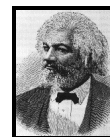




The

Agitator

"If there is no struggle, there is no progress..."
"Agitate, Agitate, Agitate..." Frederick Douglass



April, 2002

P. O. Box 22505, Newark NJ 07101-2505 (973) 601-0001

Newsletter of the People's Organization For Progress (POP)

JUSTICE FOR EARL FAISON AND ALL VICTIMS OF POLICE BRUTALITY

By Lawrence Hamm, Chairman, People's Organization For Progress



It has been three years since his death and justice still has not been attained for Earl Faison and his family. In April 1999, Earl was wrongfully arrested as a suspect in the murder of an Orange police officer. He died while in custody after being beaten and tortured by Orange police. In December 2000, after months of protests by his family, the People's Organization For Progress (POP) and other groups, five Orange police officers were found guilty on federal charges of conspiracy and civil rights violations in connection with the assault on Mr. Faison.

The trial judge, John C. Lifland, unjustly overturned the jury's guilty verdicts on the conspiracy charges last May. Earl's family, POP and many other organizations called upon the U. S. Attorney's Office to appeal Lifland's decision. On March 21, the U. S. Attorney argued the case before the Third Circuit U. S. Court of Appeals in Philadelphia. On that day, POP brought family members and supporters to the court to make our presence felt and our demand for justice known. The court is expected to render a decision within the next two months. It is our earnest hope that the appeals court will nullify Lifland's decision and put this case back on course towards justice.

Earl Faison did not die in a far away land. He was killed in this country, in this state, and in our community. This atrocity didn't happen to other people. It happened to us. Brothers and Sisters, this is our struggle. It is our cause. It is not in the history books. It is right here and right now. We cannot escape the urgency of the moment. We could not be with Earl to protect him from those police officers on the night he lost his life. We could not be there to cry out for help. We could not be there to

prevent them from kicking him when he lay on the ground. We could not be in the patrol car to block the blows to his body, or in that stairwell in the police headquarters to stop them when they pepper sprayed him while he was unconscious. We could not be there to hold him when he died. But we **can** be in this struggle for justice.



In Honor of Women's History Month

ELLA BAKER (1903 -1986)

"We who believe in freedom cannot rest until it comes. Until the killing of Black men, Black mother's sons, is as important as the killing of white men, white mother's sons."

The singing group Sweet Honey in the Rock has immortalized these words in "Ella's Song", capturing the determination and fighting



spirit of this great, dedicated, lifelong leader in the fight against racism, an unsung heroine of the civil rights movement, her work was not in the limelight, but in organizing and empowering thousands of youth, workers and poor people. She is especially known for her work in the development of the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). Ella spent her life "passing on to others that which was passed on to me."

P.O.P.
Meets Every Thursday
6:00 p.m.
Abyssinian Baptist Church
224 West Kinney St.
Newark, NJ

Continued on page 3

DEMAND CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION IN COVER UP OF TURNPIKE SHOOTINGS

By Lisa Davis

Since the state of New Jersey shamelessly allowed troopers John Hogan and James Kenna to walk after deliberately shooting 11 bullets into a van carrying four innocent and unarmed minority youths because of what it deems an "unjust system of indoctrination" established by their superiors, then the community must demand the criminal prosecution of their superiors. We must tell this state that we will not tolerate officers wrongfully gunning down innocent life. The revolting \$280 fine that NJ gave the troopers for their attack on those young men was racist and an affront to our entire community. And we must tell this state that since it ruled that Hogan and Kenna, the perpetrators of the crime, should not be criminally punished because they were following policies of their supervisors, then NJ must prosecute all of the superiors involved.

In a blatant miscarriage of justice, officers Hogan and Kenna were absolved of any criminal wrongdoing. Furthermore they admitted that their superiors and other officers assisted them in lying, falsifying police reports, tampering with evidence and obstruction of justice. The State is now asking us to accept its inane argument that it can not investigate further because too many troopers are involved to be able to get to the truth.

Organized crime and the drug trade are wide spread and involve massive numbers of people, but this has never stopped the State from going after either. And widespread

abuse must not stop the State from going after police brutality and corruption. The State's reason for not investigating further is either an admission of ineptness, or a blatant refusal to carry out justice. Either way, we must tolerate neither.

The Hogan/Kenna decision made a mockery of the state-wide racial profiling hearings. and bespeaks the hypocrisy and racial pathology of American justice. Is it any wonder that reports reflect that there has been no change in the amount of minorities being racially profiled? To stop the horrors of police brutality, police must be punished with imprisonment when guilty of engaging in such atrocities.

The only ones that NJ has arrested regarding this issue are the people who peacefully protested against the troopers! In 1999, Al Sharpton and 75 peaceful demonstrators were immediately arrested for protesting in Atlantic City. He was hit with heavy fines and imprisonment. Although he was in jail for less than two hours, that is still more jail time than any law enforcement officer has received within the past decade or more for assaulting or killing unarmed minorities.

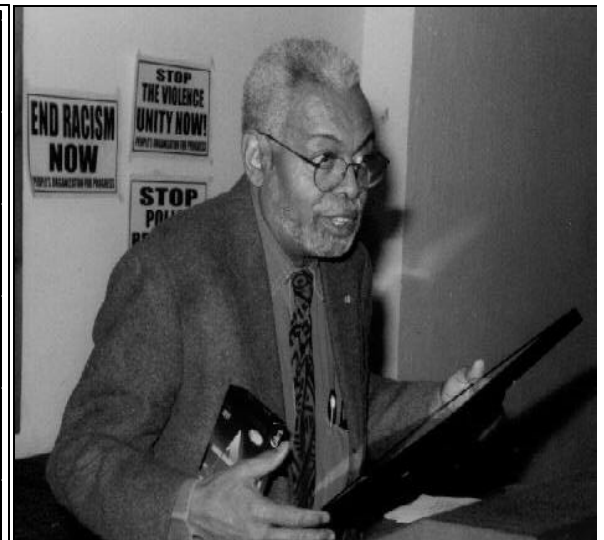
The strongest message that New Jersey has given thus far about police brutality and racial profiling is that it finds nothing criminally wrong with those who engage in these practices, but only finds wrong doing with those who choose to protest against it.

Call the Governor at (609)292-6000 and the A.G. at (609) 292-4925 to demand JUSTICE!

P.O.P. - Aims And Purposes

The People's Organization for Progress has been formed for the following purposes:

- ? To educate the people about relevant social, economic and political issues.
- ? To continuously organize and mobilize the grassroots community so that it can effectively solve its problems and fight for its needs.
- ? To improve the social and economic conditions in our community.
- ? To work for the total elimination of racism and sexism.
- ? To further develop and increase the political power of working and poor people.
- ? To strive for a more just and equitable distribution of wealth in our society.
- ? To serve as an advocate of human and civil rights.
- ? To support the struggles of people at home and abroad against oppression and exploitation.
- ? To promote world peace.
- ? To build unity with other organizations and individuals whose goals are similar to our own.



Montclair Branch of P.O.P. hosted Amiri Baraka, who spoke about his lifelong struggle for African American liberation to an overflow crowd on February 28.

Faison *continued from page 1*

We can be part of the effort to make sure that those who beat and tortured him are held accountable for what they did and are brought to justice. It is time to act.

On the third anniversary of Earl's death, Thursday, April 11, at 5:30 p.m. the People's Organization For Progress will hold a rally at the old Orange police station where Earl Faison died. It is located at 593 Lincoln Avenue, on the corner of Lincoln and Tremont Avenues in Orange, New Jersey. All of us who want justice for Earl Faison and his family must be there.

Earl Faison lost more than his civil rights that night. He lost his life. The state of New Jersey has not brought criminal charges and held anyone accountable for his death. The federal government has taken action. It is now time for the state to reopen the criminal investigation. The scourge of police brutality has claimed too many innocent lives. It must stop. But the powers that be won't eliminate it. We, the people, must put an end to it. We must do all we can to make sure that there are no more Earl Faisons, Amadou Diallos and Abner Louimas. Police brutality is not only a problem for the City of Orange. It is a problem for this state and this nation. There are victims from communities throughout New Jersey. All of us should be part of the movement to demand justice not only for Earl Faison but also for Stanton Crew, Randy Weaver, Bilal Colbert, Michael Anglin, Jenny Hightower and all the victims of police brutality and racial profiling.

On May 15, the Coalition For Justice will hold a march and rally in the state capitol to address the problems of police brutality and racial profiling in New Jersey. The march will begin 11:00 a.m. at the Imani Church, 2 Prospect Street in Trenton and the rally at the State House will begin at 12:00 noon.

The People's Organization For Progress fully endorses this event and we call upon all who believe in justice to answer the call for this march. By our presence in significant numbers let us send the strongest possible message that we demand an end to police brutality and racial profiling in New Jersey.

P.O.P. SAYS "NO" TO WAR WITH IRAQ

People's Organization for Progress (POP) is opposed to plans by the Bush administration to expand the current war in Afghanistan into Iraq. We believe this would further destabilize the Central Asia, Persian Gulf and Middle East regions and result in catastrophic death and destruction.

In the aftermath of the war with Afghanistan, the world has clearly become, not a safer place, but a much more dangerous place. Tensions between nations in that part of the world have risen significantly. India and Pakistan are on the brink of war. The lives of Americans in all of these countries are greatly threatened. War with Iraq could spark a conflagration that could spiral out of control, spark more intensified and new armed conflicts throughout the region, and drive anti-American sentiment to an all time high. In addition, there is no significant support for an invasion of Iraq among European nations or other allies, many of whom have counseled against it.

Iraq poses no significant military or security threat to the United States. During the Gulf War, a significant portion of Iraq's military capability was destroyed. Since then, America's continued bombing of Iraq has destroyed that country's infrastructure, resulted in the deaths of thousands, and caused great suffering among the civilian population.



Facing an economic crisis at home, the Bush administration has spent billions on the Afghanistan war. To spend billions more in a war on Iraq would be a criminal waste of our tax dollars, which should be spent on the needs of people here.

Finally, we call upon the Bush administration to halt all planning and efforts related to war with Iraq, and to end the current bombing and embargo against that country.

HONOR DR. KING BY OPPOSING WAR IN AFGHANISTAN

By Bella August

On January 15th, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday, New Jersey groups [People's Organization for Progress (POP), Women in Support of the Million Man March, Black Cops Against Police Brutality (B-CAP) and For a Better World (FABW)] co-sponsored a forum at Essex County College in Newark to honor his legacy by opposing the war in Afghanistan and the erosion of civil liberties here at home. Representatives of labor unions joined with community and political organizations in denouncing the war and its consequences at home and abroad. POP Chairman, Larry Hamm, moderated the panel and read a letter that was sent to the NJ Congressional delegation calling on them to "obtain justice, strive for peace, and protect civil liberties."



Newark Teachers' Union president, Ms. Ethel Sykes, said that pictures of prisoners being taken to Cuba reminded her of slavery. Mr. Bill Smith, President of NY Metro Postal Workers' Union, galvanized the audience as he recounted the struggle to protect the lives of postal workers from anthrax: "It's all about money, wealth, power. Stand up for righteousness!"

Zen Buddhist priest, Rev. Kobutsu Malone and attorney Bahir Kamil called for vigorous dissent as the duty of true patriots. Kamil compared the Patriot Act to COINTELPRO, and reminded the audience that Blacks have experienced the "trauma of terrorism since the auction block." Delacey Davis (B-CAP) called on people to be watchful of new laws that may be passed, and Dave Hungerford (FaBW) provided an overall view of the world situation, with a handful of wealthy countries and many poor and oppressed countries.

For a copy of the POP letter to the Congressional delegation, or for more information on these organizations, call or write to POP.

Demand Mumia's release now!

Rally and March, Saturday, April 6th

Philadelphia State Office Building 11 a.m. (Broad & Spring Garden) Teach-In Noon, Ben Franklin High School (Broad and Green) Call for more information (973) 801-0001

January 12 Membership Meeting Marks Growth & Success of POP

by Dave Hungerford



POP held a very successful general membership meeting at Mt. Pleasant Missionary Baptist Church in Newark on January 12. More than a hundred people packed the church hall and heard an excellent program that combined membership functions with a commemoration of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. POP Vice-Chairman Richard Strong conducted the meeting.

Solidarity greetings were heard from a number of organizations and individuals: Black Telephone Workers For Justice, Green Party of New Jersey, Clinton Hill/South Ward Improvement Association, Committee To Elect Ras Baraka, Irvington City Council Members, ACLU National Project on Racial Profiling, Enough Is Enough Coalition, and Service Employees International Union.

Earl Williams, father of police brutality victim Earl Faison, spoke of the long and continuing struggle that the family and POP had waged for justice. He said that he did not know where the family would be if it had not been for POP's support.

East Orange grandmother, Esmay Parchment described her ordeal at the hands of the police and mesmerized everyone with a recitation of the outrages done to her. POP Chairman Lawrence Hamm noted that the organization has become a virtual family of victims of injustice. Guest speaker, Gil Noble, host of ABC-TV's "Like It Is," gave a riveting account of the endless battle to represent the oppressed in the mass media.



Mrs. Esmay Parchment speaks to P.O.P. vigil in front of her East Orange home, describing her brutalization at the hands of E.O. police. The February 4th vigil commemorated the killing of Amadou Diallo, as well as calling attention to Mrs. Parchment's case.



The first edition of the revived POP newsletter, *The Agitator*, was distributed at the meeting, with eight pages of information on POP activities. Chairman Hamm gave special thanks to Debbie Brown, Sophia Willis and Annette Alston for their outstanding contributions that made this meeting a resounding success.

Many members received their membership cards, some paid their annual dues, a number of new members were registered, and the new Montclair Branch was recognized.

Gil Noble addresses POP meeting

The next POP general membership meeting will take place on April 27.

A CALL TO ACTION FOR PEACE ON VIEQUES

Information from The Committee for the Rescue and Development of Vieques

The US Navy has officially notified the Puerto Rican government of their intention to resume exercises on Vieques for 20 days starting April 1st. Groups on Vieques and on the main island of Puerto Rico are planning actions of peaceful civil disobedience if and when the bombing begins. "It is our duty to try and stop Navy bombing that is responsible for the environmental and health crises that have been killing our people during more than sixty years," the groups say.

Solidarity in the U.S. is needed to put pressure on the United States government to immediately and permanently cease war practices on Vieques. Educational activities, picketing, film showings, music and poetry, messages and declarations from leading figures can all be powerful forms of solidarity.

Groups working on the Vieques issue also greatly appreciate financial contributions, and communications by email or FAX to inform them of protest actions in the U.S. **Contact: CRDV, PO Box 1424, Vieques, Puerto Rico 00765. FAX: (787) 741-1717. Email:bieke@prdigital.com**

JUSTICE FOR MICHAEL ANGLIN

Submitted by the Michael Anglin Coalition for Justice

On January 29, 2000, the Anglin family was informed by Jersey City detectives that their son, Michael Anglin, Jr., had been killed in a car accident. Through their independent investigation, they learned that he was actually shot and killed by a police officer while lying face down on the ground. The web of lies and cover up began with the crime scene being dismantled, and the prosecutor not being notified for hours that a child had been killed. Marches took place in Jersey City, led by the youth, and the Michael Anglin Coalition for Justice was formed in order to seek the truth and justice for the death of an unarmed Black teenager.



In May of 2000, a "No Bill" indictment was brought. The officer remains on the force to this day. The Coalition joined with the families of other victims killed by police and took their cause to Washington, DC, with the Redeem the Dream March, to the NJ State House in Trenton, and marched with POP in Newark.

On January 28, 2002, Michael's life was commemorated by a group of 65 supporters, with a wreath-laying, a march and a candlelight vigil continuing to the Church that Michael had attended, and then to the South District Precinct. The day concluded with a program attended by 120 family members and friends at Snyder High School, where Michael was a sophomore. Rev. Edward Allen, spokesman for the coalition, officiated at the tribute.

Urgent Action! Stop New Jersey from sealing the State Trooper's records. Call Governor McGreevey (609) 292 6000 and Attorney General David Samson (609) 292-4925.

NJ/NY AREA ORGANIZATIONS JOIN WITH BTWFJ: CALL FOR VERIZON TO RECOGNIZE MLK DAY AS A PAID HOLIDAY.

by Lisa Davis

On January 21st, MLK Day, more than 150 protestors demonstrated in front of Verizon's Newark headquarters to show their solidarity with the Black Telephone Workers for Justice (BTWFJ) as they demanded that Verizon recognize Martin Luther King's Birthday as an official holiday. BTWFJ has courageously chosen to challenge this issue, exposing the hypocrisy of Verizon, which aggressively targets Blacks in their advertisements, but has repeatedly refused requests by employees to recognize MLK Day as a paid holiday. Many Black telephone workers see this as mistreatment and insensitivity to a large portion of Verizon's work force. According to Ron Washington, President of BTWFJ, "when Black workers accept any mistreatment on the job or off without fighting back it means a loss of dignity." BTWFJ will not tolerate this.



P.O.P. receiving award from Black Telephone Workers for Justice at Newark dinner dance, February 9th.

The demonstration, co-sponsored by People's Organization for Progress, drew people and organizations from all over New York and New Jersey, who stood shoulder to shoulder shouting chants of "No Justice, No Profit," "Reparations Now," "Stop Police Brutality" and "Stop the War." BTWFJ successfully rallied support from diverse sectors of the community, including official representatives from their union IBEW, Local 827.

The day concluded with an emotionally charged program in observance of Dr. King at Peddie Memorial Church. Rather than portraying King as a dreamer, the program focused on King as a revolutionary, who opposed US imperialism and militarism, and who also demanded radical domestic changes in the socioeconomic structure of capitalism that would end economic injustice. The message of all speakers was-- if you support King then you must fight against racism, oppression, war, police brutality, poverty, economic disparity, exploitation of workers and all forms of human injustice. The event highlighted the key role of black workers in the struggle for justice.

Call Verizon CEO, Ivan Seidenberg at 1-800-621-9900. Demand that the company honor Martin Luther King Day.

URGENT ACTION NEEDED ON DEATH PENALTY LEGISLATION

Bills to establish a commission to study issues that surround the death penalty have been reintroduced in the new NJ legislative session, with bipartisan support., by Assemblymen Al Steele and Chris Bateman (bill A1913) and Senator Shirley Turner (bill S1112).

These bills would suspend executions pending government action on the proposed study commission's recommendations. POP's support of similar bills introduced in the previous session will continue to be used to reflect public questioning of the death penalty and support for these bills. Disparities in sentencing based on race, geography, and socio-economic status, documented high error rates making wrongful convictions inevitable, the failure of deterrence and the high cost of state killing account for increasing changes in public opinion. New Jersey may begin executions within the next year, so urgent action is needed.

To work on this issue, contact: POP member, Jean Ross, Esq., (609) 924-6508, jeanross55@aol.com.



Victory In Irvington

By Lisa Davis and Dave Hungerford



Last March two 8 year olds, Hamadi Alston and Jaquill Shelton, were arrested and charged in Irvington with making a "terroristic threat" for playing with a paper gun in school. The outrageous

"zero tolerance" story made national news. A partial victory was had on March 14 when a Superior Court judge signed an order to expunge the arrest record of one of the boys, Hamadi Alston.

Although the Essex County Prosecutor decided to drop the charges, the criminal record charging them with making a terroristic threat was to stand until they were 18 years old. Ron Alston, Hamadi's father, spearheaded the battle to clear their names and have their records expunged.

Ron came to POP from the start for support. POP members went with Ron and Hamadi to school board meetings, stood with them at rallies, and gave Ron opportunities to talk about the case in public. Several POP members were with the family in court on March 14.

Although Hamadi has achieved a victory, supporters are reminded that Jaquill's record still stands. He has a different lawyer than Hamadi and hasn't had his day in court. But when he does, Ron says "I will be standing right there with him." And while happy about the partial victory, Ron promises to continue to challenge unfair zero tolerance policies. "I don't want another kid to go through this. It's been a hard 12 months."

People's Organization For Progress

P.O. Box 22505 Newark, New Jersey 07101-2505 (973) 801-0001 website: [Http://www.njpop.org](http://www.njpop.org)

I am interested in the work of the **People's Organization For Progress** and would like to:

- ? Become a member and receive the newsletter—\$25.00 year
- ? Help volunteer to work with the **People's Organization For Progress** and join a committee
- ? Make a financial contribution to POP ? \$5.00, ? \$10.00, ? \$25.00, ? Other
- ? Be on the mailing list to receive notices of activities.

Name _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email adress _____ Phone _____

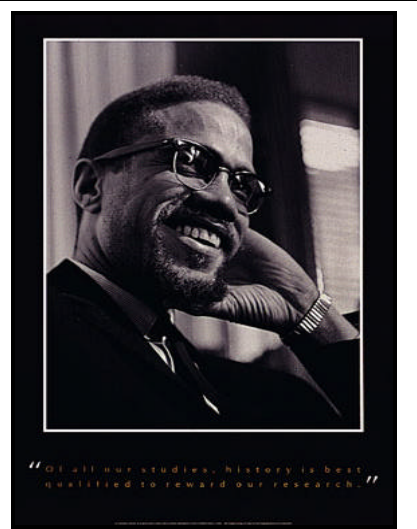
Please note: Contributions are not tax deductible



Save These Dates

- ? **April 4**, Thursday, 6 pm, **Celebration of the Life and Work of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.** Abyssinian Baptist Church, 224 West Kinney Street, Newark
- ? **April 6**, Saturday, **March and Rally for Mumia**, Philadelphia State Office Building 11 a.m. (Broad & Spring Garden) Teach-In, Noon, Ben Franklin High School. Call (212) 330-8029 for bus information.
- ? **April 6**, Saturday, 4 pm, **Coalition for Justice Statewide Planning Meeting for the March on Trenton** Imani Church, 2 Prospect St., Trenton, NJ
- ? **April 7**, Sunday, 10 am, Larry Hamm, **Sermon: Struggle Against Racial Profiling & Police Brutality**, Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Somerset Hills, 45 N. Gaston Ave. Somerville, NJ, For info call (908) 927-0601
- ? **April 9**, Tuesday, TBA, **Paul Robeson Anniversary Celebration**, Speaker: Larry Hamm, sponsored by ASAD-Essex Co. Coll., BOS-Rutgers Newark, & POP, Paul Robeson Center, 350 Martin L. King Blvd, Newark, NJ
- ? **April 11**, Thursday, 6 pm, **Vigil to Commemorate the Death of Earl Faison**, Old Orange Police Headquarters, Lincoln & Tremont Aves. Orange, NJ
- ? **April 13**, Saturday, 1:30 pm, **A Tribute to Gil Noble, Host of "Like It Is"**, St James AME church, 588 Martin Luther King Blvd, Newark, NJ, Contact: (973) 297-1275 email-f.bey@att.net
- ? **April 27**, Saturday, 5 pm, **POP General Membership Meeting** Mt. Pleasant Missionary Baptist Church, 100 Montgomery St., Newark NJ
- ? **May 5**, Sunday, 1- 3 pm, Larry Hamm, Speaker: **Struggle Against Racial Profiling & Police Brutality**, Unitarian Church, 67 Church St., Montclair, NJ, Contact: Joann Ceraso (973)746-9576
- ? **May 15**, Wednesday, 12 pm, **March on Trenton Against Police Brutality and Racial Profiling Rally**, The State House In Trenton, NJ. Call (973) 801-0001 for bus information
- ? **May 19**, Sunday, 3 pm, **Malcolm X Commemoration**, Co-Sponsored by the Black Telephone Workers for Justice, Masonic Temple, 883 Sanford Ave, Irvington, NJ (2nd Fl.)

Layout by The Workstation



“Education is our passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to the people who prepare for it today.” - Malcolm X

Join POP and the Black Telephone Workers For Justice when we commemorate the birthday of Malcolm X on Sunday, May 19, at 3 pm. Masonic Temple, 883 Sanford Ave, Irvington, NJ (2nd Fl.).

Contributors: *Bella August, Lisa Davis, Larry Hamm, Wilhelmina Holder, Milton Hudson, Dave Hungerford, Darlene Roberts, Bethany Tolentino*
Photo credits: *FaBW, William Frazier, Jon Levine*

People’s Organization For Progress
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