:* Disseminate Know Your Rights brochures and insure that Team Member A's filming is not interrupted. Member B is most likely to engage the police in confrontation. Therefore it is necessary for B to be well versed in search and seizure laws, and guidelines and laws pertaining to police practices and procedures, amongst other things. B should be able to articulate to the police and public the goals of the Cop Watch Program. B should also have the temperament and skill to verbally diffuse hostile situations.

- **Team Member C**

- \* *Equipment:* Walkie-Talkie, Still Camera, Listening Device
- \* *Duties:* Maintain constant communication with Teams 2 and 3. Watch and listen intently to the interaction between Member B and the police. Carefully determine the level of the police interaction and be prepared to notify Team 2 to begin deployment and/or to notify Team 3 to initiate the rapid response network and deploy legal assistance.

- **Team Member D**

- \* *Equipment:* Valid Driver's License with no outstanding infractions
- \* *Duties:* Operate the vehicle, which will contain Team One. Member D will insure that the vehicle is secured and in close proximity of the encounter site at all times. D should also be well versed in the target area.

- **Team Two**

- **Team Member E**

- \* *Equipment:* Camcorder, and extra battery

- \* *Duties:* Film Team One and all police encounters. E must know confrontation statement verbatim. He/she should also be skilled in conflict resolution.

– **Team Member F**

- \* *Equipment:* Walkie Talkie, Political Education Material, Binoculars
- \* *Duties:* Disseminate brochures and insure that E’s filming is not interrupted. Team Member F is likely to engage the police in confrontation. If necessary, he/she will “back-up” Member B and/or replace B if he/she is arrested. Therefore, it is necessary for F to be well versed in search and seizure laws, and guidelines and laws pertaining to police practices and procedures, amongst other things. F should be able to articulate to the police and public the goals of the Cop Watch Program. F should also have the temperament and skill to verbally diffuse hostile situations. While in the vehicle, F is responsible for communicating via walkie-talkie with the Team Three.

– **Team Member G**

- \* *Equipment:* Valid Driver’s License with no outstanding infractions
- \* *Duties:* Operate the vehicle, which will contain Team Two. Team Member G will insure that the vehicle is secured and in close proximity of the encounter site at all times. G should also be well versed in the target area.

• **Team 3 – Base**

– **Team Member H**

- \* *Equipment:* Scanner, Walkie-Talkie, Telephone, Rapid Response List, Media List
- \* *Duties:* Monitor the police scanner and communicate the information to C & F. H must be prepared to deploy Team member I (legal panel member) and to initiate the rapid response network.

– **Team Member I – Legal Panel**

- \* *Equipment:* CellularTelephone
- \* *Duties:* Be on-call during patrols and prepared to respond to emergencies, travel to precincts and incident sites, and provide legal representation

## Legal Panel Description

While putting together this program, we have identified a certain area in which we need assistance; one of these is that of legal counsel. We need to know the rights of people being stopped, searched, or arrested as well as our rights when conducting the Cop Watch Program. Specifically, legal team members will do the following:

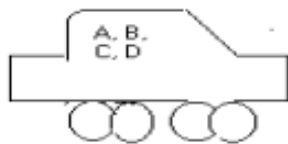
1. Training patrol team members on relevant aspects of the law to prepare them to handle certain scenarios/confrontations

2. Be on-call during patrols and prepared to respond to emergencies, travel to precincts and incident sites, and provide legal representation
3. Provide legal expertise on the development and implementation of the Cop Watch Program and occasionally may be called upon to answer questions and provide additional training.
4. Participate/Volunteer every other month in a weekly **“Police Brutality Free Legal Clinic”** or MXGM’s Know Your Rights Workshop.
5. Regularly accept Police Misconduct Cases referred to her/him by MXGM.

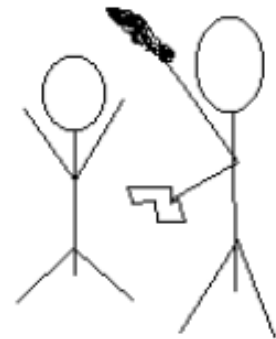
## **Cop Watch Diagram**



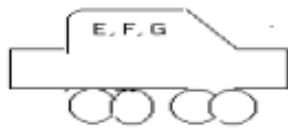
**Team One**



**Police Encounter**



**Team Two**



**Team Three**



## Possible Scenarios for Discussion

- Weapons drawn
- Cops beating up someone
- Stop and frisk
- Hot pursuit
- Arrest in progress

## Deployment Agreement

- There must be a consensus from team member A & B to get out of the car
- Team member B only addresses the crowd as a group. He/she does not get into individual discussions while incident is occurring.
- Team member B does not address the police unless spoken to. Then, he/she can respond.
- If the cops tell us to leave, we would state that we have the right to be there.
- If the cops demand that we step back, we do so but refuse to leave because we have a right to be there.
- If the cops tell us to stop filming, we refuse to because we have the right to film.
- If a cop draws his gun and demands we put the camera down, we comply.
- If a cop pulls his nightstick and demands we put the cameras down, we step back and assess the situation and make a further judgment.
- If we are threatened with arrest, we refuse step back and explain that we have a right to be there and to film.
- If a team member is arrested, the member does not resist and all team move into rapid response mode.
- If cops are beating someone we determine a means for distraction, while at the same time, attracting the attention of the community.

<http://mxgm.org/report-on-the-extrajudicial-killings-of-110-black-people/>

<http://www.dhs.gov/state-and-major-urban-area-fusion-centers>

OPD accountable by instituting a Community Control Board that has the power and authority to hire, fire, subpoena, monitor, approve and disapprove budgets and policies.

*population in Oakland, changing over yrs with homicides, drug busts, brutality cases, extrajudicial killings.)*

the CCB (following just rules of evidence) that there was no other way to prevent the killing of a member of the public or OPD.

The Anarchist Library (Mirror)  
Anti-Copyright



Malcolm X Grassroots Movement  
Let Your Motto Be Resistance  
A Handbook on Organizing New Afrikan and Oppressed Communities for Self-Defense  
March 2013

Retrieved on 2020-09-03 from  
<https://www.scribd.com/document/218033423/Let-Your-Motto-Be-Resistance-Self-Defense-Man>

A Every 36 Hours Campaign Resource. On Occasion of the 170 th Anniversary of Henry Highland Garnet's speech at the 1843 National Negro Convention entitled, "An Address to the Slaves of the United States." To read the speech visit  
<http://www.blackpast.org/?q=1843-henry-highland-garnet-address-slaves-united-states>.

Written by Kali Akuno for the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement. Support provided by Arlene Eisen, Sacajawea Hall, Doug Norberg, Jamal P. Oliver, and Linda Thani.

**[usa.anarchistlibraries.net](http://usa.anarchistlibraries.net)**