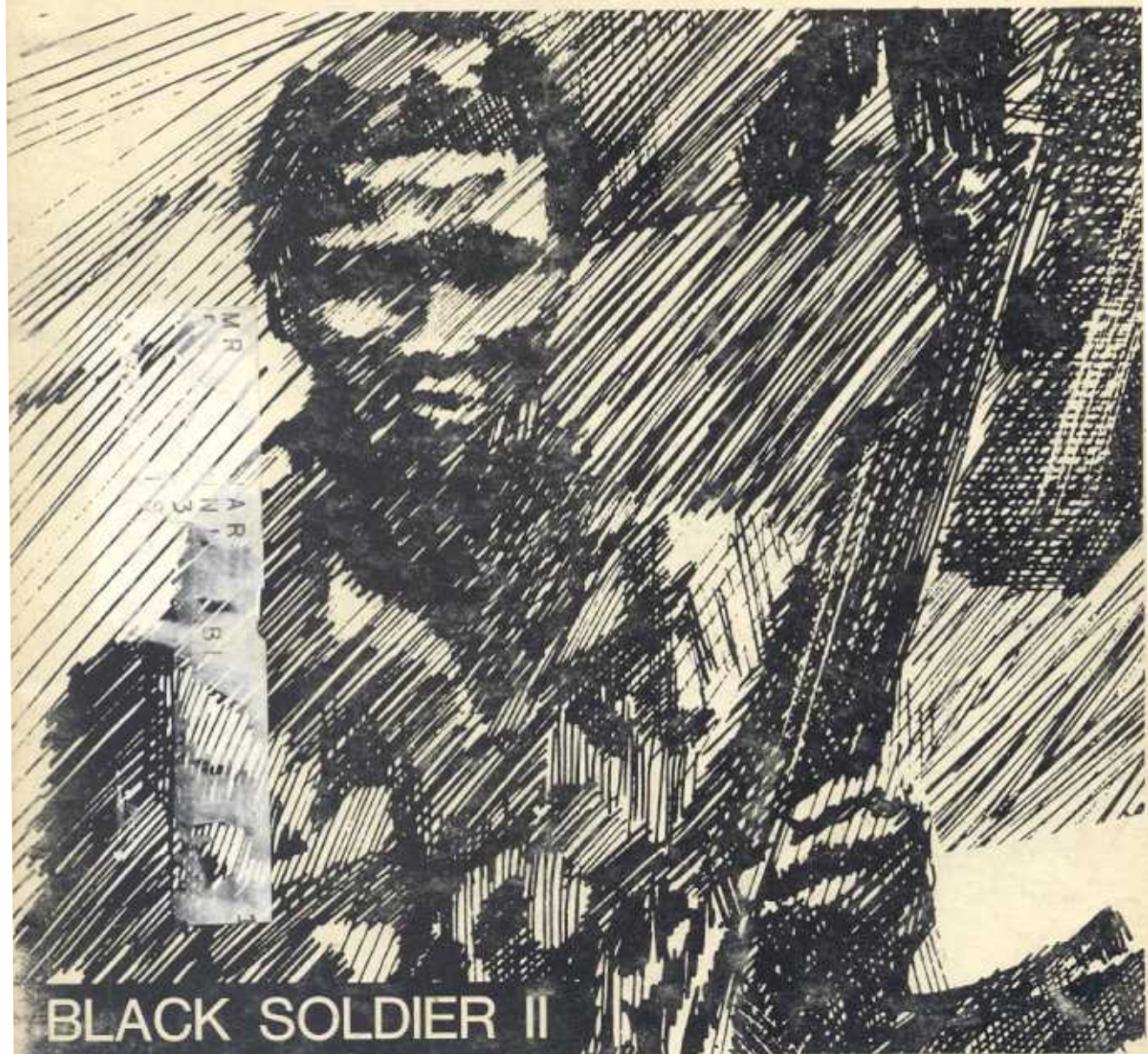


THE BLACKSCHOLAR



FEATURING AN ARTICLE BY

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TO MY PEOPLE

by JOANNE CHESIMARD

JOANNE CHESIMARD, whom police claim to be the top leader of the Black Liberation Army, was indicted in August 1973 on murder, kidnapping and robbery charges. Eight men, said to be members of the BLA, have also been indicted. Police authorities claim that a BLA conspiracy is responsible for the deaths of several policemen in New York, New Jersey, and possibly other states. However, journalists and black leaders point that there is no hard evidence to support this "conspiracy theory" of a BLA plot to kill policemen. The present plight of Joanne Chesimard stems from a shooting incident on the New Jersey Turnpike, the details of which are still unclear. Last May, she and Clark Squire

and Zayd Malik Shakur were driving on the Turnpike when they were stopped by the highway patrol. Shooting erupted and in the aftermath Chesimard was wounded and a trooper and Shakur were killed. Squire and Chesimard were arrested and charged with murdering both the trooper and Shakur. They are presently imprisoned in New Jersey and awaiting trial. For more information contact: National Committee for the Defense of Joanne Chesimard and Clark Squire, P.O. Box 1352, Harlem, New York 10027. The following is the text of a letter, entitled "To My People," which Joanne Chesimard wrote from prison.

BLACK BROTHERS, BLACK SISTERS, I want you to know that I love you and I hope somewhere in your heart you have love for me. My name is Assata Shakur (slave name JoAnne Chesimard), and I am a field nigga who is determined to be free by any means necessary. By that I mean that I can never be free unless all my people are free along with me. By that I mean that I have declared war on all forces that have raped our women, castrated our men and kept our babies empty bellied.

I have declared war on the rich who prosper on our poverty, the politicians who lie to us with smiling faces, and all the mindless heartless robots who protected them and their property.

I am a black revolutionary, and as such I am the victim of all the wrath, hatred and slander that amerikkka is capable of. Like all other black revolutionaries I have been hunted like a dog, and like all other black revolutionaries, amerikkka is trying to lynch me.

I am a black revolutionary woman and because of this I have been charged with and accused of every alleged crime in which a woman was believed to have participated. The alleged crimes in which only men were supposed involved, I have been accused of planning. They plastered pictures alleged to be me in post ffices, airports, hotels, police cars, subways, banks, television, and newspapers. They offered over fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) in rewards for my capture and they issued orders to shoot on sight and to shoot kill.

I am a black revolutionary and, by definition, that makes me part of the Black Liberation Army. The pigs have used their newspapers and TV's to paint the Black Liberation Army to be vicious, brutal mad dog criminals. They have called us gangsters and gun molls and have compared us to such characters as John Dillinger and Ma Barker. It should be clear, it must be clear to anyone who can think, see or hear, that we are the victims. The victims are not the criminals.

It should also be clear to us by now who the real criminals are. Nixon and his crime partners have murdered hundreds of thousands of Third World brothers and sisters in Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Mozambique, Angola and South Africa. As was proven by the Watergate, the top law enforcement officials in this country are a lying bunch of criminals. The president, two attorney generals, the head of the FBI, the head of the CIA, and half the White House staff have been implicated in the Watergate crimes.

THEY CALL US MURDERERS, but we did not murder over 250 unarmed black men, women and children, and wound thousands of others in the riots they provoked during the Sixties. The rulers of this country have always considered their property more important than our lives. They call us murders, but we were not responsible for the more than 6,000 black people lynched by white racists. They call us murders, but we were not responsible for the 28 brother inmates and the 9 hostages murdered at Attica. They call us murders, but we did not murder and wound over 30 unarmed black students in the Orangeburg massacre. We did not shoot down and murder unarmed black students at Jackson State or Southern State either.

They call us murders but we did not murder Martin Luther King, Emmit Till, Medger Evers, Malcolm X, George Jackson, Nat Turner, James Chaney and countless other black Freedom Fighters. We did not bomb 4 black little girls in a Sunday school. We did not murder, by shooting in the back, 16 year old Rita Llyod, 11-year old Rickie Bodden, or 10-year old Clifford Glover.

They call us murders, but we did not control or enforce a system of racism and oppression that sytematically murders black and Third World people. Although black people supposedly comprise about 15% of the total amerikkkan population, at least 60% of murder victims are black. For every pig that is killed in the so-called line of duty there are at least 50 black people murdered by police.

Black life expectancy is much lower than white and they do their best to kill us before we are born. We are burned alive in fire-trap tenements. Our brothers and sisters O.D. daily from heroin and methadone. Our babies die from lead poisoning. Millions of black people have died as a result of indecent medical care. This is murder. But they have the gall to call us murders.

THEY CALL US KIDNAPPERS, yet Brother Clark Squire (who is accused along with me, of murdering a New Jersey state trooper), was kidnapped on April 2, 1969, from our black community and held on \$100,000 ransom in the New York Panther 21 conspiracy case. He was acquitted on May 13, 1971 along with all the others of all 156 counts of conspiracy by a jury that took less than 2 hours to deliberate. Brother Squire was innocent. Yet he was kidnapped from his community and family. Over two years of his life were stolen, but they call us kidnappers. They call us kidnappers, but we did not kidnap the thousands of Brothers and Sisters held captive in amerikkka's concentration camps. 90% of the prison population in this country are black and Third World people who can afford neither bail nor lawyers.

They call us thieves and bandits. They say we steal. But it was not us who stole millions of black people from the continent of Africa. We were robbed of our language, of our gods, of our culture, of our human dignity, of our labor and of our lives. They call us thieves yet it is not us who rip off billions of dollars every year through tax evasions, illegal price fixing, embezzlement, consumer fraud, bribes, kickbacks and swindles. They call us bandits, yet every time most black people pick up our paychecks we are being robbed. Every time we walk into a store in our neighborhood we are being held up. And every time we pay our rent the landlord sticks a gun in our ribs.

They call us thieves, but we did not rob and murder millions of Indians by ripping off their homeland, then call ourselves pioneers. They call us bandits, but it is not us who are robbing Africa, Asia and Latin America of their natural resources and freedom while the people are sick and starving. The rulers of this country and their flunkies have committed some of the most brutal, vicious crimes in history. They are the bandits. They are the murderers. And they should be treated as such. These maniacs are not fit to judge me, Clark Squire, or any other black person on trial in amerikkka. Black people should, and, inevitably must, determine our destinies.

EVERY REVOLUTION IN HISTORY has been accomplished by actions, although words are necessary. We must create shields that protect us and spears that penetrate our enemies. Black people must learn how to struggle by struggling. We must learn much by our mistakes.

I want to apologize to you, my black brothers and sisters, for being on the New Jersey Turnpike. I should have known better. The Turnpike is a check point where black people are stopped, searched, harrassed, and assaulted. Revolutionaries must never be in too much of a hurry or make careless decisions. He who runs when the sun is sleeping will stumble many times.

Every time a black freedom fighter is murdered or captured the pigs try to create the impression that they have squashed the movement, destroyed our forces and put down the Black Revolution. The pigs also try to give the impression that 5 or 10 guerillas are responsible for every revolutionary action carried out in amerikkka. That is nonsense. That is absurd. Black revolutionaries do not drop from the moon. We are created by our conditions, shaped by our oppression. We are being manufactured in droves in ghetto streets; places like Attica, San Quentin, Bedford Hills, Leavenworth and Sing Sing. They are turning out thousands of us. Many jobless black veterans and welfare mothers are joining our ranks. Brothers and sisters from all walks of life who are tired of suffering passively make up the Black Liberation Army.

There is and always will be, until every black man, woman and child is free, a Black Liberation Army. The main function of the Black Liberation Army at this time is to create good examples to struggle for black freedom and to prepare for the future. We must defend ourselves and let no one disrespect us. We must gain our liberation by any means necessary.

It is our duty to fight for our freedom.

It is our duty to win.

We must love each other and support each other.

We have nothing to lose but our chains!

IN THE SPIRIT OF:

RONALD CARTER

WILLIAM CHRISTMAS

MARK CLARK

MARK ESSEX

FRANK HEAVY FIELDS

WOODY CHANGA OLUGBALA GREEN

FRED HAMPTON

LIL' BOBBY HUTTON

GEORGE JACKSON

JONATHAN JACKSON

JAMES MCMCLAIN

HAROLD RUSSELL

ZAYD MALIK SHAKUR

ANTHONY KIMU OLUGBALA WHI

We must fight