

## Facts Behind Terror by Jeffrey Steinberg

### Reactivation of the BLA

*EIR's counterintelligence newsletter, Investigative Leads, warned a year ago that the group was being reactivated.*

**O**n April 16, two New York City police officers were shot and severely wounded by two members of the Black Liberation Army as the officers attempted to inspect their van.

The BLA, composed of former Black Panthers and convicted felons, were responsible for the murder of over a dozen policemen across the country in the early 1970s. Police investigators now speculate that the BLA may be attempting to rebuild their nationwide apparatus under the leadership of Joanne Chesimard. It is believed that a series of robberies are being carried out to finance this resurgence.

The police think the BLA has joined forces with a variety of black militant organizations to build a base of support. One such group is the New Jersey-based New World of Islam, an extremist black Islamic sect responsible for over 13 bank robberies and one police murder in the last year. Police also suspect that the BLA may have hooked up with the Rastafarian drug cult.

We reprint here the *Investigative Leads* report of April 1, 1980 predicting this reactivation. If the proper counterterror action had been taken at the time, the recent shootings could probably have been averted.

*IL's* continuing investigation into the recent pattern of prison breakouts and the release from prison of former terrorists has de-

termined that there is a deliberate effort to rebuild the Black Liberation Army . . . [as] a "new black nation."

In early April 1978, New York City police were involved in a shootout with two BLA terrorists, Eric Thompson and Mariano Gonzales. Afterward, police discovered extensive dossiers on the BLA leadership in the trunk of the BLA vehicle and an arms cache in Thompson's apartment. This find is believed to have derailed an attempt at that time to rebuild the BLA using ex-convicts as the hard core of the group. However, the rebuilding started again with the Nov. 2, 1979 prison breakout of Joanne Chesimard, a.k.a. Assata Shakur, known as the "soul of the BLA." Chesimard has openly called for the freeing of all black "political prisoners."

Beginning in January 1980, three members of the terrorist Republic of New Africa (RNA), which is leading the fight for a "new Black nation," were freed from federal penitentiaries in the South. The three—former president of the RNA Imari Obadele, Addis Ababba, and Karim Njabafundi—are part of the RNA 11 imprisoned in 1972 on charges ranging from possession of stolen weapons to murder, federal conspiracy, and assault. Soon after, in January and February 1980, a series of prison breakouts began. These included breakouts at Rikers Island prison in New

York City, Lewisberg Federal Penitentiary in Pennsylvania, and the recent aborted breakout at the Essex County Jail in Newark, N.J. on March 25. The pattern of prison breaks follows the standard M.O. of how such organizations are created—using fugitive criminals indoctrinated in "liberation" ideologies while in prison "rehabilitation programs."

Members of such terrorist organizations as the Symbionese Liberation Army (SLA) were recruited from prison rehabilitation programs on the West Coast. The West Coast programs were run almost exclusively by members and supporters of the Revolutionary Union—now the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP). In fact, it should be noted that H. Bruce Franklin, one of the founders of the RU, is now active in prison organizing and cultural studies on the East Coast. One piece of information pointing to this was the outburst by James Johnson and Lloyd Jones during their trial for attempted murder of a New York City police officer. When the two were found guilty by Judge Roberts, they started screaming at the judge calling him a "capitalist hog." It is important to note that Johnson and Jones are being represented by FALN lawyer Susan Tipograph.

Law enforcement officials in Florida believe that a January-February crime spree there, including two South Florida bank robberies, is linked to Chesimard. Messages in the two robberies were identical to those given in robberies committed by the BLA in the early 1970s. Chesimard had many contacts in South Florida in the 1970s; one of the bank robbers fits Chesimard's description.