

onment and a \$50,000 fine. He was also convicted of six counts for attempted murder of police stemming from his defense of Sundiata and himself during the police attack two years earlier. For this, he was sentenced to 25 years, to be served consecutively.

Initially Odinga was sent to the maximum security in Marion II, "which is a joint they claim is for those who can't deal in regular prisons, who kill and run drugs and try to escape. They never gave me a chance. They sent me there right away. Then when you talk about my conditions in the joint, and how the prison system has dealt with me, you see that they have never dealt with me as a regular prisoner, says Odinga.

"They treat me differently. They just don't acknowledge that I'm a Prisoner of War."

However, international law certainly does observe Odinga: "There is a clause in the Geneva Convention of 1948 and 49, and follow up protocols of 1977 and '78, which was actually signed in 1980. It states that a colonized people have a right to self-determination. And to gain self-determination, they have a right to struggle by any means necessary, including armed struggle. As such, if captured, they must not be considered a criminal and tried as a criminal. They can be turned over to their own country. Under that law, it was illegal for them to try me as a criminal."

But unlike any Vietnam POW, Sekou Odinga has received scant attention for his illegal incarceration. As a result, a freedom fighter sits behind bars for crimes that are not his.

Support Political Prisoners

If you wish to write to Sekou, write to him at:

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Outside Contact Organizations

Sekou Odinga & Dr. Mutulu Shakur
Political Prisoner of War Defense
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Local groups working with Sekou:

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YOU CAN HELP BY GIVING POLITICAL
PRISONERS A VOICE AND VISIBILITY

THE TRUTH CAN SET THEM FREE!

PRISONER OF WAR IN AMERICA



**SEKOU ODINGA:
NEW AFRIKAN
FREEDOM FIGHTER**



Who is Sekou Odinga?

Sekou Mgobozi Abdullah Odinga is a prisoner of a war that started more than 400 years ago and that rages even today. “When we say prisoner of war,” explains Odinga from behind the walls of Lewisburg Federal Penitentiary, “the obvious questions that should come to mind is, ‘What war? Is there a civil war going on in this country?’ No, not a civil war. New Afrikan (Black) people are not part of this country. So, it can’t be civil war. Our people were illegally kidnapped and brought to this country more than 400 years ago. That was an act of war”

“We have to distinguish first who we are and how we can be at war with the U.S. government,” says Odinga. “We are a colonized people, but many of us don’t understand what that means. A colonized people are a group or nation whose every aspect of life is controlled by another nation. Among the colonized, there are those who don’t accept the colonized force. International law gives them the right to be free and independent by any means, including armed struggle. We want to establish a New Afrikan State. While participating in that war I was captured, which makes me a prisoner of war.”

He didn’t declare the war, nor did he start it. But Sekou Odinga, born 1944, and a father of eight, has committed his life to fighting back. First as a community activist, then as a Black Panther Party leader, and later as a soldier in the Black Liberation Army. Odinga earned international recognition from his efforts to educate, organize, and liberate Afrikan people worldwide. Even from behind bars, Sekou Odinga remains a cornerstone of the New Afrikan Independence Movement. Comprised of a

broad coalition of New Afrikan-nationalist organizations, the NAIM seeks to establish a Republic of New Afrika in land currently designated as the states of Mississippi, Georgia, Louisiana, Alabama, and South Carolina.

As part of its efforts to crush this movement, the United States has mislabeled Odinga as an outlaw, saddling him with a lifetime sentence for crimes that he did not commit.



“Although I consider fighting for my people a good thing, being declared a prisoner of war doesn’t entitle me to any luxury. You become an enemy of the state.”

-Sekou Odinga

In 1969, Odinga was forced into hiding when he and 20 other Black Panther Party members were falsely charged with criminal conspiracy in the New York 21 Panther case. Months later while still underground, he traveled to Algeria to establish an international chapter of the Black Panther Party. On October 23, 1981, Odinga and comrade Mtyari Shabaka Sundiata were ambushed in Queens by a joint task force of New York police offi-

cers and FBI agents. The cops murdered Sundiata in the street. They captured Odinga, then tortured him mercilessly, eventually charging him with the liberation of Assata Shakur (who had been in captivity on suspect charges), and the expropriation of money from an armored car.

“When I was captured, I was burned with cigars, beaten, had my head flushed in toilets,” recalls Odinga. “I was taken to a window, and the officers threatened to throw me out. This went on for about six hours, when they were trying to get me to give up information on other comrades. I was captured in October 1981, and didn’t get out of the hospital until February ‘82.”

When he was released from the hospital Odinga was thrown into a trial that was anything but fair. For instance, during his trial, in which he faced 11 counts and an assortment of state charges, the judge refused to allow Odinga to submit his medical records as evidence, suggesting that the freedom fighter may have fabricated his wounds.

Even before his trial, the charges against Odinga were manipulated to ensure cruel and unusual punishment. “They called the liberation of Assata Shakur kidnapping because jail-breaking was not a federal charge,” he points out. “It was a state charge. So that the feds could get it, they claimed that while liberating the sister, the comrades tied up and held two of the guards.”

“Even though they didn’t take the guards off the grounds, the court said taking them from one roof top to another was kidnapping,” says Odinga.

In 1983, Odinga was convicted of two federal charges under the Racketeering Influenced and Corrupt Organization (RICO) Act, and was sentenced to 40 years impris-