

Armed Defense of The Black Commune and Community

Black Autonomy Federation

December 3, 2012

“Our insistence on military action, defensive and retaliatory, has nothing to do with romanticism or precipitous idealist fervor. We want to be effective. We want to live. Our history teaches us that the successful liberation struggles require an armed people, a whole people, actively participating in the struggle for their liberty!”

— George Jackson, quoted in *Blood in my Eye*

We must organize self-defense units to protect the Black community and its organizations. It is the police and the government who are the main perpetrators of violence against Black people. Every day we read of the police murdering and maiming the people in our community, all in the name of “law and order.” This police brutality has included the use of deadly force against children as young as five years old and elderly persons over 75 years old! We must disarm and demilitarize the police, and force them to leave our community.

Perhaps this can be done after a rebellion or insurrection drives them out, or perhaps they will have to be driven out by a street guerrilla force, like the Black Liberation Army tried to do in the 1970s. We have no way of knowing. We just know that they have to go. They are an oppressive occupying army, are not of our community, cannot understand its problems, and do not identify with its people and their needs. Further, it is the corruption of the cops that protects organized crime and vice in our community, and Capitalism with its exploitative economic conditions which is responsible for all crime.

Existing police forces should be replaced with the Black community’s own self-defense force, made up of members of our community elected or appointed by their neighbors to that position, or from an existing street guerrilla force or political organization if the people agree. They would be subject to immediate recall and dismissal by the Community Control boards of an area. This is only so that we will have community control of the self-defense force, and begin to deal with fratricidal Black-on-Black crime, and be able to defend ourselves from white racist or police attacks. With the increase of white racist violence today, and the possibility of white mob action in the future, usually in the name of “law and order,” this community self-defense force is most important. The only question is: can we do this now?

We exist now under conditions of nominal legality and civil rights, but at some stage in the process of building up our forces, it is inevitable that the white power structure will recognize the danger to itself represented by such a free Black commune, and will then try to forcibly repress it. We must have the self-defense capability to resist.

This concept of organizing a self- defense force accepts any level of violence that will be necessary to enforce the demands of the people and workers. Yet these self-defense forces would not be a “party vanguard,” a police force, or even a standing army in the Statist or usually thought of sense; they would be a Black Peoples’ militia, self-managed by the workers and community itself: in other words, the people-in-arms. These militia organizations will allow us to engage in offensive or defensive actions, either in general community defense, or as part of an insurrection or underground resistance.

But what do we do right now in conditions of legality, to reclaim our community from violent racist cops? Do we sit around and debate the appropriateness of military preparation, when the enemy is in our community now, committing rape and murder of Black people or do we hit back? How do we even get the idea across to our people and start to train them for paramilitary operations? On a mass scale, We advocate the immediate formation of defense and survival skills study groups, under the guise of gun clubs, martial arts societies, wilderness survival clubs or whatever we need to call them. A thorough understanding of marksmanship, ammunition fabrication, demolition and weapon manufacturing is minimal for everyone.

In addition, we should study first aid pertaining to the rather traumatic injuries sustained from gunfire and explosives, combat communications, combat weapons, combat tactics for the small group, combat strategy for the region or nation, combat intelligence of police and military activities among other subjects. These subjects are indispensable if too live underground or during a general insurrection.

We should put emphasis on the purchase, collection, duplication and dissemination of military manuals, gun-smithing textbooks, explosive and improvised demolitions manuals, police and government technical manuals, and pirated editions of right-wing manuals on the subject (since they seem to write the best material in this area), and also begin the study of how to build intelligence networks to collect information on the rapidly growing Skinhead and other totalitarian racist organizations, along with intelligence and counter-intelligence information on the government secret police and law enforcement agencies, like the FBI, CIA, ATF, etc., and on any and every other subject which could be of use to us in the coming struggle.

Even though in the United States, development of military skills and self defense is simpler than many other countries because arms and ammunition are widely available, it is logical to assume that the arms situation will soon be so tight so as to make firearms virtually unobtainable, except through an expensive Black market because of the government’s “war on drugs” and other proposed gun control legislation to prevent street violence,” or so they say (Do you think the sporting goods stores will be open during an insurrection?) Therefore we should learn to use machine tool technology to produce our own weapons. Perfectly adequate firearms may be produced using a minimum of machine tools, providing the individual or group is willing to do the necessary studying and preparation. It is not enough to know a little about these subjects; it is a matter of future survival — of life and death that one be highly proficient.

We are not advocating the immediate waging of urban guerilla warfare, especially where there is no mass base for such activities. What we are advocating at this stage is armed self-defense and the knowledge of tactics to resist military aggression against the Black community. It is a foolish

and unfortunate trait among Anarchists, the white left and sections of the Black movement to condemn the study of military tactics as premature or adventuristic, or on the other hand, to cast oneself into a blind fury of bank expropriations, kidnappings, bombings or plane hijackings. Too many people in the movement have a death trip approach to guns — they assume if you are not “fooling around,” then you should prove your convictions via a suicidal shootout in the streets. It doesn’t have to be that way.

But the Black movement doesn’t even have the luxury of such tepid debates, and must have an armed defense policy because America has a long tradition of government political repression and vigilante paramilitary violence. Although such attacks have been directed primarily at Blacks and other oppressed nationalities in the past, they have also been directed at labor unions and dissident political groups. Such violence makes it absolutely necessary to acquire familiarity with firearms and military tactics. In fact, the Black Resistance movement that we spoke of earlier should think of itself as a paramilitary movement, rather than a strict political association.

We must assert our rights to armed self-defense and revolution, even though it is true that there is a lot of loose talk about guns, self defense, revolution, “urban guerilla warfare,” etc., in the Black and radical movements, but with very little study and practice in handling and using weapons. Some of the same folks think “picking up the gun” means that you pick one up for the first time on the day of an insurrection or confrontation with police. This is nonsense and is the real “revolutionary suicide,” you could get led not knowing what you are doing. But many instances attest to the fact that armed community self defense can be carried out successfully, such as the MOVE resistance in Philadelphia, the Republic of New Africa armed resistance in Detroit and Mississippi and the Black Panther cases. Even as important as the act of defense itself is, is the fact that these instances of successful self -defense have made a tremendous impact on the Black community, encouraging other acts of resistance.

Insurrection:

But what is a rebellion and how does it differ from an insurrection? An insurrection is a general uprising against the power structure. It is usually a sustained rebellion over the course of days, weeks, months or even years. It is a type of class war that involves a whole population in an act of armed or semi-armed resistance. Sometimes mistakenly called a rebellion, its character is far more combative and revolutionary. Rebellions are almost totally spontaneous, short-term affairs. An insurrection is also not the revolution, SINCE REVOLUTION IS A SOCIAL PROCESS, RATHER THAN A SINGLE EVENT, but it can be an important part of the revolution, maybe its final phase. An insurrection is a planned violent protest campaign which takes the spontaneous revolt of the masses to a higher level. Revolutionaries intervene to push rebellions to insurrectionary stage, and the insurrection to a social revolution. It is not small, isolated pockets of urban guerillas taking actions, unless those guerillas are part of a larger revolt.

The importance of recognizing the true differences of each level can define our strategy and tactics at that stage, and not lead us prematurely into a full offensive, when the enemy is not yet weakened enough by mass action or political attacks. The importance of also recognizing the true causes of the revolt cannot be understated. Anarchist revolutionaries intervene in such struggles to show people how to resist and the possibilities of winning freedom. We want to take the people’s rebellions against the state and use them to weaken the rule of Capital. We want to create resistance on a longer term and to win liberated zones to disconnect these communities from the state means that these rebellions will assume a conscious political character like the Palestinian Intifada in the occupied territories controlled by Israel in the Middle East.

Creating the possibility of a Black insurrection means popularizing and spreading the various rebellions to other cities, towns and even countries, and increasing them in number and frequency. It also means consciously nullifying the power of the state, instead of temporary revolts against it, which ultimately preserves its power. There must be a deliberate attempt to push the government out of existence, and establish People's Power. This has not yet happened with the various Black revolts we have seen since 1964, when the first such modern revolt erupted in Harlem, NY.

In the 1960s, the Black communities all over the U.S. rose up angrily with massive rebellions against the state demanding racial justice. After the Harlem revolt, for the next four years major rebellions shook the U.S. in the Watts section of Los Angeles, Detroit, Chicago, and hundreds of other North American cities. Isolated acts of police brutality, racial discrimination substandard housing, economic exploitation, "the hoodlum element," a breakdown in family values, and a host of other "explanations" have been put forward by liberal and conservative sociologists and others commissioned by the state to whitewash the true causes. Yet none of these revealed this as a protest against the Capitalist system and colonial rule, even though the social scientists "warned" of the possibility of a new outbreak of violence.

Once again in the Spring of 1992, we saw a massive revolt in Los Angeles, whose immediate causes were related to the outrageous acquittal of Los Angeles policemen who had brutally beaten Rodney King. But there again this was just an immediate cause acting as a trigger; this revolt was not a sympathy revolt on behalf of Rodney King personally. The cause of this rebellion was widespread social inequality in the Capitalist system and police terrorism.

This time the rebellion spread to 40 cities and four foreign countries. And it was not just a so-called "race riot," but rather a class revolt that included a large number of Latinos, whites and even Asians. But it was undeniably a revolt for racial injustice first and foremost, even if it was not just directed against white people in general but the Capitalist system and the rich. It was not limited to just even the inner city in the Los Angeles area but spread even to white upper crust areas in Hollywood, Ventura, and beyond this was the beginning stage of class warfare.

If an underground military force existed or a militia was assembled, it could have entered the field of battle with more weaponry and advanced tactics. As it was the gangs played that role, and played it very well. Their participation is why it took so long to put the rebellion down, but even they could not prevent the reestablishment of white power in South Central Los Angeles. Not just because of being militarily outgunned, but because they had no revolutionary political program despite all their rhetoric of having been radicalized. Also the state came down extremely hard on the rebels. Over 20,000 persons were jailed, 50 were killed and hundreds wounded.

Could a liberated zone have been won, so that dual power could have been established? That possibility existed and still does exist if the people are properly armed and educated. Mass resistance with heavy military weaponry may have won serious concessions, one of which is to pull back the cops. We don't know that, this is purely speculation. We do know that this is not the last rebellion in L.A. and other cities. They may come much quicker now that the genie of urban revolution is out of the bag again. We can only hope and prepare. **ONWARD TO THE BLACK REVOLUTION!**

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