

"The Black Liberation Army is a politico-military organization, whose primary objective is to fight for the independence and self-determination of Afrikan people." ★★★★★★

Jalil Abdul Muntaqim (Anthony Bottom) has been held captive as a political prisoner in United States prisons since 1971, and is one of the longest held political prisoners in the world. He is a former member of the Black Panther Party and its offspring the Black Liberation Army, an urban guerrilla organisation that operated during the 1970s.

"The history of our national liberation struggle is one of the most important factors upon which the political partys, the oppressed masses, and the liberation armed forces may understand the nature of their oppression and the task before them towards independence and freedom."

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**Jalil Muntaqim**

*On the*  
**Black  
Liberation  
Army**






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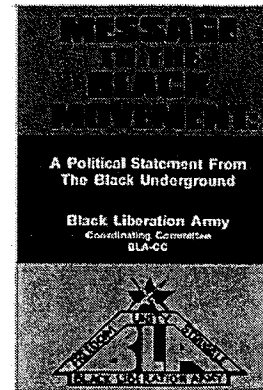
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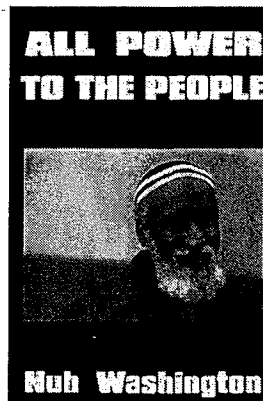
## more on Black Liberation



### Message To The Black Movement Political Statement From The Black Underground

This statement originally written in 1975 by the Coordinating Committee of the Black Liberation Army. It is political analysis, statement of general political positions, and a contribution to the Black Liberation Movement specifically, and to the revolutionary movement in general. From Abraham Guillen Press & Arm The Spirit.

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Writings by and about now deceased Black Liberation Army soldier Albert Nuh Washington. This is the single largest collection available in print. Includes interviews, essays, poetry, photos, and tributes to Nuh by political prisoners and friends. Published by Arm The Spirit-Solidarity.

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## SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS

*(partial listing)*

Anarchist Black Cross Federation (ABCF)  
Box 350392, Jacksonville, FL, 32235

Marshall E. Conway Support Committee  
P.O. Box 41144, Baltimore, Maryland, 21203-6144

National Plebiscite Education  
Campaign for Self-Determination  
P.O. Box 3585, Oakland, CA, 94609

New African Liberation Front (NALF)  
P.O. Box 340084, Jamaica, NY, 11434

New African Network in Defense  
of Political Prisoners & POWS  
P.O. Box 90604, Washington, DC, 20090

Sundiata Acoli Freedom Campaign  
P.O. Box 5538, Harlem, NY, 10027

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## INTRODUCTION

This pamphlet offers insights into the history and lessons of the Black Liberation Movement being waged in North America. Since the original writing, the struggle has declined due to U.S. political repression and political infantilism on the part of U.S. revolutionaries. What is extremely important to understand about the former Black Panther Party (BPP) is that it was basically a militant youth movement. Because the BPP was a powerful youth movement, J. Edgar Hoover, former Director of the FBI, declared the BPP to be the greatest threat to the internal security of the United States. The FBI launched a political and military counter-intelligence program (COINTELPRO) to destroy not only the BPP, but to also crush any possibility of a new youth movement of similar magnitude and militancy.

Today, our youth are being crushed by increasing draconian laws, and the saturation of poor communities with CIA procured drugs. The music industry continues to produce and distribute nihilistic gangsta rap that glorifies drive-by shootings and gang bang'in. The U.S. government is lowering the age a teenager can be tried and sentenced as an adult from 16 to 14 years old. The U.S. government has consistently withdrawn money from social and educational programs, while at the same time increased spending for prison building. These are direct attacks on our youth to prohibit the rebuilding of a movement that in any way resembles the militant determination of the former Black Panther Party or the Black Liberation Army (BLA).

This pamphlet comprises a chapter from a soon to be published compilation of my prison writings. The book, *We Are Our Own Liberators!*, presents specific ideas, theoretical determinations, and political positions on how we should work to rebuild and continue the struggle. The proceeds from this pamphlet will help offset the cost to produce the book. Therefore, it is anticipated all will support not only the distribution of this pamphlet, but more importantly, the rebuilding of our movement. Rest assured, our youth and the struggle for class and national liberation, having learned the lessons of the past will recover and triumph. Remember - "Truth crushed to the earth will rise again."

Jalil A. Muntaqim, August 1997

## PRISONERS OF WAR

(This is only a partial listing as of January 2002)

Abdul Majid (A. LaBorde)  
83A0483 / Box 700, Wallkill, NY, 12589

Anthony Bottom (Jalil A. Muntaqim)  
77A4283 / Box 618, Auburn, NY, 13024

Bashir Hameed (J. York)  
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Herman Bell  
79C0262 / CCF Main / Box 2001, Dannemora, NY, 12929-2001

Mutulu Shakur  
83205-012 / Box PMB / D-Unit 105, Atlanta, GA, 30315

Robert Seth Hayes  
74A2280 / Box 2001, Dannemora, NY, 12929-2001

Russel Shoats  
AF-3855, SCI Green, 1040 E. Roy Furman Hwy,  
Waynesburg, PA, 15370-8090

Sekou Cinque T.M. Kambui  
(William Turk # 113058), P.O. Box 10 (6A-100)  
Clio, Alabama, 36017-0010

Sekou Odinga  
05228-054, 3901 Killen Blvd, Lompoc, CA, 93436

Sundiata Acoli (C. Squire)  
39794-066 / Box 3000, White Deer, PA, 17887

While imprisoned in San Quentin in 1975-77, Jalil was able to organise the first national prison petition campaign to the United Nations. He established the first revolutionary prisoners national newspaper called "Arm the Spirit", and organised the first Black August demonstration in front of San Quentin. From his prison cell, Jalil with the support of another BLA Prisoner of War, Sundiata Acoli, organised the first march to the United Nations calling for recognition of U.S. political prisoners, as well as the first demonstration in front of the Harlem State Office Building calling for recognition of U.S. political prisoners.

Also, since being in NY state prisons, Jalil wrote and submitted a legislative bill for prisoners with life sentences to receive good time off their minimum sentences. This bill was introduced to the NY State Assembly Committee on Corrections. Jalil has filed numerous lawsuits on behalf of prisoners' civil and human rights challenging the prison system's way of doing business. In addition, he has received awards of appreciation from Jaycee's NAACP, and Project Build prison chapters for his active participation and leadership.

After many years of being denied the opportunity to attend college because he has been designated a Central Monitoring Case (CMC) security classification, in 1994, Jalil graduated from SUNY-New Paltz with a BS in Psychology and a BA in Sociology. He is a founding member of the New African Liberation Front (NALF), and presently working to develop a National Prisoners' African Studies Project (NPASP). Recently, he initiated the international mobilization, "Spring Break '98 Jericho March on the White House and U.S. Embassies to Demand Amnesty for U.S. Political Prisoners." Over the years he has written several political booklets and essays, an unpublished novel and teleplay.

Jalil has a daughter and granddaughter. He states, "I came to prison an expectant father and will leave prison a grandfather." Jalil will not appear before the parole board in NY state until the year 2002. He also states, "The United States does not recognize the existence of political prisoners. To do so would give credence to the fact of the level of repression and oppression that exists in the United States, and have to recognize the fact that people resist racist oppression in the U.S., and therefore legitimize the existence of not only the individuals who are incarcerated or have been captured, but also legitimize those movements of which they are a part."

## **ON THE BLACK LIBERATION ARMY**

*"... Hide nothing from the masses of our peoples. Tell no lies. Expose lies whenever they are told. Mask no difficulties, mistakes, failures. Claim no easy victories..."* PAIGC-1965

The history of our national liberation struggle, is one of the most important factors upon which the political party(s), the oppressed masses, and the liberation armed forces may understand the nature of their oppression and the task before them towards independence and freedom.

In this article, I would like to present to the masses the general history of the evolution of the Black Liberation Army. This will be a brief historical overview not providing specific historical data in order to protect people who are either functioning in the BLA, or in other areas no longer associated with the BLA. The Black Liberation Army is a politico-military organization, whose primary objective is to fight for the independence and self-determination of Afrikan people in the United States. The political determination of the BLA evolved out of the now defunct Black Panther Party.

It was in October 1966, with the advent of the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense, that the question of armed struggle and resistance to racist oppression emerge as a plausible strategic maneuver in the developing liberation movement. It was in late 1968, early 1969, that the forming of a Black underground first begun. From Los Angeles-California, to Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama, armed units were formed in rural areas, trained and caches were established. In Oakland, San Francisco, Detroit, Chicago, Philadelphia, Ohio and New York, Black Panther Party offices were established to formulate a political relationship with the oppressed Black masses in these and other communities across the country. From 1969 to 1972, the BPP came under vicious attack by the State and Federal government. The government employed COINTELPRO (FBI, CIA and local police departments) as the means to destroy the above-ground political apparatus that fielded the Black underground. But it wasn't until 1970 that the BPP began its purge of many of its most trusted and militant members, many of which eventually joined the Black underground. By 1971, contradictions perpetuated by COINTELPRO forces in the

leadership of the BPP caused the split between Newton and Cleaver, which eventually split the entire Black Panther Party into two major factions. It was this BPP split and factionalism that determined the fielding of the Black underground would begin to serve its primary purpose (along with conditions presented by the State armed offensive to liquidate the Party). This is not to say that armed action against the State did not occur by the Black underground prior to the split. On the contrary, by 1971, the Black underground was becoming rich in experience in the tactics of armed expropriations, sabotage, and ambush-assaults. It needs to be said that prior to the split, the Black underground was the official armed-wing of the aboveground political apparatus, and thereby had to maintain restraint in its military activity. This was very well, for the Black underground, although in many areas experienced in tactical military guerrilla warfare, was still infantile politically, and although becoming organisationally wielded as a fighting apparatus, it did not establish an infra-structure completely autonomous from the aboveground BPP cadres and Party chapters. This in turn become one of the major detriments of the Black underground after the split of the Black Panther Party.

Based upon the split and factionalism in the BPP, and heightened repression by the State, the Black underground was ordered to begin establishing the capacity to take the "defensive-offensive" in developing urban guerrilla warfare. Hence, in 1971, the name Black Liberation Army (or Afro-American Liberation Army) surfaced as the nucleus of Black guerrilla fighters across the United States. This is not to say that the name Black Liberation Army was first used in 1971, for in late 1968, during a student strike and demonstration in Mexico City, students and demonstrators were killed by Mexican police. One of those students was reported to have had a piece of paper in his pocket upon which was written the name Black Liberation Army. Whether or not there was a connection to the fielding of the Black underground with the uprising in Mexico in 1968 is unknown.

Since the split in the BPP and the call of the "defensive-offensive" commenced, the Black underground which in May of 1971 born the name Black Liberation Army, had committed many armed attacks against the state as part of the BPP (and after the split) many of which are unrecorded. Here I would like to present the Justice Department-LEAA Task Force report on BLA activity (it should be noted these reports were recorded by the State according to when they captured, killed, or in

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Anthony Bottom/ Jalil A. Muntaqim was born October 18, 1951 in Oakland, California, the first of four children in his family. His early years were spent in San Francisco. In his junior high school years he obtained a summer scholarship to attend an advanced college math and engineering program. During the civil rights movement, he participated in NAACP youth organising and was one of many who engaged in street riots against racism and police brutality in San Francisco. In high school, he became a leading member of the Black Student Union. Because of his ability to articulate the issues that confronted Black students, Jalil often toured San Jose, California, in what was called "speakout" with the BSU Chairman of San Jose State and City College. He had become a member of the "House of Umoja", a cultural-nationalist affiliate of Ron Karenga's United Slaves organisation.

At the age of 16 1/2, on April 6, 1968, two nights after the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. the BSU Chair of San Jose State and City College, Jalil, and a couple of high school students were arrested in a car and charged with possession of high-powered rifles and molotov cocktails. Black high school students picketed and demonstrated in front of San Jose City Hall demanding their release from detention. After the assassination of Rev. King, Jalil began to believe a more militant response to national oppression and racism was necessary, and began to look towards the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense for leadership. He became affiliated with the BPP when he was 18 years old. Having moved back to San Francisco from San Jose, Jalil was recruited into the Black underground by elementary school friends who had since become Panthers. Less than two months from his twentieth birthday, on August 28, 1971, Jalil was captured along with Albert Nuh Washington in a midnight shoot-out with San Francisco police (It has been alleged that Jalil and Nuh attempted to assassinate a S.F. police sergeant in retaliation for the August 21, 1971 assassination of BPP Field Marshal George Jackson).

Subsequently, Jalil was charged with a host of revolutionary underground activities, including the assassination of NYC police officers for which he is currently serving a life sentence. When he was arrested in 1971, he was a high school graduate and employed as a social worker for the California State Employment Office. Having been imprisoned since 1971, Nuh and Jalil are two of the ten longest held Black political prisoners in the world.



of the Geneva Accords) concerning the existence of political prisoners of war in the United States. Thereby, supporting the release of political prisoners of war brings understanding to how these revolutionaries came to be imprisoned, and the need for them to be released, as well as, the need for revolutionary armed struggle. This is the challenge in uniting the mass and popular movement under the auspices of building the Black Liberation Front, and can only be objectively realised by supporting the re-emergence of the Black underground, the Black Liberation Army.

**SUPPORT THE BLACK LIBERATION ARMY!**

**BUILD THE NATIONAL POW AMNESTY CAMPAIGN!**

**FREE ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS OF WAR!**

*Jalil Abdul Muntaqim on behalf of the Black Liberation Army*

**Addendum:** Since the original writing of this brief historical account of the BPP-BLA, Assata Shakur was liberated, and BLA soldiers were captured during Nyack Brinks armored car expropriation.

*Originally written on September 18, 1979 & printed in Arm the Spirit, the first national revolutionary prisoners newspaper.*



some way received information concerning BLA activity, and therefore one-sided and by no means indicated all BLA activity in the last ten years).

**1970:**

*October 22. San Francisco, California* - An antipersonnel time bomb explodes outside a church, showering steel shrapnel on mourners of a patrolman slain in a bank holdup. No one is injured. The BLA is suspected.

**1971:**

*January 13. Hunters Point, California* - A police officer is shot by BLA member.

*January 19. San Francisco, California* - Two police officers are wounded by BLA members.

*March 30. San Francisco, California* - There is a BLA attempt to bomb a police station.

*May 19. New York City* - Two Black men lure patrolmen Curry and Binetti by driving the wrong way and ignoring a traffic light. When apprehended the driver drops down and the passenger fires a machine gun at the doors and windows of the patrol car. The Black Liberation Army is suspected.

*May 21. Harlem, New York City* - Patrolmen Piagentini and Waverly Jones are killed in an ambush by alleged members of the BLA.

*June 5. New York City* - Four men associated with the Black Liberation Army attempt to hold-up a night club called the Tribble O. One cab driver is killed.

*June 18. New York City* - BLA members rob a bank for funds.

*August* - Twenty BLA members leave New York City and rent a farmhouse in Fayetteville, Georgia, where they conduct a guerrilla warfare school for one month, during which they hold-up a bank and kill an Atlanta policeman.

*August 23. Queens, New York* - The Bankers Trust Company is robbed; Black Liberation Army members are identified as participants.

*August 28. San Francisco, California* - Two BLA members attempt to machine-gun a San Francisco police department patrol car, after an exchange of gun fire, they are apprehended. The service revolver of slain New York City patrolman Waverly Jones is found in their possession.

*August 29. San Francisco, California* - A police sergeant is killed at his desk when two black men fire repeated blasts into the Ingelside police station. The BLA is suspected.

*October 7. Atlanta, Georgia.* - The Peters Street branch of Fulton National Bank is robbed, reportedly by the Black Liberation Army.

*November 3. Atlanta, Ga.* - Officer James Richard Greene is shot in a paddywagon; the scene of the shooting is 3 miles from a residence used by the Black Liberation Army, this organization believed responsible for the shooting.

*December 12. Atlanta, Ga.* - Three reported Black Liberation Army members and two other prisoners escape from the DeKalb County jail.

*December 21. Atlanta, Ga. - New York City* - Two police officers notice a suspicious car near Bankers Trust Company in Queens. When they approach the car, it speeds away, and individuals in the car roll a grenade towards the police car. The grenade explodes, causing considerable damage towards the police car, and injuring the policemen. Two suspects are identified as Black Liberation Army members.

*December 31. Brooklyn, New York* - BLA members engage in a shoot-out with a rival group in the offices of Youth in Action.

*Odessa, Florida* - BLA member is killed in a shoot-out with FBI.

mobilise the national liberation struggle under the aspirations of the oppressed Black masses. The building of the Afrikan National Prisoners Organization is a positive step on which various progressive Black forces can develop principled working relationships, alliances, and coalitions, and further build towards the Black Liberation Front. In the same regards, the development of the National Black Human Rights Coalition provides a means from which a greater number of Black organizations and groups representing oppressed Black masses can be educated, organized, and mobilized to confront racist capitalist-imperialism, in conjunction with the heightened struggles in Namibia and Azania, and human right violations here in North America. But it is imperative that these new formations develop a struggle line that supports the need for armed struggle to be waged in the United States, and therefore support of the oldest revolutionary armed force in North America - The Black Liberation Army.

It is practically 1980, and the Black Liberation Army (the Black underground) have been in existence for over ten years. The last ten years have been hard years of struggle, we have lost many comrades, we have made many mistakes, but we have never lied nor compromised our principles in struggle. The growth and development of the BLA depends on the growth and development of the entire class and national liberation struggle. The means from which the BLA can build revolutionary armed struggle is based upon the willingness of the oppressed masses to support the BLA, to call for the BLA to act, to build areas of support in the work place, in the home, and the social places of entertainment, but most of all amongst the political organisations and groups that the oppressed masses are affiliated with. It is essential and necessary that the general mass and popular movement understand the need for revolutionary armed struggle/forces to exist, and that the existence of the Black Liberation Army is the criteria on which the class and national liberation struggle will be preserved, as the socio-economic conditions of U.S. monopoly-capitalism worsen, and as racist repression intensifies.

As mentioned earlier, another national political campaign has been launched, this new campaign calling for the release and/or exchange of captured members of the Black underground and other revolutionary forces across the country. But it must be understood the principal objective of this campaign is to also build support of revolutionary armed struggle, employing international law and politics (specifically: Protocols

and strengthen our collective political determination as a fighting force. Over the years, the newsletter has served to help develop cadres inside and outside of prisons, and broaden the capacity from which the BLA could continue to serve the national liberation struggle. Also, in 1976, members of the Black Liberation Army launched a national campaign to petition the United Nations concerning the plight of political prisoners of war, and conditions of the U.S. penal system, on behalf of the prison movement. The U.N. Prisoners Petition Campaign, initiated and directed by members of the BLA, virtually revitalized the prison movement across the country, and forged an impetus to the present Human Rights campaign to the United Nations. It was the U.N. Prisoners Petition Campaign that first called for an international investigation into the conditions of U.S. prisons, and called for the release of political prisoners of war to a non-imperialist country that would accept them. (Consequently, this year another national campaign has been launched entitled "National POW Amnesty Campaign"). Lastly, in 1976-77, the Coordinating Committee distributed what had been termed a Study Guide to captured members of the BLA as a means to consolidate the ideological perspectives from which the BLA would provide political leadership to the national liberation struggle.

Since 1974, to the present, the BLA have continuously provided ideological and political perspectives within the Black Liberation Movement, and in this way gave leadership to the movement, although the Black Liberation Army is still lacking principled support by progressive forces throughout the country. The primary aspect of lack of support is the fact the BLA still calls for the need of armed struggle and the building of a revolutionary armed front. The Black Liberation Army is a politico-military organization, which in the last five years has served to develop the political mass movement to merge with the political determination of the Black underground. The merger is upon the development of a national politico-military strategy in unity with the aspirations and strategic initiatives of the various progressive political organizations throughout the country. Consistently, the Black Liberation Army has called for the development of the Black Liberation Front or Black United Front, an united front of Black revolutionary nationalists, establishing the political determination of the class and national liberation struggle towards independence, and for the freeing of the land. At this stage in the struggle, there are several areas of progress being formulated that may serve to strengthen, consolidate, and

**1972:**

*January 12. Houston, Texas* - Members of the BLA are charged with shooting and wounding of off-duty Housing Police detectives.

*January 19. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania* - Two BLA members are arrested with two suitcases containing guns.

*January 27. New York City* - In the morning two patrolmen notice a car going through two red lights. When they approach to ask for a driver's license, the driver starts shooting. One patrolman is seriously wounded. In the evening, two policemen, Gregory Foster and Rocco Laurie, are shot in the back by at least three persons. Four suspects in the case are members of the Black Liberation Army. One suspect is later killed in a street battle with St. Louis police. The recovered pistol matches Laurie's.

*February 16. St. Louis, Missouri* - A Black Liberation Army member tied to shooting of Foster and Laurie, is killed in a gun battle with police. Two others are arrested.

*May 10. Columbia, South Carolina* - Four BLA members arrested with guns.

*August 8. Newark, New Jersey* - BLA member who escapes after shooting sergeant and patrolmen on April 19, 1971, is captured.

*September 9. Brooklyn, New York* - Three BLA members, including one who escaped from DeKalb County jail (Georgia) are arrested.

*October 7. Los Angeles, California* - Police car bombing claimed by Afro-American Liberation Army.

*December 28. Brooklyn, New York* - An owner of a bar is kidnapped by the BLA and held for \$20,000 ransom.

**1973:**

*January 2. Brooklyn, N.Y.* - During the robbery of a social club, BLA members shoot and kill a victim.

*January 10. Brooklyn, N.Y.* - After being confronted on a subway station by patrolman a BLA member fires a shot and escapes into the tunnel.

*January 12. Brooklyn, N.Y.* - Two Housing detectives are shot in front of a bar after stopping two BLA members.

*January 23. Brooklyn, N.Y.* - Two wanted BLA members are shot and killed by members of New York City police department after they are trapped in a bar. Two detectives are wounded.

*January 25. Brooklyn, N.Y.* - Two patrolmen brothers assigned to same car are machine-gunned by the BLA.

*January 28. Queens, N.Y.* - Two patrolmen on patrol are machine-gunned by BLA members, who escape.

*February 9. Bronx, N.Y.* - Members of the Black Liberation Army robbed a bank.

*February 23. Brooklyn, N.Y.* - Two BLA members are arrested with a carload of explosives.

*March 2. Brooklyn, N.Y.* - A group of BLA members, stopped by officers looking for a robbery suspect, engages the officers in a gun battle.

*March 6. Bronx, N.Y.* - Three BLA members are recognized by two detectives, and engage them in a gun battle. BLA members are joined by two more and escape by stealing a car and machine-gunning a police radio car.

*March 27. Brooklyn, N.Y.* - BLA members rob a supermarket.

*April 10. Queens, N.Y.* - BLA members rob a bank.

*April 12. Brooklyn, N.Y.* - Two telephone company men are held at gun point by the BLA when they are suspected of being police. They are told that they would be killed if they have guns, radios or shields.

terrorism, to prevent these terrorists from starting racial strife between black and white people, and to protect the interest and lives of police who are responsible for the welfare of the oppressed communities, etc. The captured and confined BLA member was deemed a terrorist, a criminal, a racist, but never a revolutionary, never a humanitarian, never a political activist. But the undaunted revolutionary fervor of captured BLA members continued to serve the revolution even while imprisoned. By placing the State on trial, the BLA was more able to expose the contradictions between the philosophy of the State to protect the rights of all people, and the actions of the State which are to only protect the rights of the capitalist-class bourgeoisie. The BLA trials sought to undermine the State attempts to play-off the BLA as an insignificant group of crazies, and therefore the trials of BLA members became forums to politicize the masses of what the struggle and revolution is all about. The trials served to organize people to support those being persecuted and prosecuted by the State, as a means from which the oppressed masses would be able to protect themselves from future persecution. In this manner, the trials of the Black Liberation Army voiced the discontent, dissatisfaction, and disenfranchisement of Black people in racist America.

By late 1975, the Black Liberation Army established a Coordinating Committee, which essentially was comprised of imprisoned members and outside supporters gained during the years of political prosecution in the courts. The first task of the Coordinating Committee was to distribute an ideological and political document depicting the theoretical foundations of the political determination of the Black Liberation Army. This document was entitled, "A MESSAGE TO THE BLACK MOVEMENT -A Political Statement from the Black Underground." The Message to the Black Movement, put forth several political premises from which the BLA should be noted as a revolutionary politico-military organization fighting for national liberation of Afrikan people in the United States.

In late 1975 and 1976, the Coordinating Committee distributed the first BLA newsletter, an organizational publication for the purpose of forging ideological and political clarity and unity between BLA members captured and confined in various parts of the country. The BLA newsletter begun to serve as a means from which BLA members would voice their political understanding of the national liberation struggle, and in this way, for the entire organized body to share in ideas

