

## Assata Shakur's Open Letter

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## Assata Shakur's Open Letter About Persecution



My name is [Assata Shakur](#), and I am a 20th century escaped slave. Because of government persecution, I was left with no other choice than to flee from the political repression, racism and violence that dominate the US government's policy towards people of color. I am an ex-political prisoner, and I have been living in exile in Cuba since 1984.

I have been a political activist most of my life, and although the U.S. government has done everything in its power to criminalize me, I am not a criminal, nor have I ever been one. In the 1960s, I participated in various struggles: the black liberation movement, the student rights movement, and the movement to end the war in Vietnam. I joined the Black Panther Party. By 1969 the [Black Panther Party](#) had become the number one organization targeted by the FBI's [COINTELPRO](#) program. Because the Black Panther Party demanded the total liberation of black people, J. Edgar Hoover called it "greatest threat to the internal security of the country" and vowed to destroy it and its leaders and activists.

In 1978, my case was one of many cases brought before the United Nations Organization in a petition filed by the National Conference of Black Lawyers, the National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression, and the United Church of Christ Commission for Racial Justice, exposing the existence of political prisoners in the United States, their political persecution, and the cruel and inhuman treatment they receive in US prisons. According to the report:

*'The FBI and the New York Police Department in particular, charged and accused Assata Shakur of participating in attacks on law enforcement personnel and widely circulated such charges and accusations among police agencies and units. The FBI and the NYPD further*

*charged her as being a leader of the Black Liberation Army which the government and its respective agencies described as an organization engaged in the shooting of police officers. This description of the Black Liberation Army and the accusation of Assata Shakur's relationship to it was widely circulated by government agents among police agencies and units. As a result of these activities by the government, Ms. Shakur became a hunted person; posters in police precincts and banks described her as being involved in serious criminal activities; she was highlighted on the FBI's most wanted list; and to police at all levels she became a 'shoot-to-kill' target."*

I was falsely accused in six different "criminal cases" and in all six of these cases I was eventually acquitted or the charges were dismissed. The fact that I was acquitted or that the charges were dismissed, did not mean that I received justice in the courts, that was certainly not the case. It only meant that the "evidence" presented against me was so flimsy and false that my innocence became evident. This political persecution was part and parcel of the government's policy of eliminating political opponents by charging them with crimes and arresting them with no regard to the factual basis of such charges.

We need to create media outlets that help to educate our people and our children, and not annihilate their minds. I am only one woman. I own no TV stations, or Radio Stations or Newspapers. But I feel that people need to be educated as to what is going on, and to understand the connection between the news media and the instruments of repression in Amerika. All I have is my voice, my spirit and the will to tell the truth. But I sincerely ask, those of you in the Black media, those of you in the progressive media, those of you who believe in truth freedom, To publish this statement and to let people know what is happening. We have no voice, so you must be the voice of the voiceless.

Free all Political Prisoners, I send you Love and Revolutionary Greetings From Cuba, One of the Largest, Most Resistant and Most Courageous Palenques (Maroon Camps) That has ever existed on the Face of this Planet.

### **Assata Shakur Havana, Cuba**

Assata Shakur's actions were only reactionary to the then lawful and unlawful hate, oppressive, and racist practices & policies that our government now condemns and/or has abolished. Further, not one bit of forensic evidence supported the conviction of Ms. Shakur, and she was denied a fair and impartial trial. Anyone that goes against the establishment (rules of the Government) is deemed a terrorist.

**"ALL POWER TO THE PEOPLE"**

[Source](#)