

Hip-Hop Artist Get Involved For Assata

Written by Robert ID1430

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On Wednesday, May 25th at 1:30PM, Brooklyn City Councilmember Charles Barron, prominent hip-hop artists and community groups will hold a press conference on the steps of City Hall condemning a one-million-dollar bounty offered May 2nd for the capture of exiled Black Liberation fighter Assata Shakur; the godmother of the late rap icon Tupac Shakur.

“I’m infuriated that a bounty has been put on her, placing her in danger,” said Councilmember Barron – who called for Wednesday’s press conference – “She is a shero to our community, its long overdue for her to receive clemency and come home.”

In an unprecedented move, on May 2nd the Federal Justice Department, working side by side with New Jersey’s Attorney General, also placed the 58-year-old grandmother on the same domestic terrorist list as Osama bin Laden – this despite the fact that Assata herself was shot while her hands were raised above her head, allowing the bullet to pass through her armpit, traveling past her clavicle. Barron and others are demanding that Assata Shakur be removed from that list.

This sensationalized action was taken 32 years after Ms. Shakur and two companions were stopped on the New Jersey Turnpike in 1973 allegedly for a “broken tail light”. There are many versions of what occurred that night, but what is known is that one Panther, Zayd Shakur, was shot dead, Assata – also shot- was left on the side of the road to die and Trooper Werner Forester also lay dead.

Another Panther, Sundiata Acoli, was taken into custody.

Following trials tainted with documented human rights violations and constitutional errors including the exclusion of African people from the jury, Assata and Sundiata were both found guilty, in separate trials, of the murder of Trooper Forester and sentenced to life in prison. Prior to her New Jersey trial, Assata was tried and acquitted six times on the various false charges.

In 1979 Assata was liberated from a New Jersey jail and seven years later received political

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Asylum from the government of Cuba, where she has continues to speak out for the right of African people in the United States to freedom and self-determination.

"Assata was granted asylum in Cuba because they understood what many here understand" says Kamau Karl Franklin, an attorney and member of the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement.

"The Cuban government understands that Assata was convicted in a climate where she and anyone who stood up for the human rights of Black people were completely criminalized.

She never had a chance at a fair trial in this country and Cuba understood that."

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