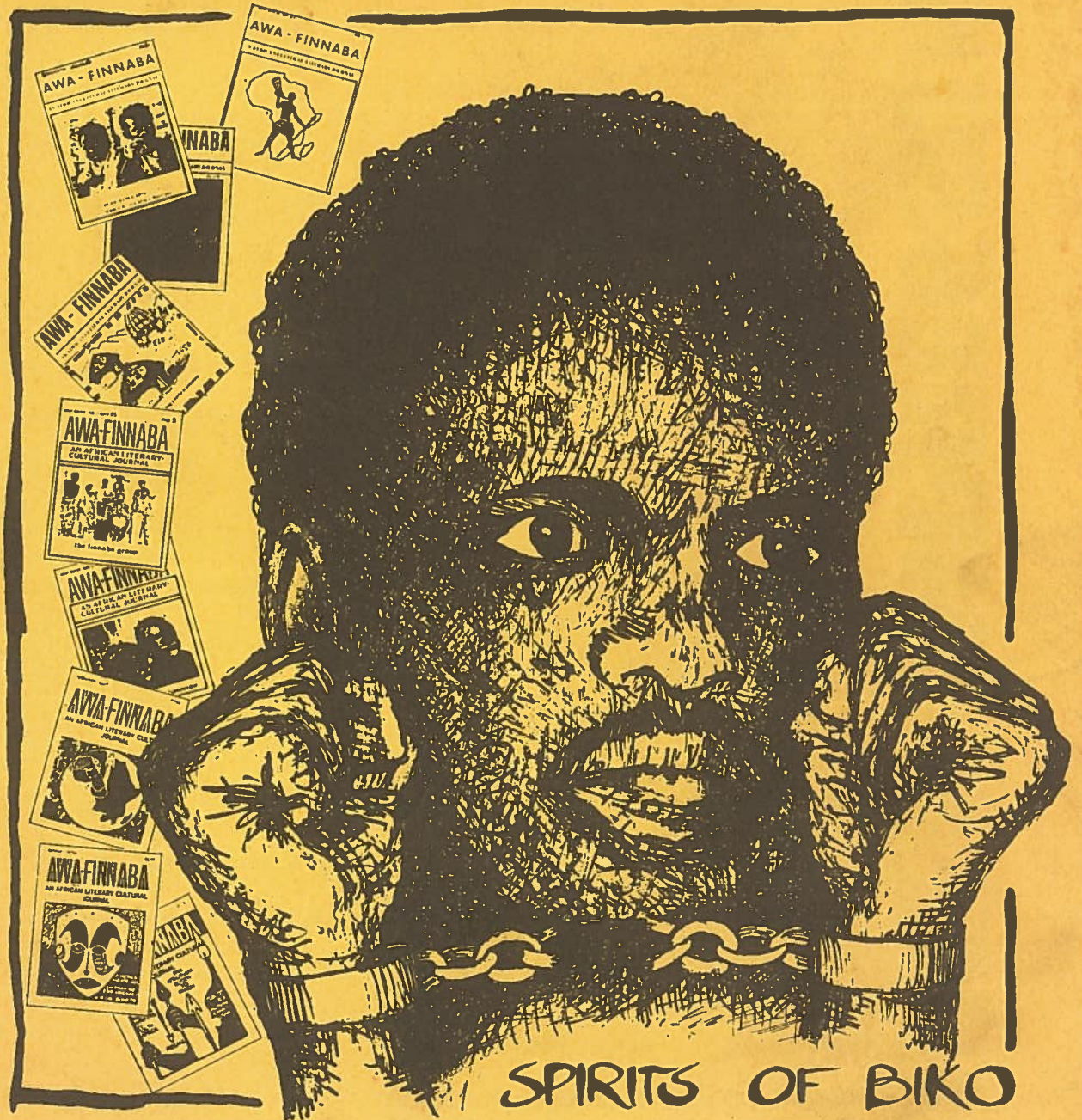


# AWA-FINNABA

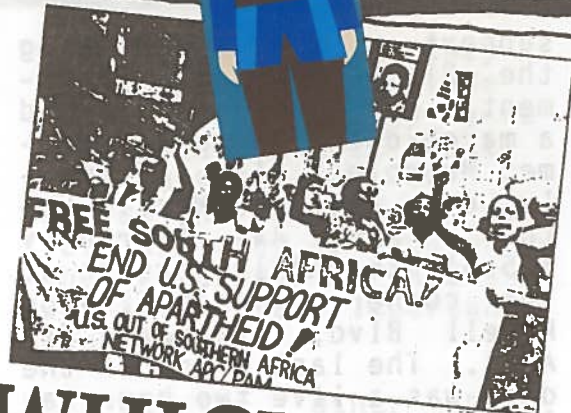
AN AFRICAN LITERARY CULTURAL JOURNAL



SPIRITS OF BIKO



# BLACK RADICALS DEBATE ON AFD



# WHICH WAY FORWARD?

## MARCH!

Black Folks in South Africa Must Be Free  
Down With U.S. Imperialism Now!

## AFRICAN LIBERATION DAY IN HARLEM

Saturday, May 23, 1987  
MARCH at 4:30 PM at 135th St. and Convent Ave. at City College  
RALLY at the Harlem State Office Building at 5:30 PM

Join Us On The March Support Our Fighting Sisters and Brothers in South Africa and Namibia

## RALLY!



**Invited Speakers:**  
African National Congress (ANC) • Southwest African Peoples Organization (SWAPO) • Organization of African Unity (OAU) • Puerto Rican Committee Against Political Repression • Columbia Black Students Organization • The Honorable David Patterson • Ashanti Bartlett Family • Nela Akuffa Bea-Harlem Fightback • Elombe Brath-Patricia Lumumba Coalition • Chokwe Lumumba-New African Peoples Organization • Mario Drummonds-Community Self-Defense Projects • Abdul Alkalimat-21st Century Publications • Representatives of African Community in Europe

Harlem-Soweto: Same Struggle—Same Fight  
Organized by The Committee to Commemorate the 15th Anniversary of African Liberation Day 1972  
c/o FLJH • 167th Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. Blvd. • Harlem 10126

A National Forum on African Liberation Support Work and the Black Liberation Movement  
PHILIP RANDOLPH CAMPUS HIGH SCHOOL

March and Rally to Link Arms Across Harlem for African Liberation  
STREET & CONVENT AVENUE AT CITY COLLEGE

THURSDAY, MAY 23, 1987

(135th St. & Convent Ave. at City College)

"ALSC: Lessons for the Future" (Morning Panel)  
Moderator: Nsia Akuffa Bea  
Abdul Alkalimat  
Amiri Baraka  
Elombe Brath  
Carl Dix

"Proposal for African Liberation Support Work: Building the Linkages" (Afternoon Panel)  
Moderator: Mario Drummonds  
Linda Burnham  
Chokwe Lumumba  
Cecile Counts  
Bill Sales

COME PREPARED WITH QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS

On May 23rd a major forum was held in New York to commemorate the 15th anniversary of African Liberation Day 1972. There were two plenaries, one summing up the lessons of the African Liberation Support Committee, and the other discussing the links between building African Liberation

# Speak your

support work and building the Black liberation movement. A mass rally followed a march down the newly renamed Malcolm X Blvd. (formerly Lenox Ave.) to Martin Luther King Ave (formerly 125th) to Africa Square at the corner of Adam Clayton Powell Blvd, (formerly 7th Ave). The last event of the day was a live two hour radio discussion with several speakers from the days activities.

The ad hoc committee that organized this event was initially composed of key activists from the Black New York Action Committee (Bill Sales), New Africa Peoples Organization (Ahmed Obafemi), The Patrice Lumumba Coalition (Elombe Brath), and the TCB Publications (Abdul Alkalimat). A Handbook of Struggle was developed that spelled out in great detail the political objectives, timetable, division of labor, and logistics. About 7 committee meetings were held, with at least 20 people having attended at least one meeting at the Fannie Lou Hamer Institute. There were three leaflets. The entire symposium was video taped.

In general, the strength was the political content of the presentations and discussion, while the weakness was the small attendance and weak media coverage. The tapes can be purchased from TCB Publications for \$100.

The Marxist-Nationalist dialogue that highlighted the ideological struggle within ALSC was major theme

of the symposium. It is important that while many specific points were raised by the participants, some of which were clearly in conflict, but most of which were complementary, there were clear lines of criticism, mainly in the form of self criticism.

Most of the speakers stressed that the support by Black people in the USA for the liberation of Africa is a long standing tradition of struggle. Linda Burnham stated:

"It is noteworthy that all of the major leaders of the Black liberation movement in the United States have recognized at one level or another the bond to the struggle of the peoples of Africa dating all the way back actually to Frederick Douglas, through Garvey, through the very inspired leadership of DuBois, over many many decades on the question of the links of the peoples of Africa through Malcolm and Martin. ... This is a permanent feature of the Black liberation in the United States."

Elombe Brath went into how the Nationalist tradition of Harlem continued the Garvey tradition, and so Blacks there had consistently been active in the work of Carlos Cooks and the African Nationalist Pioneer Movement.

Abdul Alkalimat and Bill Sales put their position forward in Issue 2 of the Black Liberation Movement



News, by linking together the traditions of resistance connected to Martin Luther King and Malcolm X:

"Malcolm was the voice calling for revolution while King led mass struggle to test the limits of reform. While they differed fundamentally on means, and possibly ends, they were united on the absolute necessity for liberation of South Africa from settler rule. ... From different directions both pushed the African American community toward a militant unity in action based on an internationalist, anti-imperialist perspective. Such a unity, whether advanced by an avowed revolutionary or a reform minded, non-violent minister, was objectively beyond anything this system could safely accommodate. For this reason, King and Malcolm were brutally murdered. As martyrs of the revolution they continue to live as we carry on their struggle."

Within this tradition of support, as one would clearly respect, there has been a great deal of struggle. But, contrary to many commonly held notions, this struggle has not been all negative. Elombe Brath stated:

"One of the positive things about ALSC is that the struggle did happen between the Nationalists and the Marxists. The reason we feel this is important is that generally speaking the movement has benefited by the dialectic, the dialogue. Mostly everyone now at

least postures that they are anti-imperialist. We don't know what they're really about, but at least they posture that. Of course the future will dictate who they are and what they're about. It (ALSC) was a very very important experience."

On the other hand, there were criticisms of the Left. Linda Burnham made the following observation:

"The 60's and 70's produced wave upon wave of Black revolutionary nationalists who were seeking Marxism. But, they were seeking Marxism in a context in which there was not a revolutionary party which incorporated them. There is whole history to why that is the case, but they were seeking Marxism when was not a community party that had established a vanguard relationship to the masses of people in this country. Black or white. ... in that period people came to revolution without an organization, without the guidance of politics that could consolidate them on a Marxist basis, and for that reason the process of maturing that revolutionaries ought to have in a stable organization, with a stable history and a stable set of politics did not exist so people had to develop in organizations like the ALSC.

Carl Dix makes a similar point:

"On the question of revolution in the USA, this is where the left line

really came into play and played a negative role as a secondary factor in the demise of ALSC. Because programatically, ALSC as a mass based united front did not need to address questions of how you were going to make revolution in the USA. But around 1975, from then on, ALSC chapters did get jacked up to say that they had to have positions on party building, on self determination...."

On the Marxist-nationalist dialogue there are several key points to make. Out of both tendencies people are making self-criticisms and trying to fashion a line for the Black liberation rooted in a righteous fight for unity. ALSC was a progressive motion, one that helped push our movement politics forward.

One of the great controversial issue was the question of which organizations to support and on what basis. Elombe Brath stressed the need to grasp the facts:

"The basis of the objective and subjective conditions and what is actually happening in the country that a group represents. ...What should happen for us in this country is to take a position based on views and observation based on what's happening inside a particular country because there is enough documentation."

Carl Dix stressed that while investigation is important, the critical criteria is which organization

was contributing most to bringing about good revolutionary action. Abdul Alkalimat spelled out four basis criteria for support:

1. Refuse to accept the views of someone else, a movement organization or a country, no franchise.
2. Investigation is important, especially direct contact with as many of the organizations as possible.
3. Main support is the educational work among the people here, so emphasis should be over the contradictions faced by the masses, the history of struggle, and full scope of all forces contributing to the revolutionary motion.
4. Be prepared to change support as organizations change, leaders come and go, and what is true at one point in time is not always true.

Out of this debate three positions developed on the current problem of who to support in South Africa. Elombe Brath and Linda Burnham give full support to the ANC, Chokwe Lumumba and Carl Dix give full support to the PAC, and Bill Sales and Abdul Alkalimat give critical support to both. This is a major issue, perhaps the major issue that is determining the course of the current African liberation support movement.

by  
Prof. Dr. Abdul Alkalimat  
(on behalf of the organizers and participants)