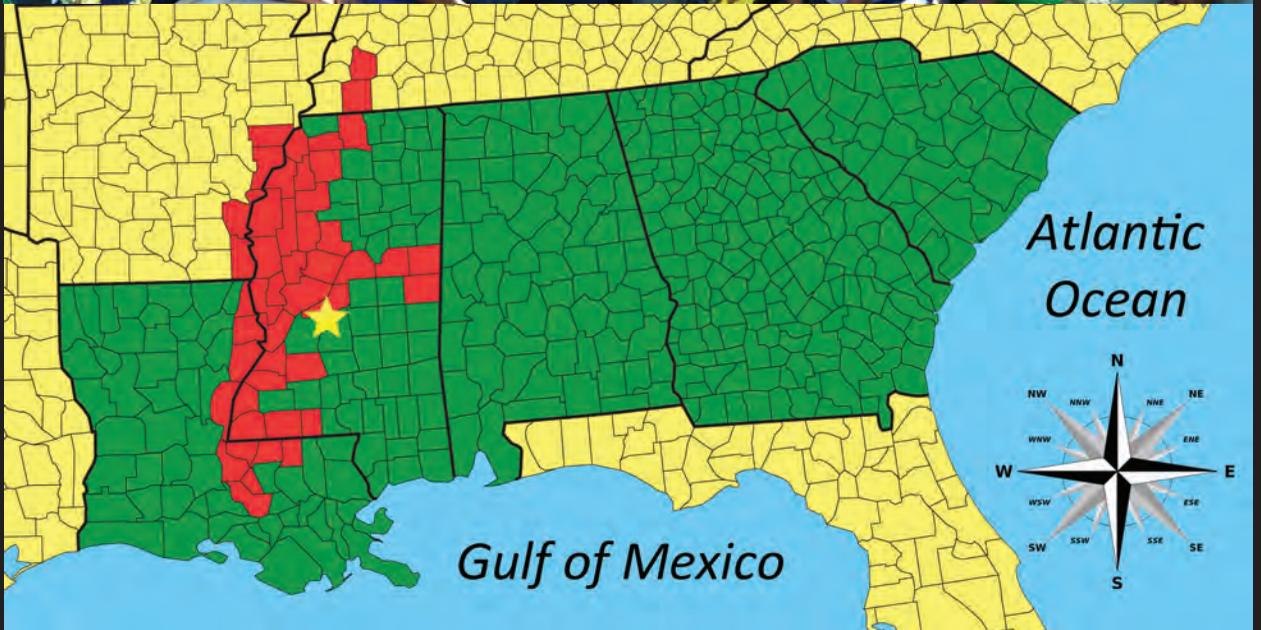


The Jackson-Kush Plan:

The Struggle for Black Self-Determination and Economic Democracy



Written by Kali Akuno

For the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement & the New Afrikan People's Organization



What's the Hour of the Night?

*After four score years of freedom
Our so-called leaders say
The race has made great progress
And we face the dawn of day
But the day is not quite dawning
Millions of my peoples stand
Pleading at the bars of justice
For reparations and for land
We're not free in this country
And the truth is the light
So I turn to ask my watchman
What's the hour of the night?*

*We died fighting for democracy
I admit this to be true
Yet countless African men & women
Have no homes or work to do
If we wish to see the daylight
Or the rising of the sun
We need our self-determination
Our own affairs to run
Since only reparations will
Put freedom in our sight
Let us turn to ask the watchman
What's the hour of the night?*

*Civil rights laws just for us
Is proof that we're not free
How could we be fooled to think
We had a share in this democracy
When foreigners come here
They're made citizens by choice
Citizenship was imposed upon us
We never had a voice
The passage of the 14th Amendment
Took away the right
So you better ask your watchman
What's the hour of the night?*

*Time is running out for us
A deadline we must meet
To file reparations petitions
And make politicians earn their seats
If we're to win this battle
Every organization must join the Fight
Then we'll tell our watchman
What's the hour of the night.*

We began to talk about wanting to be first class citizens. We didn't want to be second class citizens. You would have sworn that "second class" was in the constitution. Also that citizens have to fight for rights. Imagine a citizen having to fight for civil rights! The very thought of it is repulsive. And I resent it and I reject this "citizenship" that was imposed on me. From the bottom of my heart, I reject it. This is the thing that motivates me and keeps me going. A lot of people say, "Mother, at 75, I don't see how you can do it." But when you realize your status, it does something to you.

Now for a long time I was a Negro. And I fought very hard as a Negro. All the while I was in the Garvey movement, I was a Negro. And as a Negro I wanted freedom. But there is a difference in the qualitative demands. When you're a Negro, the demands are superficial. So, for instance when the white folks came to me and asked me to organize a committee to get Negroes in the Big Leagues, I didn't know anything about baseball, but they knew my fervor and that I knew people and could get the people out. So I went to Adam Clayton Powell, who became the co-chairman of my committee along with another brother. We fought to end Jim Crow in the Big Leagues. But I had no idea that we had all of those good Black teams. I knew nothing about Satchell Paige. So here I am fighting to get Negroes in the Big Leagues. If I had known about the Black teams and had had my right mind, I would have said to the white man: "I will fight to get our teams in the Big Leagues." There is a qualitative difference—not a Negro but a team in the Big Leagues. So it makes a lot of difference who you are as to what your demands will be.

—Queen Mother Audley Eloise Moore, interview in *The Black Scholar*, March–April 1973

—Queen Mother Moore, July 1950



NEW AFRIKAN PEOPLE'S ORGANIZATION



The struggle for Afrikan or Black Liberation in the European settler-colonial project called the United States is far from complete. Despite the election of the first person of Afrikan descent to the executive office of the United States government and the progress this allegedly entails, Black people remain at the top of virtually every social indicator of inequality and inequity, with some critical gaps growing ever wider since the onset of the manufactured financial crisis that struck in the mid-2000s.

Despite the social gains won by the Black Liberation Movement (BLM) in the 1950s, '60s, and '70s with the forced dismantling of the legal structures of white supremacy, securing the more challenging objectives of the movement, particularly economic democracy¹ and self-determination, have yet to be won. The challenge

with economic democracy and self-determination is that in order for them to be attained a critical break with capitalism and the dismantling of the American settler colonial project is required. Since the ebb of the BLM in the 1970s as a result of massive government repression, unrelenting white resistance, and the fragmentation of the movement itself as result of the divide and conquer tactics of its enemies and its own internal contradictions pertaining to ideology, class interests, and sexual and gender inequality, the movement has not been able to develop a comprehensive strategy and the level of mass resistance needed to advance these particular objectives. However, to meet these objectives the organized forces of the BLM most dedicated to their pursuit have been compelled over the past 30 years to advance projects of limited scale in order to maintain political position and regroup as a movement to engage in protracted struggle to win economic democracy and self-determination.

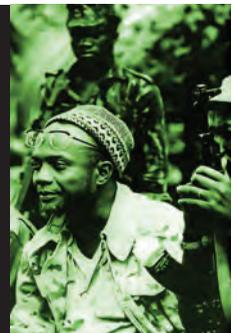
What follows is a presentation of one such project—an experiment being actively conducted by the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement (MXGM) and its parent organization the New Afrikan Peoples Organization (NAPO) called the Jackson–Kush² Plan. The Jackson–Kush or J–K Plan is an initiative to build

¹ Economic Democracy here means the political process of transforming the private ownership and appropriation of the means of production and distribution to ensure that the workers and direct producers own and control these means and processes and determine the conditions of their labor; how their product is exchanged and distributed, and how any surplus value produced is appropriated. In short, it describes the political process by which socialism and communism are to be attained.

² Kush is a name appropriated by partisans in the New Afrikan Independence Movement from an ancient Nile based civilization which would be in present day Egypt and Sudan, to designate the span of contiguous Black majority or Black Belt counties along the Mississippi river in the states of Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas and Tennessee. This area has been designated or renamed the Kush District.

“It is with the intention of making a contribution, however modest, to this debate that we present here our opinion of the foundations and objectives of national liberation in relation to the social structure. This opinion is the result of our own experiences of the struggle and of a critical appreciation of the experiences of others. To those who see in it a theoretical character, we would recall that every practice produces a theory, and that if it is true that a revolution can fail even though it be based on perfectly conceived theories, nobody has yet made a successful revolution without a revolutionary theory.”

— Amilcar Cabral, *The Weapon of Theory*, 1966



a base of autonomous power in Mississippi concentrated in Jackson and the eastern Black Belt portions of the state that can serve as a catalyst for the attainment of Black self-determination and the democratic transformation of the economy.

Getting Started: The Historical Background

The J-K Plan in its concrete form is the product of a self-generated organizing challenge that emerged from the 2008 Ideological Conference of MXGM and NAPO. The challenge was to test the strength of our organizing model and work in the South after more than 25 years of patient and deliberate work in key cities like Atlanta, Birmingham, and Jackson. The initial plan was to expand the People's Assembly model that was built in Jackson by MXGM and NAPO in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina and to run Peoples' Attorney Chokwe Lumumba for a City Council seat to assess the reach and impact of our work.



However, the J-K Plan also has many immediate and distant precursors drawn from the New Afrikan Independence Movement (NAIM) in particular and the BLM in general. Some of the most immediate sources of inspiration for the J-K Plan were the initiatives to build a national Reconstruction Party in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina (first proposed by Saladin Muhammad in "The Black Nations 9/11"³); the campaign to run Malcolm Suber for a vacated At-Large City Council seat in New Orleans in 2007 as an independent Black candidate under the Reconstruction Party banner⁴; the work of MXGM members April and Cliff Albright in Selma, Alabama to build the Freedom Party in the mid-2000s; and the conceptual and organizing work of Baba Hannibal Afrik and Dr. Demetri Marshall to develop the "Kush Plan" to organize the Black Belt portions of Mississippi and Louisiana.

A few of the precursors of the J-K Plan include the 1981 campaign of Provisional Government of the Republic of New Afrika (PG-RNA) Southern Region Vice President, Kwablah Mthawabu, for Mayor in his home town of Waterproof, Louisiana in the Kush District. In 1993 former NAPO and MXGM Detroit, Michigan coordinator, Kwame Kenyatta, won a seat on the Detroit School Board, which preceded his successful 2004 campaign for a seat on the Detroit City Council.

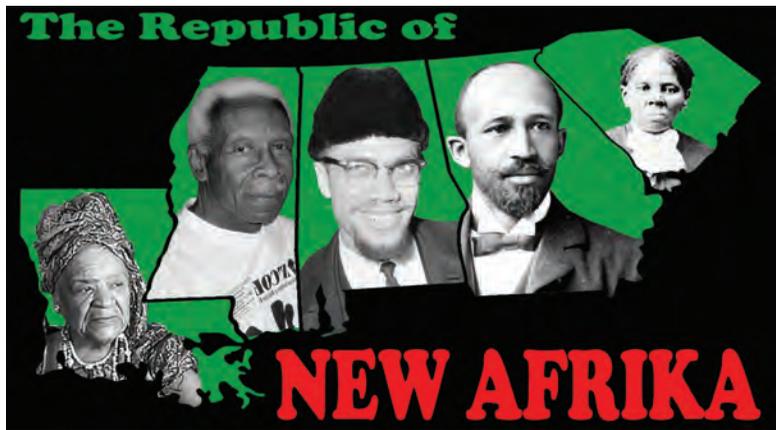


Another key precursor was the formation of the Jackson Human Rights Coalition in the late 1980s. This coalition helped unseat white Mayor Dale Danks who promoted and defended police brutality in the face of growing opposition to police terror in Jackson's Black Community. After Danks' defeat, another white mayor, Kane Ditto, was elected to replace him. Ditto also defended police terrorism when white segregationist police officer Steve Wilson gunned down community activist Johnny Griffin in front of several

³ See <http://www.workers.org/2005/us/hurricane-0922/> for this work.

⁴ See <http://www.thenation.com/article/malcolm-suber-good-new-orleans> for some brief background on this campaign.

of Griffin's children in Jackson's inner city community. Outcry over Griffin's death galvanized demonstrations against killer cops, and also sparked the establishment of an Anti-Klan Coalition which challenged the KKK in Mississippi. The Anti-Klan Coalition sponsored a mass rally and march that successfully shut down the KKK's attempted march on the Hinds County court house in support of Wilson and police terrorism. The Griffin family and a legal team led by MXGM Attorney Chokwe Lumumba won a legal settlement for Johnnie Griffin's wife and children in Federal Court.



In response to this pressure, Ditto hired Jackson's first Black police chief, David Walker. Ditto hoped that hiring Walker would defuse growing Black opposition to his administration. Indeed, to Ditto's surprise, Walker launched an unprecedented campaign against police brutality. Several police officers were fired and prosecuted for their abuse at Walker's initiative. Rather than embracing Walker's positive work, Ditto rejected it. Walker was fired by Ditto only six months after he was hired. MXGM, NAPO, the *Jackson Advocate*, and various others united to form a city-wide coalition which protested the firing of Walker with a city wide "selective buying" campaign.

Following this development, the Jackson Human Rights Coalition organized a Grass Roots Convention designed to create a Self-Determination agenda and to elect Jackson's first Black mayor. In 1993 the grassroots convention selected renowned Black political activist Henry Kirksey to run for mayor. Unfortunately, Kirksey was betrayed by Black politician Harvey Johnson. Once a participant in the grassroots convention, Johnson abandoned it and announced he would run for Mayor after Kirksey was nominated by the convention. Harvey Johnson and Kirksey were both defeated in 1993 due to the fragmentation of the Black vote. Johnson, however, ran again in 1997 and won. These experiences provided invaluable lessons for the development of the J-K Plan.



The principle foundational precursor of the J-K Plan, however, is drawn from the plans of the Provisional Government of the Republic of New Afrika (PG-RNA) under the leadership of Dr. Imari Abubakari Obadele in the early 1970s to establish a new community called "El Malik" near Bolton, MS as the capital of the Republic.

The Jackson-Kush Plan builds on these immediate and historic foundations and also on a critical appraisal of the lessons, both positive and negative, of the popular struggles for self-determination, economic democracy, and social liberation throughout the world over the last

30 years, particularly those in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Yet it was not until we succeeded in electing Chokwe Lumumba to the Jackson City Council to represent Ward 2 on May 19th, 2009⁵ coupled with the growth of the People's Assembly that was stimulated by this electoral campaign that we decided to launch the J-K Plan as envisioned herein as a critical experiment in the struggle for Afrikan liberation.



Program or Pillars

The J-K Plan has three fundamental programmatic components that are designed to build a mass base with the political clarity, organizational capacity, and material self-sufficiency to advance the objective of building an autonomous power. The three fundamental programmatic components are:

- *Building People's Assemblies*
- *Building an Independent Black Political Party*
- *Building a Broad-based Solidarity Economy*

People's Assemblies

The People's Assemblies that MXGM and NAPO are working to build in Jackson and throughout the state of Mississippi, particularly its eastern Black Belt portions, are designed to be vehicles of Black self-determination and the autonomous political authority of the oppressed peoples and exploited classes contained within the state. The Assemblies are organized as expressions of participatory or direct democracy, wherein there is guided facilitation and agenda setting provided by the committees that

⁵ For more information on Chokwe's victory see <http://panafricannews.blogspot.com/2009/05/former-detroit-attorney-chokwe-lumumba.html> or http://www.jacksonfreepress.com/index.php/site/comments/runoffs_provide_decisive_wins_052009/.



compose the People's Task Force, but without any preordained hierarchy. The People's Task Force is the working or executing body of the Assembly. The Task Force is composed of committees that are organized around proposals emerging from the Assembly to carry out various tasks and initiatives, such as organizing campaigns (like "Take Back the Land") and long-term institution building and development work (like land trusts and cooperative housing).

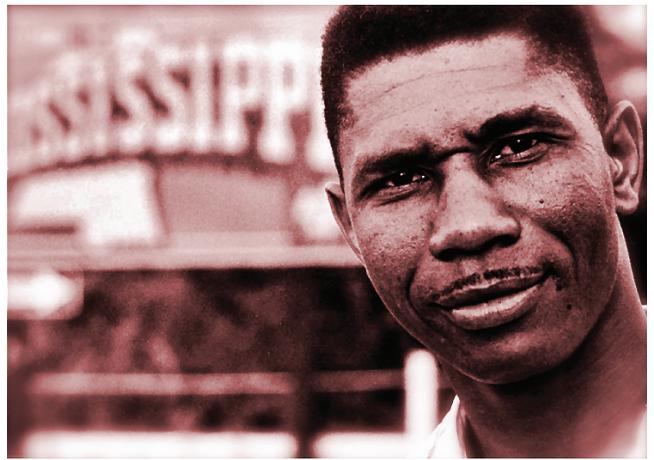
The People's Assemblies model advanced by MXGM and NAPO as a core component of the J-K Plan has a long, rich history in Mississippi and in the Black Liberation Movement in general.

The roots of our Assembly model are drawn from the spiritual or prayer circles that were organized often clandestinely by enslaved Afrikans to express their humanity, build and sustain community, fortify their spirits, and organize resistance. The vehicle gained public expression in Mississippi with the organization of "Negro Peoples Conventions" at the start of Reconstruction to develop autonomous programs of action to realize freedom as Afrikans themselves desired it and to determine their relationship to the defeated governments of the Confederacy, and the triumphant government of the Federal Republic⁶.



This expression of people's power remerged time and again in the New Afrikan communities of Mississippi as a means to resist the systemic exploitation and terror of white supremacy, as well as to exercise and exert some degree of self-determination. The last great expression of this vehicle of Black people's self-determined power in Mississippi occurred in the early 1960s. It was stimulated

⁶ See *Reconstruction: The Battle for Democracy (1865–1876)*, by James S. Allen.





Ella Baker
MFDP ADVISOR

by a campaign of coordinated resistance organized by militant local leaders like Medger Evers that drew on the national capacity and courage of organizations like the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE). This campaign created the democratic space necessary for New Afrikan communities in Mississippi to organize themselves to resist more effectively. Broad, participatory People's Assemblies were the most common form of this self-organization⁷.

One of the most memorable outgrowths of this wave of People's Assemblies in Mississippi was the creation of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP). This development challenged the hegemonic control over the Black vote on a state and local level since the New Deal, and remains a vehicle that serves as a constant reminder for the need for genuine Black equality and self-determination to this day.

It is this legacy of People's Assemblies that MXGM and NAPO are grounding ourselves in, and we encourage others, particularly those in the Occupy movement, to study this with the aim of helping guide our present collective practice towards our shared goal of building a better future.

⁷ See *I've Got the Light of Freedom: The Organizing Tradition and the Mississippi Freedom Struggle*, by Charles M. Payne; *Local People: The Struggle for Civil Rights in Mississippi*, by Charles Dittmer; *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement: Black Communities Organizing for Change*, by Aldon D. Morris; *A Little Taste of Freedom: the Black Freedom Struggle in Claiborne County, Mississippi*, by Emilye Crosby; and *Freedom is an Endless Meeting: Democracy in Action in Social Movements*, by Francesca Polletta.



Independent Electoral Politics

MXGM and NAPO firmly believe that at this stage in the Black liberation struggle, in order to firmly advance the cause of attaining economic democracy and self-determination, the movement must be committed to building and exercising dual power. And while we believe that building autonomous power outside of the state (i.e. government) structures in the form of People's Assemblies is primary, we also believe that engaging electoral politics on a limited scale with the express intent of building radical voting blocs and electing candidates drawn from the ranks of the Assemblies themselves is important. As we have learned through our own struggles—and through our analysis of the experiences of many other revolutionary or liberation movements—we ignore the power of the state at our own peril.

However, it should be clear that we do not engage the electoral system of the settler colony known as the state of Mississippi because we aim to legitimize its existence or its claims to being a democratic institution. Rather we engage it, first and foremost, to try to negate its repressive powers and to contain the dictatorial power and ideological influence of monopoly capital in Mississippi. From police violence to the divestment of jobs and public resources from our communities, there are many challenges that require us to leverage every available means of power to save lives and improve conditions. Secondly, we struggle to engage it as a means to create political openings that provide a broader platform for future struggles to be waged to restore the “commons”⁸, to create more public utilities (i.e. universal health care and comprehensive public transportation), and for the democratic transformation of the economy. As we are struggling against a state apparatus which is an edifice of white colonial supremacy and that is neoliberal in its orientation of governance and resource allocation, we are clear that this combination of defensive and offensive struggles must be given equal attention. If this perspective of critical struggle for power against the



state is not maintained, our initiatives could easily turn opportunist and fall victim to becoming the latest Black-faced trend in the neoliberal administration of austerity.

Fundamental to our engagement with electoral politics is the principle that we must build and employ independent political vehicles that are not bound to or controlled by either of the two monopoly parties in the United States. We are particularly focused on building an independent political party that challenges the



⁸The “Commons” refers to the resources of the earth that everyone is dependent upon and must utilize to survive and thrive. The essential “Commons” are land, water, and air.

Democratic Party for the loyalty of the Black or New Afrikan vote in the state of Mississippi. Although the Democratic Party in Mississippi is overwhelmingly Black, and highly independent from the day to day operations of the National Democratic Party as articulated by the Democratic National Committee, it is still a local tool of transnational monopoly capital and an instrument for the operations of US imperialism “domestically” and internationally. As such, it must be opposed by all those claiming to be anti-racist, anti-colonial, anti-capitalist, and anti-imperialist. In the effort to build on the legacy of independent electoral engagement by New Afrikans in Mississippi, MXGM and NAPO are partisan members of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MSFDP) and are starting to work as activists within the party to transform it into a fully independent party (as many of its founders originally envisioned) and extend its reach so that it eventually breaks the hegemony of the Democratic Party over the Black electorate in Mississippi.

It is this combination of building and exercising dual power—building autonomous People’s Assemblies and critical engagement with the state via independent Black political party politics—that are the two fundamental strategic pillars of the J–K Plan.

To date, some of the victories of this model beyond the 2009 election of Chokwe Lumumba include: leading the campaign to elect the first ever Black sheriff of Hinds County, Tyrone Lewis, in August 2011⁹; leading the campaign to “Free the Scott Sisters,” which won their release in January 2011¹⁰; successfully campaigning to save the J–Tran city public transportation in Jackson from devastating budget cuts planned by current Mayor Harvey Johnson; and uniting with the Mississippi Immigrant Rights Alliance (MIRA) and other progressive forces to pass an anti-racial profiling ordinance in Jackson, and to defeat Arizona styled anti-immigrant legislation in Mississippi, in 2011 and 2012 respectively.¹¹



Solidarity Economy

The critical third pillar of the J–K Plan is the long-term commitment to build a local Solidarity Economy that links with regional (like the Southern Grassroots Economics Project) and national (like the US Solidarity Economy Network) Solidarity Economy networks to advance the struggle for economic democracy as a transitional means to the construction of socialism (which we still define as “from each according to ability, to each according to need”).

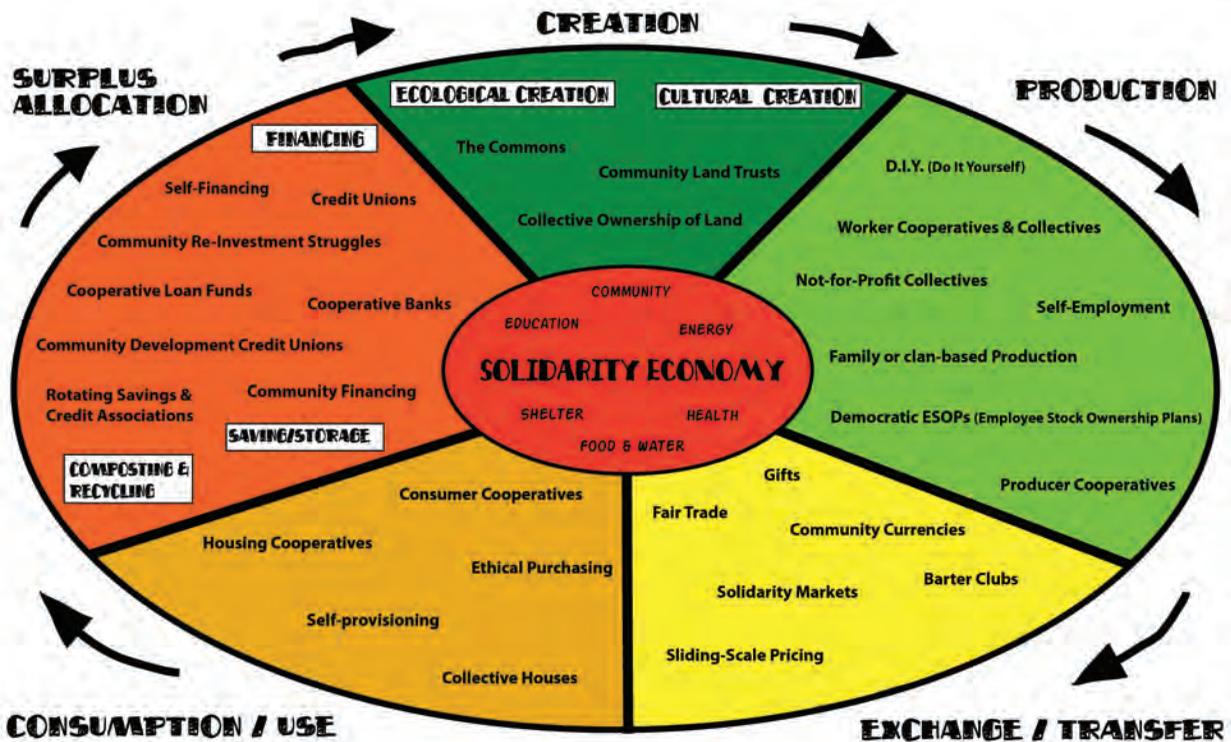
Solidarity Economy or Solidarity Economics is a concept that emerged from social movements primarily in Latin America in the 1980s and ‘90s fighting against the imposed austerity of neoliberal capitalism, the authoritarian order of the neocolonial state regimes, and the countless exploitative impositions of US imperialism¹². Solidarity Economy as a concept describes a process of promoting cooperative economics

⁹ See Black Agenda Morning Shot, August 29, 2011 interview with Kamau Franklin by Kali Akuno at <http://youtu.be/IIJcginZkpw>. And “Lewis prepares for the Future”, by Elizabeth Waibel at <http://www.jacksonfreepress.com/news/2011/aug/31/lewis-prepares-for-the-future/>.

¹⁰ See “Lumumba says Scott sisters released because of supporters” at http://youtu.be/oXBm_szT_5E. And “Scott Sisters Finally Set Free” at http://colorlines.com/archives/2011/01/scott_sisters_finally_set_free.html.

¹¹ See “A New Kind of Southern Strategy”, by Susan Eaton at <http://www.thenation.com/article/162694/new-kind-southern-strategy/>.

¹² For more information on Solidarity Economy see the works of Ethan Miller, particularly “Solidarity Economy: Key Concepts and Issues” at http://www.communityeconomies.org/site/assets/media/Ethan_Miller/Miller_Solidarity_Economy_Key_Issues_2010.pdf.



that promote social solidarity, mutual aid, reciprocity, and generosity. It also describes the horizontal and autonomously driven networking of a range of cooperative institutions that support and promote the aforementioned values ranging from worker cooperatives to informal affinity-based neighborhood bartering networks.

Our conception of Solidarity Economy is inspired by the Mondragon Federation of Cooperative Enterprises based in the Basque region of Spain¹³. Our conception attempts to draw from the best practices and experiences of the Mondragon system and combine them with the best practices and experiences of the Solidarity Economy and other alternative economic initiatives already in motion in the United States.

Our struggle in part is to make these practices and experiences relevant in Jackson and Mississippi Black Belt on the one hand; and on the other to make greater links with existing cooperative institutions (again like the Southern Grassroots Economies Project and the Federation of Southern Cooperatives) in the state and the region to extend and broaden their reach and impact on the local and regional economy.



¹³ For more information on the Mondragon visit <http://www.mondragon-corporation.com/ENG.aspx>.

The practices and experiences that MXGM and NAPO are working to organize based on our assessment of the aforementioned examples, and what we think would be the most relevant and viable in the Jackson context consist of the following:

- Building a network of cooperative and mutually reinforcing enterprises and institutions, specifically worker, consumer, and housing cooperatives, and community development credit unions as the foundation of our local Solidarity Economy
- Building sustainable, Green (re)development and Green economy networks and enterprises, starting with a Green housing initiative
- Building a network of local urban farms, regional agricultural cooperatives, and farmers markets, drawing heavily from recent experiences in Detroit, to realize food sovereignty and combat obesity and chronic health issues in the state associated with limited access to fresh produce and unhealthy socialized eating habits
- Developing local community and conservation land trusts as a primary means to begin the process of reconstructing the “Commons” in the city and region by decommodifying land and housing as a means of transforming property relations and subjecting privately appropriated social production to democratic processes
- Organizing to reconstruct and extend the Public Sector, particularly public finance of community development, to be pursued as a means of ensuring there is adequate infrastructure to provide quality health care, accessible mass transportation, and decent, affordable public housing, etc.



In building along these lines we aim to transform the economy of Jackson and the region as a whole to create the material base needed to support and build the autonomous politics we are pursuing. This said, we see that Solidarity Economy, if developed to its own logical conclusions, represents the limit of economic reform possible within a capitalist framework of social production governed by a bourgeois social order. We are clear that in order to build socialism that something more than just the principles and institutions of



economic and social solidarity will be needed. What we believe will be needed are new political and social identities crafted on the transformation of consciousness produced in part by engaging in the practices associated with Solidarity Economy and radical participatory and horizontal democracy. Solidarity Economy when pushed to its limits as a means of heightening contradictions within the capitalist system we believe is a transitional strategy and praxis to build 21st century socialism and advance the abolition of capitalism and the poverty and oppressive social relations that it fosters.

Turning Theory into Action: Organizing Campaigns and Alliance Building

The three fundamental program components or pillars of the J-K Plan can only and will only be built through grassroots organizing and alliance building. The key to the organizing component of the overall plan is the launching and successful execution of several strategic and mutually reinforcing organizing campaigns. The most critical of these organizing campaigns are as follows:

- *The Amandla¹⁴ Education Project*
- *Take Back the Land*
- *Operation Black Belt*
- *2013 Electoral Campaigns*

The Amandla Education Project

The Amandla Project is a youth and community education project specializing in organizing training, political education, and skill building for civic engagement and participation. The Project provides training to youth and community members in the People's Assembly and the broader civil society in Jackson on community organizing, conflict resolution, critical literacy, media literacy, journalism and media advocacy, political theory, political economy, human rights advocacy, cooperative planning and management, participatory budgeting, the principles and practices of solidarity economy, sustainable economic development, and ecological sustainability. The Project also specializes in teaching the deep and rich history of struggle by New Afrikan people in Jackson and Mississippi in general, to liberate themselves from white supremacy and colonial domination and the assimilation of lessons from these struggles that can be employed today to advance the liberation movement.



In its first year, the Amandla Project will recruit, train, and organize 100 youth and community organizers. These 100 individuals will serve as the core organizing cadre for the J-K Plan. Our objective is to place 10 organizers in each of Jackson's seven wards and to utilize the remaining 30 to enhance the overall organizing capacity of progressive forces in the state of Mississippi.

These organizers will be trained by a team of experienced organizers drawn from the ranks of MXGM, the Mississippi Chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Mississippi Workers Center for Human Rights, and other allied

¹⁴ "Amandla" is a Xhosa or Zulu word for "Power". It is used in a fashion similar to the slogan, "Black Power" by the BLM in the United States. It is used in call and response form, and the response is "Awethu", which means "to us". Combined it means "Power to the People", as made popular in the United States by the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense. This slogan was and remains common in the Azanian (i.e. South African) Freedom Movement.

organizations that support the People's Assembly and the J-K Plan.

Training 100 organizers is a critical start, but is in no way sufficient to meet the comprehensive needs of the J-K Plan. To “train our trainers” and develop a cadre of organizers needed to realize the objectives of this plan, MXGM, the Mississippi NAACP and the Praxis Project are working in an alliance to build a training school that will serve as the cornerstone of this longterm educational initiative.—projected to be functional by early 2013.

The Take Back the Land Campaign



The Take Back the Land campaign is an initiative to create a network of urban farms and farmers' markets to promote healthy diet, affordable produce, and urban food sovereignty. It also aims to create a land trust network, cooperative housing, and a workers' cooperative network to provide employment for many of the under- and unemployed.

The Take Back the Land campaign will focus on occupying vacant land, abandoned homes, and industrial facilities, convert them into usable agricultural land for urban farming, and refurbished green housing, thereby establishing a cooperative housing network, and community

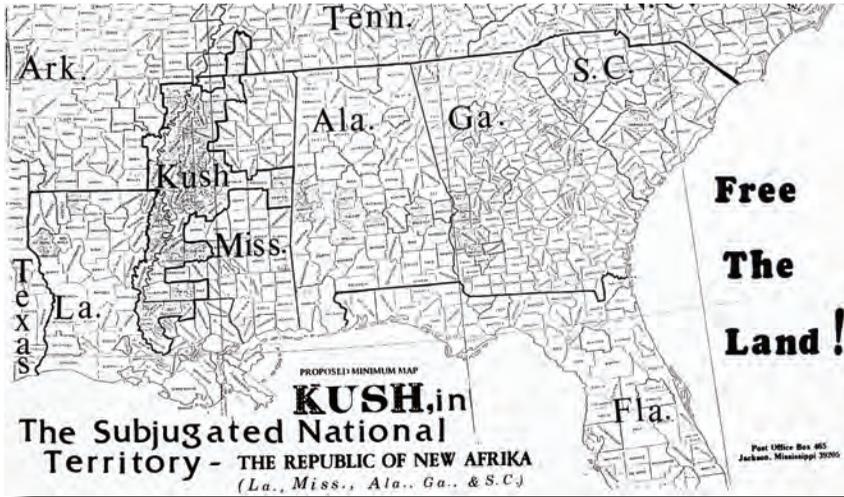
spaces where training facilities, business centers and recreation spaces can be established.

Aspects of this campaign have already been launched by MXGM with the healthy foods initiative and Fannie Lou Hamer/Tougalou community gardens project. This initiative is also conceptually linked with the primary aim of the New Afrikan Independence Movement (NAIM), which MXGM and NAPO are a part of, to “Free the Land”, meaning the creating of a self-governing area in the Black Belt South to exercise New Afrikan sovereignty. It is also linked to the National Take Back the Land Movement that was launched in 2009 by the Land and Housing Action Group (LHAG) of the US Human Rights Network (USHRN), which originally consisted of MXGM, Survivors Village, Chicago Anti-Eviction Campaign, and Take Back the Land Miami.¹⁵



¹⁵ For more background on the National Take Back the Land Movement and its history visit <http://navigatingthestorm.blogspot.com/> or <http://www.takebacktheland.org/>.

Operation Black Belt



Operation Black Belt is a campaign to organize the oppressed peoples and exploited classes in the South, particularly concentrating on organizing Black workers in the region who form the core of the oppressed Black or New Afrikan nation that has been super-exploited for centuries, into militant, class-conscious and social movement-based worker associations and unions. This campaign is being initiated by MXGM with the support of the Malcolm X

Solidarity Committee (MXSC), which is a North American anti-imperialist formation under the discipline of NAPO. The campaign is being launched in the state of Mississippi and key cities along the Mississippi River to organize Truckers and Transport workers and help strengthen the organization of Longshore and various Port workers.

This campaign is starting with an initiative to organize workers in the transport industry, primarily because of its strategic nature to the economy of Jackson, the Southern Region, and ultimately the United States as a whole. The Mississippi River port network, running from Minneapolis to New Orleans is the single largest river-based trade nexus in the world. This nexus is as essential to world trade as it is to the economy of Jackson. We believe that we can strategically leverage the labor power of workers in and around Jackson—which is strategic to this nexus, since it connects the Port of Vicksburg with the intersection of Interstate Highways 20 and 55 and numerous rail lines—as a means of intervening in the circuit of capital that flows through it to improve the material lives of workers in the city and the Black Belt region running from New Orleans to St. Louis, and from here strengthen the hand of labor within the US empire.

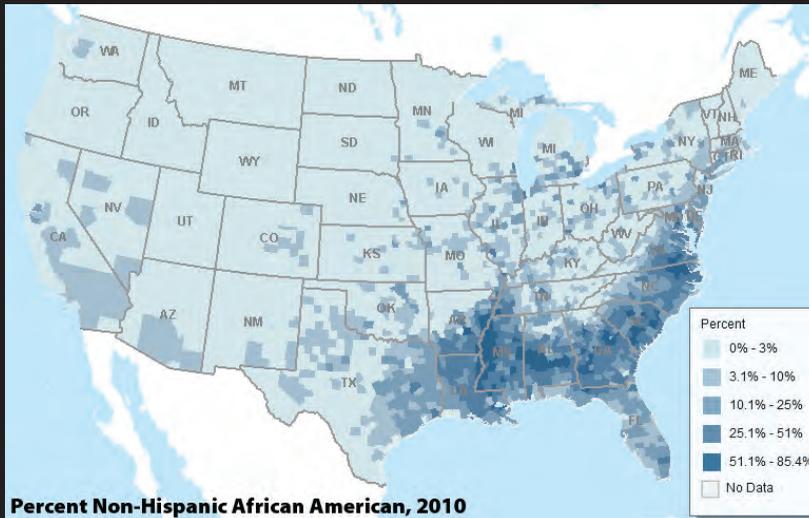
The long-term objective of this campaign is to challenge, and eventually overturn, the “right to work” laws and policies in Mississippi (and throughout the South). These laws and policies play a major role in sustaining the extreme rates of poverty and health disparities in the state, and must be overturned in order to improve the living standards of the vast majority of its residents. MXGM and the People’s Assembly aim to partner with the Mississippi Workers Center for Human Rights to build and expand this critical long-term campaign.



NEW AFRIKANS AND POVERTY

The following maps will clearly illustrate the nature and scale of the problems we are attempting to address in the Black Belt South generally and the Kush District specifically.

These maps were obtained from the Atlas of Rural and Small-Town America website, Economic Research Service, US Dept. of Agriculture, at <http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/atlas-of-rural-and-small-town-america.aspx>. Many more maps could be generated, down to the county level, that would more precisely elucidate the extent of the pressing needs of our New Afrikan people throughout the South, and indeed, throughout the US empire.



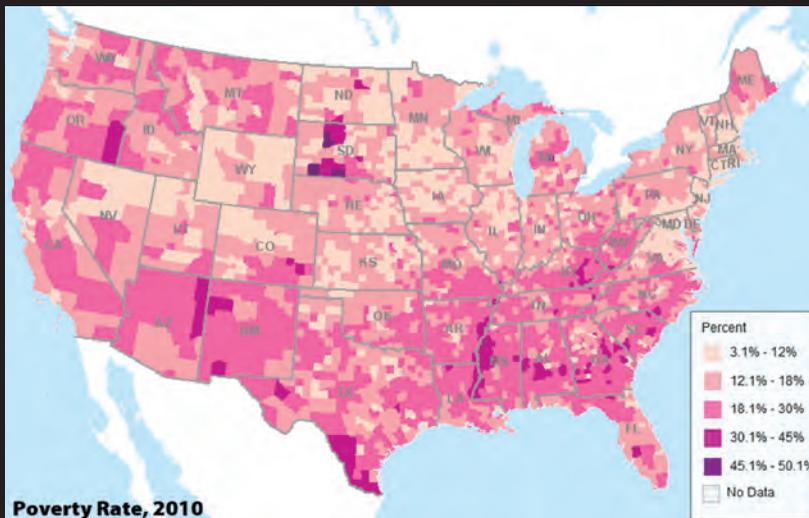
MAP #1: PERCENT NON-HISPANIC AFRICAN AMERICAN, 2010.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2010 Census of Population.

Type of data: Point-in-time estimate.

Year(s): April 1, 2010.

Definition: Percent of county population that self-identifies race as Black or African-American and that does not self-identify as Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino; does not include people who report more than one race



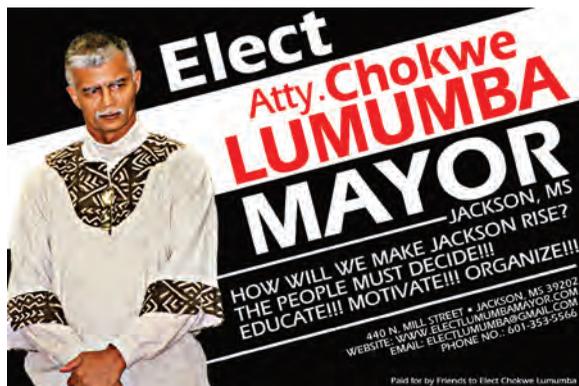
MAP #2: POVERTY RATE, 2010.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates.

Type of data: Annual average estimates based on statistical modeling, combining data from administrative records, intercensal population estimates, the decennial census and the American Community Survey.

Year(s): 2010.

Definition: Percent of county population living in families with income below their poverty threshold; poverty status thresholds vary by family size, number of children, and age of householder; if a family's before tax money income is less than the dollar value of their threshold, then that family and every individual in it are considered to be in poverty. For people not living in families, poverty status is determined by comparing the individual's income to his or her poverty threshold



For the 2013 City Elections in Jackson, the Jackson People's Assembly, MXGM, and NAPO are prepared to run two candidates—under the independent banner of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party. One candidate, Attorney Chokwe Lumumba, who currently serves as the City Councilman for Ward 2, will run for Mayor. The other candidate, June Hardwick, also an Attorney, will run for City Council in Ward 7.

The objective of running these candidates and winning these offices is to create political space and advance policy that will provide maneuverable space for the autonomous initiatives promoted as part of the J-K Plan

to develop and grow. They are also intended to be used to build more Ward-based People's Assemblies and Task Forces in Jackson, base build for the overall plan, and raise political consciousness about the need for self-determination and economic democracy to solve many of the longstanding issues affecting New Afrikan people.

In order to create the democratic space desired, we aim to introduce several critical practices and tools into the governance processes of the Jackson city government that will help foster and facilitate the growth of participatory democracy. Some of these processes and tools include:

- *Participatory Budgeting* to allow the residents of Jackson direct access and decision making power over the budgeting process in the city
- *Gender-Sensitive Budgeting* to address the adverse impact of policy execution as reflected in budget priorities that negatively impact women and children
- *Human Rights Education and Promotion* will require all city employees to undergo human rights training to ensure that their policies and practices adhere to international standards of compliance with the various treaties ratified by the United States and the results-based norms established by the United Nations

We also aim to make several critical structural changes to the city of Jackson's governance structure. The most critical change we will propose and fight for is:

- *Creating a Human Rights Charter* to replace the existing city charter as the basis of sovereignty and governance for the city. Our Human Rights Charter conception draws heavily from the Human Rights Charter campaign work of our allies the Atlanta Public Sector Alliance (APSA)



And finally we aim to advance several economic and social changes on a structural level in Jackson via the governance process. These include:

- *Expanding Public Transportation* by increasing transport lines and launching a fleet of green vehicles that utilize natural gas, ethanol, and electric energy
- *Creating a Network of Solar and Wind-Powered Generators* throughout the city to expand and create a sustainable power grid
- *Creating a South-South Trading Network and Fair Trade Zone* that will seek to create trading partnerships with international trading blocs such as CARICOM (the Caribbean Community and Common Market) and ALBA (the Bolivarian Alliance for the Americas)



Alliance Building



Following the example of Malcolm X and countless Black political strategists and organizers before and after him, MXGM and NAPO are major proponents of principled alliance building and united front politics. We are clear that none of our strategic objectives and demands can be attained simply by the forces we can muster. And few of our transitional goals and objectives can be reached without creating substantive alliances with strategic partners and allies. The J-K Plan, as a transitional strategic program, is no exception to the rule.

Alliance building has been central to the operations of MXGM and NAPO in Jackson since these formations were founded in 1990 and 1984 respectively. In many fundamental respects, the roots of the Jackson People's Assembly rest with the principled alliance of Black progressive organizations like Southern Echo, the Mississippi NAACP, Mississippi Workers Center, Nation of Islam, Mississippi ACLU, N'COBRA, MIRA, Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, NCBL, etc., largely forged by NAPO in the early 1990s to combat environmental racism, labor exploitation, and various aspects of institutional racism and colonial domination in Mississippi. Some of the key alliances we have formed or helped





support over the last 20 plus years include the Andre Jones Justice Committee, Mississippi Justice Coalition, Concerned Citizens Alliance, Jackson Human Rights Coalition, Concerned Workers of Frito-Lay, Johnnie Griffin Justice Committee, Anti-Klan Coalition, Kwanza Coalition, Chokwe Lumumba Legal Support and Defense Committees, Workers United for Self Determination, City Wide Coalition for Selective Buying Campaign, Grassroots Convention, Committee to Free the Scott Sisters and the Full Pardon Committee for the Scott Sisters.

In order for the J-K Plan and its objectives to be realized, we are going to have to build a broad alliance in the city, the Black Belt counties, and throughout the state that is aligned with the principle aims of the Plan and

the initiatives that emerge from the People's Assemblies. This alliance will be intentionally multi-national in its outlook and orientation, but be based in and lead by New Afrikan working class communities and forces throughout the state.

We assess our strategic allies being the growing Latino community and various immigrant populations that are migrating to the state seeking employment in the agricultural, construction, and professional service sectors. The strategic nature of these forces rests with our common interest in eradicating white supremacy and the institutional dimensions of colonial subjugation that structure the economy. This alliance will also give due focus to building principled relationships with white progressive forces throughout the state who are essential to the current and foreseeable balance of power in the state. Our immediate aim is to win enough of these forces over to our vision and program so as to weaken, if not altogether neutralize, aspects of white reactionary power in the state.



The objectives of the J-K Plan require the building of coalitions and alliances that far exceed the borders of the settler state of Mississippi. We envision the coalitions and alliances we are seeking to build in Mississippi as being an essential cornerstone to the building of a strategic South-by-Southwest radical peoples' alliance, rooted in the rebuilding of principled alliances amongst the primary colonial subjects of



the U.S. settler-colonial empire, namely New Afrikans, Xicanos, and Indigenous Nations. When and if linked with the growing immigrant population, this grand alliance possesses within it the potential to transform the United States, via decolonization and economic restructuring, into an entirely new social project.

Solidarity and Joint Struggle: What You Can Do to Help Promote and Advance the Jackson-Kush Plan

MXGM and NAPO believe that for organizing initiatives like the Jackson-Kush Plan to be successful, it will take a balance of self-reliant initiative, will and resourcing combined with genuine solidarity and joint struggle on the part of our allies. To help see this initiative to fruition, we are calling on our allies and supporters to build with us in the following concrete ways:

Promotion and Education

The first critical task is to spread the word about the Jackson-Kush Plan. Promote it amongst your family, friends and comrades and wherever you live, work, play, rest or pray. Promote the democratic potential the plan represents and educate people about the importance of this initiative, the lessons that can be learned from it, how it can be applied in their context, and how they can support it.

Resource Generation

No major social initiative such as the Jackson-Kush Plan can succeed without resources. The J-K Plan needs a broad array of resources, but the two most fundamental resources it needs are skilled volunteers and money (capital).

The types of skills we need include: organizing, coordination, fundraising, entrepreneurial, and technical, in the fields of social networking, farming, construction, engineering, journalism and media, and health care. We're looking for volunteers to come to Jackson and other parts of Mississippi and commit to helping at strategic times for short-term campaigns, generally one or two weeks. And to make more longterm commitments for several months or years to work under the discipline of MXGM, NAPO, and the People's Assemblies.

Money is needed for a variety of purposes, but most specifically to support and build our organizing drives and campaigns,—paying organizers, covering work expenses (transportation, operations, facilities, etc.), and producing and promoting educational and agitation materials. If all our allies and supporters were to make small individual donations, we firmly believe we could raise millions to support this critical work. In this spirit, we are challenging everyone who supports the J-K Plan and the work of MXGM and NAPO to make a contribution of \$5 or more to this work to ensure that it succeeds. You can make a tax deductible contribution by donating to Community Aid and Development, Inc., which is our 501(c)(3) fiduciary agent, by visiting <http://www.cadnational.org/>. Donations to the support Chokwe's mayoral campaign can be made out to: **The Committee to Elect Chokwe Lumumba, P.O. Box 31762, Jackson, MS 39286**. Donations to the Campaign to Elect June Hardwick for Ward 7 can be made out to **Friends to Elect June Hardwick, P.O. Box 1352, Jackson, MS 39215**.



Solidarity and Joint Struggle Campaigns

Political support for the Jackson–Kush Plan and the many initiatives within it is just as essential as material support.

We strongly encourage folks in the South to join us in building and extending **Operation Black Belt**, since this campaign ultimately needs to be a Southern-wide initiative in order to be successful.

The Amandla Project would benefit from book and curriculum donations, pedagogical exchanges, and volunteer trainers to help get it started. We further call on our allies and supporters everywhere to support our **2013 Electoral Campaigns** by joining one of our volunteer brigades that will start in the summer of 2012 to carry out the will of the People's Assembly. And, of course, make generous financial contributions to Chokwe and June's campaign coffers.

More critically however, we would like to encourage our allies and supporters outside of Mississippi to form local and regional **Jackson–Kush Solidarity Circles** to support the Plan and relate directly with MXGM, NAPO and the People's Assembly to support the initiatives we've described here. We strongly encourage organizing and organizational development anywhere to enable social transformation to happen everywhere.



of support to engage in dual power initiatives and then link up with the forces advancing the J–K Plan to liberate the South.

To work more closely with MXGM and NAPO to build the J–K Plan, we strongly encourage people of Afrikan descent to **join MXGM**. Such people interested in joining should contact National Organizer Kamau Franklin at kamauadeabiodun@yahoo.com. Whites and other non-Afrikan peoples committed to anti-racist, anti-imperialist, anti-sexist politics are strongly encouraged to **join our Malcolm X Solidarity Committee (MXSC)**. People interested in joining the MXSC should contact malcolmxsolidaritycommittee@gmail.com.



We're also looking to inspire, encourage, and support Jackson–Kush-like plans in other Black Belt regions of the South. In particular, Black Belt regions with mid-sized towns like Jackson with similar race and class demographics, as these represent the greatest potential for success given the current balance of forces in the US, if only because these cities don't possess the same degree of consolidated transnational capital to contend with. Over time, we hope, **J–K Solidarity Committees** throughout the Black Belt South would take up this call to action and build their own local political bases



Forward!

As this contribution hopefully demonstrates, the Jackson–Kush Plan is a major initiative in the effort to rebuild the Black Liberation Movement to complete the project of Afrikan liberation on the North American Continent. To the extent that this plan calls for critical engagement with the US settler-colonial state, we take heed of the lesson and warning issued by our dear fallen comrade Walter Rodney, in his quote below, regarding his organizing efforts to transform his native Guyana.



We draw two lessons from Walter Rodney's words of wisdom and the history associated with them. The first is that to engage is to not be deluded about the hypocritical and exploitative nature of the system, nor deny its proven ability to contain and absorb resistance, or to reduce radicals to status quo managers. The lesson we draw from Rodney's statements is that we have to fight in every arena to create democratic space to allow oppressed and exploited people the freedom and autonomy to ultimately liberate themselves. The second lesson regards leadership. MXGM and NAPO believe that leadership is necessary to help stimulate, motivate, and educate struggling people, but that leaders and leadership are no substitutes for the people themselves and for autonomous mass movement with distributed or horizontal leadership. As the legendary Fannie Lou Hamer said, ***“we have enough strong people to do this. For peoples to win this election, it would set a precedent for other counties in the state. Peoples need a victory so bad. We've been working here since '62 and we haven't got nothing, excepting a helluva lot of heartaches.”***

The J–K Plan is ultimately one that aims to build a strong people, prepared to liberate themselves. We hope you will join us in its building and advancement.

Unity and Struggle!



“I say this very deliberately. Not even those of us who stand on this platform can tell you that the remedy in Guyana is that a new set of people must take over from old set of people, and we will run the system better. That is no solution to the problems of Guyana. The problem is much more fundamental than that. We are saying that working class people will get justice only when they take the initiative. When they move themselves! Nobody else can give (freedom) as gift. Someone who comes claiming to be a liberator is either deluding himself or he is trying to delude the people. He either doesn't understand the process of real life. Or he is trying to suggest that you do not understand it. And so long as we suffer of a warped concept of politics as being leadership, we're going to be in a lot of trouble.”

— Walter Rodney, from the film *In the Sky's Wild Noise* (1983)

I think at this stage the big question is, What is the American society? Is it the kind of society that either black women or black men or anyone who is seeing a dignified existence as a human being that permits people to grow and develop according to their capacity, that gives them a sense of value, not only for themselves, but a sense of value for other human beings. Is this the kind of society that is going to permit that? I think there is a great question as to whether it can become that kind of society . . .

In order for us as poor and oppressed people to become a part of a society that is meaningful, the system under which we now exist has to be radically changed. This means that we are going to have to learn to think in radical terms. I use the term radical in its original meaning-getting down to and understanding the root cause. It means facing a system that does not lend itself to your needs and devising means by which you change that system. That is easier said than done. But one of the things that has to be faced is, in the process of wanting to change that system, how much have we got to do to find out who we are, where we have come from and where we are going. About twenty-eight years ago I used to go around making speeches, and I would open up my talk by saying that there was a man who had a health problem and he was finally told by the doctor that they could save his sight or save his memory, but they couldn't save both. They asked him which did he want and he said, "Save my sight because I would rather see where I am going than remember where I have been." I am saying as you must say, too, that in order to see where we are going, we not only must remember where we've been, but we must understand where we have been. This calls for a great deal of analytical thinking and evaluation of methods that have been used. We have to begin to think in terms of where do we really want to go and how can we get there.

Finally, I think it is also to be said that it is not a job that is going to be done by all the people simultaneously. Some will have to be in cadres, the advanced cadres, and some will have to come later. But one of the guiding principles has to be that we cannot lead a struggle that involves masses of people without getting the people to understand what their potentials are, what their strengths are.

— Ella Baker, *The Black Woman in the Civil Rights Struggle* (speech at the Institute of the Black World, Atlanta), 1969



For updates and more information about the Jackson-Kush Plan, please visit the following websites and social media sources:

Malcolm X Grassroots Movement
mxgm.org or [facebook.com/MXGMnational](https://www.facebook.com/MXGMnational)

Campaign to Elect Chokwe Lumumba
[facebook.com/pages/Elect-June-Hardwick-for-Ward-7-City-Council/#!/ElectChokweLumumbaMayorOfJacksonMs](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Elect-June-Hardwick-for-Ward-7-City-Council/#!/ElectChokweLumumbaMayorOfJacksonMs)

Campaign to Elect June Hardwick
[facebook.com/pages/Elect-June-Hardwick-for-Ward-7-City-Council/#!/pages/Elect-June-Hardwick-for-Ward-7-City-Council/193157050758677](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Elect-June-Hardwick-for-Ward-7-City-Council/#!/pages/Elect-June-Hardwick-for-Ward-7-City-Council/193157050758677)





What is the difference between a Black revolution and a Negro revolution? First, what is a revolution? Sometimes I'm inclined to believe that many of our people are using this word "revolution" loosely, without taking careful consideration of what this word actually means, and what its historic characteristics are. When you study the historic nature of revolutions, the motive of a revolution, the objective of a revolution, and the result of a revolution, and the methods used in a revolution, you may change words. You may devise another program. You may change your goal and you may change your mind. . . .

Look at the American Revolution in 1776. That revolution was for what? For land. Why did they want land? Independence. How was it carried out? Bloodshed. Number one, it was based on land, the basis of independence. And the only way they could get it was bloodshed. The French Revolution—what was it based on? The landless against the landlord. What was it for? Land. How did they get it? Bloodshed. Was no love lost; was no compromise; was no negotiation. I'm telling you, you don't know what a revolution is. 'Cause when you find out what it is, you'll get back in the alley; you'll get out of the way. The Russian Revolution—what was it based on? Land. The landless against the landlord. How did they bring it about? Bloodshed. You haven't got a revolution that doesn't involve bloodshed. . . .

The Chinese Revolution—they wanted land. They threw the British out, along with the Uncle Tom Chinese. Yeah, they did. . . .

Of all our studies, history is best qualified to reward our research. And when you see that you've got problems, all you have to do is examine the historic method used all over the world by others who have problems similar to yours. And once you see how they got theirs straight, then you know how you can get yours straight.

There's been a revolution, a Black revolution, going on in Africa. In Kenya, the Mau Mau were revolutionaries; they were the ones who made the word "Uhuru". They were the ones who brought it to the fore. The Mau Mau, they were revolutionaries. They believed in scorched earth. They knocked everything aside that got in their way, and their revolution also was based on land, a desire for land.

In Algeria, the northern part of Africa, a revolution took place. The Algerians were revolutionists; they wanted land. France offered to let them be integrated into France. They told France: to hell with France. They wanted some land, not some France. And they engaged in a bloody battle.

So I cite these various revolutions, brothers and sisters, to show you—you don't have a peaceful revolution. You don't have a turn-the-other-cheek revolution. There's no such thing as a nonviolent revolution. The only kind of revolution that's nonviolent is the Negro revolution. The only revolution based on loving your enemy is the Negro revolution. The only revolution in which the goal is a desegregated lunch counter, a desegregated theater, a desegregated park, and a desegregated public toilet; you can sit down next to white folks on the toilet. That's no revolution. Revolution is based on land. Land is the basis of all independence. Land is the basis of freedom, justice, and equality.

— Malcolm X, *Message to the Grass Roots*, October 10th, 1963



Malcolm X
Grassroots Movement



NEW AFRIKAN PEOPLE'S ORGANIZATION