

**The Thirteenth Amendment:  
Instrument of Legalized Slavery  
and the  
Re-Subjugation of New Afrika**

**Background**

While these words are being written, a U.S. Prisoners' Petition To The United Nations is being circulated throughout amerikkka, both inside and outside prison walls. The petition, which is to be presented to the U.N. Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities between August 22nd and September 9, 1977, in Geneva, Switzerland, states in part:

**As Prisoners We Protest:** The subjugation of all prisoners to involuntary servitude and slavery. The 13th amendment of the u.s. constitution states, "Neither slavery, nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crimes where the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the united states, or any place subject to their jurisdiction." We protest the 13th amendment which legalizes slavery in the u.s. Our protest and condemnation of the practice of slavery is upheld by international United Nations law, which states, "No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery or the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms."

The **New Afrikan Prisoners Organization**/Stateville, helped to circulate this petition, and We also began to research the 13th amendment and the circumstances surrounding its formulation, ratification, and resulting consequences.

We began this research for several reasons, one being that in the course of acquiring signatures and discussing (the entire petition and) the particular issue of the 13th amendment, We became aware of a general absence of an understanding of the amendment and its relation to u.s. prisons.

We were also inspired because of our belief that -- especially as regards prisoners of oppressed nations inside the u.s. -- the 13th amendment is related to an issue much broader than the subjugation of prisoners alone. Our study demonstrated to us that a better understanding of the 13th amendment -- as well as the 14th and 15th amendments -- can play a vital role in raising the level of the struggle of Afrikan people in amerikkka and, consequently, contribute to the struggles of all peoples against the u.s. imperialist state. The reason for this is that, as our research revealed, the 13th (as well as the 14th and 15th) amendment to the u.s. constitution **originated** -- and continues to serve -- as an instrument in the maintenance of the national oppression of New Afrikan people. Therefore, a challenge to it is directly related to the struggle of all Afrikan people inside the u.s. for self-determination, independence, and land.

**I**

The Thirteenth Amendment

Section 1. Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crimes whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.

Section 2. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

It was never the intention of the rulers of the u.s. to "abolish" slavery. That is, it was never their intention to discontinue the domination and exploitation of Afrikan people in the u.s.

This fact became clearer to us as We read Black Reconstruction In America, by W.E.B. DuBois: "...A war, which to the intense dissatisfaction of the Abolitionists had begun with the distinct object, even on the part of the great Emancipator, to save and protect slavery, and in no way to disturb it, except to keep it out of competition with the free peasant of the West, had resulted in Emancipation... Thus, a legal-metaphysical dispute, involving the right of slave states to expand into the territories, was rapidly changed, first to a question of freedom for slaves, and then to a struggle for inaugurating a new form of national government in the United States.

"When the physical war ended, then the real practical problems presented themselves. How was slavery to be effectively abolished? And what was to be the status of the (Afrikans)? ... Slavery had been abolished as a war measure. This should be confirmed and extended by a constitutional amendment. Some control of the (Afrikan) population must be devised in the place of slavery, so as to introduce the (Afrikan) into his new freedom. The power of the national government had been greatly expanded by war. This expansion must be consolidated so that in the future secession would be impossible and slavery never re-established.

"The difficulty with this legalistic formula was that it did not cling to facts. Slavery was not abolished even after the Thirteenth Amendment. There were four million freedmen and most of them on the same plantation, doing the same work that they did before emancipation, except as their work had been interrupted and changed by the upheaval of war. Moreover, they were getting about the same wages and apparently were going to be subject to slave codes modified only in name..." (BR, pps. 187-188)

The freedom allegedly given to all Afrikans in the u.s. by the 13th amendment merely meant "a legal doing away with individual physical control." The individual physical control of Afrikans by amerikkkan slave-owners was replaced by a collective physical control -- control by the u.s. government, by the u.s. imperialist state.

After We were "emancipated" from the control of individual slave-owners and placed under the collective control of the u.s. government; after this was confirmed and extended by a u.s. constitutional amendment, "Some control of the (Afrikan) population was devised so as to introduce us into our new so-called freedom. The rulers of the u.s. still aimed at controlling the Afrikan population within its borders. Our "new freedom" was simply a new form of slavery.

"The power of the national (imperialist) government had been greatly expanded by war. This expansion must be consolidated so that in the future secession (a break-up of the empire) would be impossible and slavery (the mere individual physical control of Afrikans by individual white slave owner/settlers), never re-established.

Thus, the provision in the 13th amendment which states that "slavery" can only exist in prisons, which means that individual physical control of Afrikans could only "legally" exist in prisons after "due convictions) by the federal and state kourts of the u.s. empire.

Even though most of us remained on the same plantation after passage of the 13th amendment, it was not the same "slavery" that We were subject to as had existed prior to "emancipation." Because, just as the slave codes were modified in name only, so was our national oppression.

## II

It has been necessary to emphasize the above facts, so that We can be clear on their interpretation, be able to trace other connections, and to interpret these as well. Among these connections We'll find the 14th and 15th amendments. To arrive at an understanding, to begin the approach to a consciousness that will feed revolutionary struggle, We should begin with the slavery of Afrikan people in the u.s.

Afrikans were kidnapped from our home and brought to the u.s. in chains to satisfy its demand for a large source of cheap and exploitable labor. We were brought here to work -- not for ourselves -- but for the plantation owner, the slave master, the white amerikkan settler. We were brought here to work, but not to work "freely;" our labor was forced, controlled and specifically directed and planned, so as to most fully benefit the needs of our oppressors: to guarantee the most profit, to provide the most capital for amerikkka's economic growth and development.

This was clear to the settlers themselves in the latter half of the 1600's, since it was during this period that they began to "legally" exclude Afrikans from the nation that they were using us to build.

"Afrikans began arriving (in large numbers and as a result of kidnapping), in what was to become the United States sometime around 1619. Within 40 years the social practice and the laws of the emerging new European nation here had made it clear that Afrikans, free and slave, were not to be permitted to join this new white nation, nor were the Afrikans -- the majority of whom were slaves -- to be allowed in peace and in numbers to join the Indian nations here, largely because of the European policy of hunting down 'fugitive' slaves.

"Thus, law and custom in North Amerikkka by 1660 had forced the creation of a new Afrikan nation here. That nation was composed of Afrikans from many different nations and tribes in Afrika, with white genes injected by their slavemasters, who almost universally left their children with their Afrikan mothers and the Afrikan group, and with Indian genes. Colonial laws and the practice of oppression by whites created a New Afrikan Nation in the English colonies one hundred years before the U.S. Declaration of Independence. It was a nation founded upon and cemented by the essentially homogeneous Afrika cultural background and an essentially homogeneous oppression." (Imari Obadele, President, Provisional Government of the Republic of New Afrika)

It's clear that amerikkka had its birth as an imperialist state in the 1660's, with its enslavement, and subjugation, of a new ... nation ... of Afrikan people.

Afrikan enslavement served the interests of the entire imperialist state -- and the world imperialist system. Cotton production alone in the u.s. rose from 9,000 bales in 1791 to over five million in 1852. "Such facts and others, coupled with the increase of the slaves to which they were related as both cause and effect, meant a new world; and all the more so because with the increase in Amerikkkan cotton and Afrikan slaves, came both by chance and ingenuity new miracles for manufacturing, and particularly for the spinning and weaving of cloth.

"The giant forces of water and of steam were harnessed to do the world's work, and the black workers of amerikkka (were) bent at the bottom of a growing pyramid of commerce and industry; and they not only could not be spared, if this new economic organization was to expand, but rather they became the cause of new political demands and alignments, of new dreams of power and visions of empire.

"First of all, their work called for widening stretches of new, rich, black soil -- in Florida, in Louisiana, in Mexico; even in Kansas. This land, added to cheap labor and easily regulated and distributed, made profits so

high that a whole system of culture arose in the South, with a new leisure and social philosophy. Black labor became the foundation stone not only of the Southern social structure, but of northern manufacture and commerce, of the English factory system, of European commerce, of buying and selling on a world-wide scale; new cities were built on the results of black labor, and a new labor problem, involving all white labor, arose both in Europe and Amerikkka." (Black Reconstruction, pps. 4-5)

(The "new labor problem" involving all white labor, both in amerikkka and in europe, was the problem of their bribery, their sharing in the fruits of imperialist plunder, their tendency to co-operate in the oppression and exploitation of the nations subjugated by the rulers of the imperialist state(s). It was the creation of this "new labor problem" which allowed DuBois to add that Afrikan slavery "was a matter of both race and social condition, but the condition was limited and determined by race." In place of the word "race" We should read **national**, as in "national oppression." It's our reality as a nation which limits and determines our condition; in turn, it's our continued national oppression which limits and determines the labor problem among all white (oppressor nation) labor. That problem, like our condition, can only be resolved through our national liberation.)

We were the foundation stone, the cause, for the development of amerikkkan and world capitalism and emerging imperialism; our condition was defined as "slavery" and it was this particular form of our national domination and exploitation which led to the amerikkkan civil war, because it represented a fundamental contradiction within the u.s. imperialist system. In the South "slavery" was characteristic. That is, the individual control of Afrikans aimed at extracting profits, accumulating surplus value, was characteristic of the national oppression of Afrikans in that region of the u.s. empire. In the north, the dominant illusion was that Afrikans could "escape slavery," work for wages, and "find freedom." In the northern region of the u.s. empire, state control of the Afrikan was characteristic.

It's generally understood that "free" Afrikans in amerikkka were not "free" in the same sense that whites in amerikkka were "free." No matter the "legal" status of Afrikans inside the u.s., they remained members of a nation oppressed. And this national oppression was "legalized" and given a new form through the 13th amendment to the u.s. constitution -- along with the 14th and 15th amendments to that same document.

### III

While Afrikan national oppression and exploitation was the foundation for the total imperialist system, for the entire capitalist development of the u.s., We've seen that our national oppression had two more or less distinct characteristic forms, one in the north and the other in the south. In this sense, there were two more or less distinct forms of u.s. imperialist exploitation and domination of the New Afrikan Nation.

The contradiction that these two forms of u.s. imperialist exploitation took was sharpened as both the north and south sought to expand their imperialism. Both the northern form and the southern form sought to extend themselves, to intensify the exploitation of natural resources through greater, more extensive exploitation of the human resources represented by New Afrikan people.

This is the meaning of the "irrepressible conflict:" whether the southern form of Afrikan exploitation and national domination would be carried into the territories and tend to become the dominant form/tendency of u.s. imperialism; or, whether the northern form of Afrikan national oppression and exploitation -- state control rather than individual control of Afrikans -- would extend itself into the territories and thus become the

dominant tendency, the characteristic form of imperialism within u.s. borders.

A war was begun, and the north won it. With the north's victory over the south, there began "a struggle for inaugurating a new form of national government in the united states. ... The power of the national government had been greatly expanded by war. This expansion must be consolidated so that in the future secession would be impossible and slavery never reestablished."

The problem was the south. The problem was how to hold the empire together under the domination of the northern form of oppression and exploitation. The problem was, really, the presence of the Afrikan nation within the u.s. borders. Our presence was (is) key in deciding the fate of the u.s. imperialistic state.

"...(I)ndustrialists after the war expected the South to seize upon the opportunity to make increased profit by a more intelligent exploitation of labor than was possible under the slave system. They looked upon free Afrikan labor as a source of profit, and considered freedom, that is, a legal doing away with individual physical control, all that the Afrikans or their friends could ask. They did not want for Afrikan labor any special protection or political power or capital ... They expected some popular education and a gradual granting of the right to vote, which would be straitly curtailed in its power for mischief by the far larger power of capital.

"The South, however, persisted in its pre-war conception of these two tendencies in the North ('free' Afrikan labor as a source of profit, and the legal doing away of individual physical control -- the beginning of the end of 'free competition' and of 'private profit' and the seeds of monopoly capital). It sought to reestablish slavery by force, because it had no comprehension of the means by which modern industry could secure the advantages of slave labor without its responsibilities. The South, therefore, opposed Afrikan education, opposed land and capital for Afrikans, and violently and bitterly opposed any political power. It fought every conception inch by inch; no real emancipation, limited civil rights, no Afrikan schools, no votes for Afrikans.

"In the face of such intransigence, Northern industry was, on the whole, willing to yield, since none of these concessions really obstructed the expansion of industry and capital in the nation. When, however, the South went beyond reason and truculently demanded not simply its old political power but increased political power based on disfranchised Afrikans, which it openly threatened to use for the revision of the tariff, for the repudiation of the national debt, for disestablishing the national banks, and for putting the new corporate form of industry under strict state regulation and rule, Northern industry was frightened and began to move towards the stand (of) ... temporary dictatorship, endowed Afrikan education, legal civil rights, and eventually even votes for Afrikans to offset the Southern threat of economic attack." (BR, p. 185)

But not "eventually" votes for Afrikans. Immediate! To offset the southern threat of economic and political attack upon the northern ruling class.

It's evident that in the minds of both southern and northern imperialists, Afrikan people were not "free" even after the 13th amendment. Afrikans did not cease to be the foundation stone of the amerikkkan system with the end of the civil war. But the war made it necessary to alter the "oppressive contract."

By u.s. and international law, We were free after the 13th amendment. But We were not free in the minds and plans of the imperialists. We get an indication of this from the just quoted section, where, although We were "legally" a free people, independent of the u.s., they continued to consider us a factor in their political and economic struggles, continued to consider

us a form of property, to see our nation as a source to be manipulated and exploited so as to continue to pump life into the empire.

Because, if We were truly free, in our relations with the u.s. imperialist state, then there would have been no question of the south seeking "increased political power based on disfranchised Afrikans." A **free** people cannot be "disfranchised."

We had the "franchise" at home. We were born with the franchise; our foreparents exercised this natural franchise on the shores of our Afrikan homeland. But, the ability to exercise it was denied us by our kidnapers. After their civil war it had simply become necessary for the slavemaster to recognize -- on paper -- our inherent right to independence and self-determination.

We already know that the New Afrikan Nation was born in/during the period of slavery; New Afrika arose on the north amerikkkan continent before 1660. It was a birth facilitated by our kidnapping and enslavement, and the ensuing law and custom of the slavemaster.

While there had been "manumission" of Afrikans individually or in small numbers by individual slavemasters, the first mass "manumission" of Afrikans in the u.s. occurred on August 6, 1861, with the enactment of the Confiscation Act. This mass recognition of the Afrikan's inherent freedom was followed by another Confiscation Act on July 17, 1862.

The "emancipation proclamation" of January, 1863, freed all Afrikans who were still held as slaves in those areas of the imperialist state which sought to establish their independence from the u.s. empire. The emancipation proclamation even said it: "... that the executive government of the united states, including the military and naval authorities thereof, **will recognize** and maintain (this recognition of) the freedom of said persons." The "said persons" being members of the New Afrikan Nation.

When the 13th amendment was passed by the imperialists in December, 1865, they recognized -- on paper -- the freedom of all Afrikans inside u.s. borders -- they recognized the freedom of the entire Nation!

But it's important to point out here: with the passage of all these acts by the imperialists, they simply acknowledged our existence as a sovereign nation. None of these acts offered any social, political or economic "rights" or privileges within the imperialist state. The 13th amendment removed the municipal law of the u.s. which effected the enslavement of New Afrikans, "thus leaving the New Afrikan nation as a free political entity, legally on territory claimed by the United States." (Imari Obadele)

Once the freedom of New Afrikans was "legally" recognized by the imperialist state, We could not again be "legally" incorporated into the u.s. without our informed, freely expressed, consent.

When the south presented its threat to the empire during and after the war, "... There was only one defense against the power of the South and while that was revolutionary and hitherto unheard of, it was the only way ... That was Afrikan suffrage." (BR, p. 330)

The "legal" re-subjugation of the New Afrikan Nation through amendments to the u.s. constitution was being contemplated and planned before the passage of the 13th amendment. But, of course, the 13th amendment was in reality only the first step in the process.

In Black Reconstruction, DuBois quotes a letter written by Charles Sumner: "... but the question (of giving votes to Afrikans) has become immensely practical in this respect: Without their votes we cannot establish stable governments in the Rebel States. Their votes are as necessary as their muskets."

DuBois also quotes Wendell Phillips on the subject: "The Afrikan must be given the franchise because we have no other timber to build states with,

and unless we build with him, we must postpone reconstruction for so many years..." (BR, p. 200)

But We couldn't be given the amerikkan vote unless We were u.s. citizens; and We couldn't be considered u.s. citizens unless We were recognized as being free. Therefore, the u.s. imperialist state legally recognized our freedom with the 13th amendment, so that they could "make" us u.s. citizens with the 14th amendment, and thereby "grant" us the u.s. privilege of voting with the 15th amendment. Neither of these amendments had the object of truly maintaining the recognition of the freedom of Afrikan people, as an independent nation within u.s borders, or as so-called citizens of the imperialist state.

"... After the Thirteenth Amendment, a great body of people now stood as free, facing their former slave masters. If the Afrikans were free (and they were), neither the former slave master nor any other group or person could tell the (former) slave what to do. One of the rights the Afrikan should have had was the right to determine his future state relationships. His choices should have included:

- 1) Would he like to become a citizen of the U.S."
- 2) Would he like to go back to Afrika?
- 3) Would he like to go to another country?
- 4) Would he like (the u.s. to forfeit its claim to some land) to set up a nation of his own?

But the Fourteenth Amendment wrongfully excluded all these choices except one and imposed upon the Afrikan a condition of special citizenship. The insistence of the white man upon the validity of the Fourteenth Amendment, which denied to the freed Afrikan his rightful choices -- mean only that the white man was insisting on a continuation of white control over fundamental Black decisionmaking. It meant, in other words, a continuation of slave status, though in a somewhat less odious form. There has still been no settlement of the question of state-status for the Afrikan. For, such a settlement could only evolve on the basis of bilateral agreements between the Afrikan and Euro-Amerikkkan peoples, each of them free, and with the Afrikan enjoying his right -- as a free man wrongfully transported and enslaved -- to make a choice among the four options for his future that We have outlined above.

"Afrikans could not have been rightfully enslaved. As free people wrongfully enslaved, with the wrong now admitted by the white enslaver, no law could shut out other options and impose upon free Afrikans citizenship in the United States. And our status with respect to state affiliation and our future relations with the heirs of our fathers' white slave masters still remains to be settled." ("The Republic of New Afrika: An Independent Black Nation", Imari Obadele, I, *Black World*, May, 1971, pp. 86-87).

#### IV

The challenge to the 13th Amendment now being made is not **only** a challenge to legalized slavery in amerikkan prisons. We can't successfully challenge the 13th amendment without challenging its historical basis for existence. That historical basis was the re-subjugation of the New Afrikan Nation.

The New Afrikan Nation is struggling to liberate itself. A part of that struggle involves a challenge to the "legal" basis which far too many Afrikans still believe gives the u.s. the right to exercise authority over us. The struggle being waged by Afrikans in the u.s. involves challenging and destroying the sense of legitimacy which We hold toward the u.s. imperialist state.

The 13th amendment remains one of the instruments used by the amerikkkan government to deceive us, to make us think We are a part of it. The amendment remains an instrument used to maintain the domination of New Afrika. Therefore, the challenge to the 13th amendment can in no way be separated from the struggle to liberate the entire nation of New Afrikan people.

It would be incorrect to see this amendment as nothing more than something used to subjugate all prisoners. Because prisoners are able to make this challenge not because the amendment allowed the "legalization of slavery" in prisons, as such; but because **it allowed Afrikans to be made prisoners, and thereby "legally" re-enslaved** -- initially in the southern section of the u.s., and later from u.s border to border.

It took some time for the south to begin to share some of the north's vision as to how to "make increased profit by a more intelligent exploitation of labor." For instance, Dan Lacy, in his The White Use of Blacks In America, writes: "On the eve of World War I, the new system of white control (sharecropping) had reached its peak of effectiveness, and it provided a much more efficient and profitable method of exploiting black labor in commercial agriculture than had slavery. Output per man-hour of black labor in cotton production was substantially higher than before emancipation. Sharecropping made the (Afrikan's) own meager income dependent on his productivity and got more work out of him than could any form of discipline under slavery ... At the same time the cost of black labor was probably less. Only an unusual worker in an unusual year could hope to gain more than the subsistence that had formerly been given all slaves. And the freedom of the planter from the burden of support of the elderly and invalid and from the necessity of tying up capital in the purchase of slaves probably actually significantly lowered his man-hour labor cost in constant dollars."

And, Lerone Bennett, Jr., has pointed out that, "Between 1870 and 1910, cotton production tripled, and the appropriated black surplus helped pay for the reconstruction of the South, the industrialization of the North, and the western settlement." (The Making of Black America)

Southern thinking was, in the months and years immediately following the amerikkkan civil war, still dominated by remembrance of the old form, the old slave system.

"From the beginning of the reconstruction period, white southern leaders had manifested extreme anxiety over the stability of their labor supply. As Carl Schurz noted in a postwar tour of the South, white people still believed that the black worker existed 'for the special object of raising cotton, rice, and sugar for the whites and that it (was) illegitimate for him to indulge, like other people, in the pursuit of his own happiness in his own way.' Schurz added: "But although the freedman is no longer considered the property of the individual master, he is considered the slave of society.'" (Bennett)

The Afrikan who was now considered the slave of the total amerikkkan society was now a colonial subject. The new system which was to replace "slavery" was colonialism.

Lerone Bennett again: "Three major sub-systems -- peonage, disfranchisement, and segregation -- constituted the cutting edge of the new system, and these sub-systems meshed in an overarching framework which relegated most (Afrikans) to a state which was not markedly different from slavery. In the generation after Reconstruction, tenancy and peonage laws, supplemented by official and unofficial violence, confined most black workers to Black Belt plantations, where they continued to harvest the crops of slavery. In 1890, a generation after slavery, seven out of every eight black workers were still harvesting cotton and sugar crops in the old plantation settings or performing domestic work in demeaning urban contexts. Under the provisions of tenancy and peonage laws, which the U.S. Supreme Court

sanctioned until 1910, it was difficult and in some cases illegal for these workers to change jobs without the consent of their employers. In 1912, W.E.B. DuBois estimated that at least 250,000 black laborers were being held to service on Southern plantations by force." (Bennett)

Since Afrikans were now legally "free" under u.s. law, they were forced into "contracts" to secure their labor. In South Carolina, for instance, that state's Black Codes made unemployment for Afrikans a "crime," and for this "crime" they were "duly convicted" and sentenced to work on white-owned farms and plantations -- without pay. Because they were then "prisoners," -- right?

"When, towards the end of Reconstruction, white leaders unleashed the Klan and other terrorist organizations, they said frankly that their central concern was not race but property and labor ... Lewis E. Parsons, a former governor of Alabama, told a Congressional investigating committee that the fundamental purpose of the terrorist campaign was to control the black man and his labor. It came to be understood, he said, 'that in this way negroes might be made to toe the mark again, to do the bidding of the employer, to come up to time a little more promptly, and do more work than they would otherwise do.'" (Bennett)

When the contract labor system failed, and when the terror also failed, "... black criminals were deliberately manufactured by the legal system which was an adjunct to the notorious prison convict system. On the slightest pretext, and oftentimes with no pretext at all, young black men were sentenced to long prison terms and leased out to plantation owners, railroad builders, and other businessmen.

"This system was no accident; it was a result of will, cunning, and design. And what was the purpose? The purpose was the continuation of slavery ... More concretely, the purpose was to force a whole race (nation) of people to live at a subsistence level while the fruits of their labor were appropriated by others." (Bennett)

On the same subject, DuBois says, "... In Georgia, at the outbreak of the Civil War, there were about 200 white felons confined at Milledgeville. There were no Afrikan convicts, since under the discipline of slavery Afrikans were punished on the plantation. The white convicts were released to fight in the Confederate armies. The whole criminal system came to be used as a method of keeping Afrikans at work or intimidating them. Consequently there began to be a demand for jails and penitentiaries beyond the natural demand due to the rise of (so-called) crime." (BR, p. 506) And: "Above all, crime was used in the South as a source of income for the state ... In no part of the modern world has there been so open and conscious a traffic in crime for deliberate social degradation and private profit as in the South since slavery ... Since 1876 Afrikans have been arrested on the slightest provocation and given long sentences or fines which they were compelled to work out..." (BR, p. 698)

It was the 13th amendment which allowed this legalized re-enslavement of Afrikans. The 13th amendment was specifically directed toward this objective.

We recognize that prisons still perform an economic function and that the labor of prisoners is still exploited. But We don't believe that this is what characterizes prisons in 1977 amerikkka.

It's our belief that the present and future thought and actions of prisoners -- especially prisoners of oppressed nations -- must begin to emphasize and become active around the use of u.s. prisons as "detention centers," and "konzentration kamps," -- as instruments of national oppression and genocide.

This piece has purposely concentrated on defining the 13th, 14th and 15th amendments as instruments of national oppression because We believe that this is not only the most correct conception; but also because We believe this will contribute to raising the level of national consciousness among

Afrikan people, and consequently to successful revolutionary nationalist war -- a war for the independence of Afrikan people, a war to regain the National Territory; a war which will lead to the establishment of sovereignty for New Afrika and its socialist development.

Build To Win!  
8/31/77