DHORUBA BIN WAHAD:

The Black Liberation Army & Hamas

Dhoruba bin Wahad, “The Black Liberation Army & Hamas,” Black Liberation Media, with Jared A. Ball, May 3, 2024
www.youtube.com/watch?v=d7rGikymsFE

Cover image by Emory Douglas, “In Revolution One Wins or One Dies,” *Black Panther: The Revolutionary Art of Emory Douglas*

with whatever weapons at hand

I and the people that came into the Black Liberation Army, many of them were never in the Black Panther Party. Everybody assumed that everybody that was in the BLA came from the Black Panther Party. That's a misunderstanding. Before we went underground, we were in the community. We were in the pool halls. We were in the barbershops. We were selling papers on the subway. We was at Mrs. So-&-So's crib in the backyard—you understand?—at the barbecues. We was among, we were a part of, we were with the people, you see? So when we go underground, the people know us, you understand? "I'm going to see my aunt for the weekend." "Here. Here's the key." "We going to be back 6:00 Monday, now." "Okay, baby. Cool." I got a safe house for the weekend. She knows what's going on. "They looking for you. You know they looking for you, boy." "Don't worry. Don't worry. Them crackers can't find shit."

If we understand that Hamas, just like the BLA, is an expression of the people's relationship to power and the status quo, it's just that we took a position—and the community knows that—that whenever the status quo does something bad to our community we will retaliate in kind. Black folks appreciated that. Yeah, if you stick a mic in their face from CBS and said, "Two cops was just killed yesterday by these Black extremists and these radical revolutionaries, what do you think about them?" They might say, "Well, that's a shame. I don't think police should be killed." What else they going to say? "Yeah, they should have killed that motherfucker?" You understand what I'm saying? But if you took a survey of the people there... "Yeah, them cops always coming in here beating up on people. Good somebody got their ass, especially that white one that's always bullying people. It's good they kill his ass." They might not say that on CBS, but that's what they feel.

It's just like the Palestinians when Hamas went across that border and defeated all of that surveillance and snatched them Israelis, they were cheering. They was dancing on the tanks with their cell phones. You see? They couldn't cheer when they were occupied and Israeli soldiers standing at the checkpoint. They had to humble themselves. They had to let these people push them around. But, yeah, our boys got 'em. Our boys got 'em. Yeah. When they see the rockets coming over from Iran and from Hezbollah dropping on them Israelis, they be talking about, "Yeah! Yeah! Yeah!" People identify with resistance, you see? Who are the ones in Lebanon talking about Hezbollah in a negative way? It's the Christians talking about, "Hezbollah is endangering Lebanon." Like Lebanon is safe

with Israel on your doorstep? If it wasn't for Hezbollah, Lebanon would be cool? American imperialism would have no [influence]? Y'all be good?

Justifying the BLA only means understanding psychologically what Frantz Fanon talked about the native. When the native kills a colonist, he's reinventing himself. He's asserting his humanity. Now, the act may seem inhumane, but that's the psychosis of it. Look at how they changed the struggle around when the FLN started blowing up cafés in Paris. How could they just blow up innocent people sitting in the café getting coffee? The same way you could bomb a village up in the motherfucking mountains in Algeria and don't give a fuck. The same way you could kill goat herders. When you are suffering what you inflict on others, now you understand that what goes around comes around, that your humanity is just as valuable to you as it is to them. The fact that they will come here and kill you tells you that they're far braver and more straightforward than you are, because they come in here just to make sure that you understand, "We ain't getting mad, we going to get evil."

That was the BLA's mantra. "Blood to the horse's brow and woe to those who cannot swim." That's what we said every time we went out and did something, "Blood to the horse's brow and woe to those who cannot swim." "Bam. Bam." We gone. That's it. Didn't make no difference if you was a Black cop, if you was a white cop, if you was a female cop. If you took the life of a Black boy in our community and shot him down like a dog, you were going to die. Of course they're gonna portray us as "just these criminals." I mean, they portray us… Every slave revolt, the ones that revolted were criminals. They were inhumane. Even your homeboy Finklestein says that. Remember when Finklesten said he went back and looked at Nat Turner's slave rebellion and how the abolitionists dealt with that? Because he was in a conundrum about how to respond to Hamas and how to respond to these things, and he realized out of all of these abolitionists, not one of them condemned Nat Turner. They all said, "We told you so. We told you that this was going to happen."

What I'm trying to point out is that we used to have an axiom that repression breeds resistance. All this murder and killing, you see them young kids that's watching their whole family get murdered in their sleep, them babies that are starving and watching their mama cry and watching their daddy and their siblings die. If you think that that's not the next generation of Hamas, you a goddamn fool. And they going to be far more

ruthless than the ones that you got now. You better negotiate with these motherfuckers you got now, because when that baby grow up... That's why the Egyptians like, "I ain't letting them motherfuckers in here. You know what I'm going to have on my hand in 10 years with a population that's experienced this and they in the desert in Gaza suffering and we the ones just keeping them there suffering?" Whoa.

Dhoruba bin Wahad was a leading member of the New York Black Panther Party, a Field Secretary of the BPP responsible for organizing chapters throughout the East Coast, and a member of the Panther 21. Arrested in June 1971, he was framed as part of the illegal FBI Counter Intelligence Program (COINTELPRO) and subjected to unfair treatment and torture during his nineteen years in prison. During Dhoruba's incarceration, litigation on his behalf produced over three hundred thousand pages of COINTELPRO documentation, and upon release in 1990 he was able to bring a successful lawsuit against the New York Department of Corrections for all their wrong-doings and criminal activities. Living in both Ghana and the U.S., Dhoruba, an uncompromising critic of imperialism and capitalism, continues to write and work promoting freedom for all political prisoners and revolutionary Pan-Africanism.

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