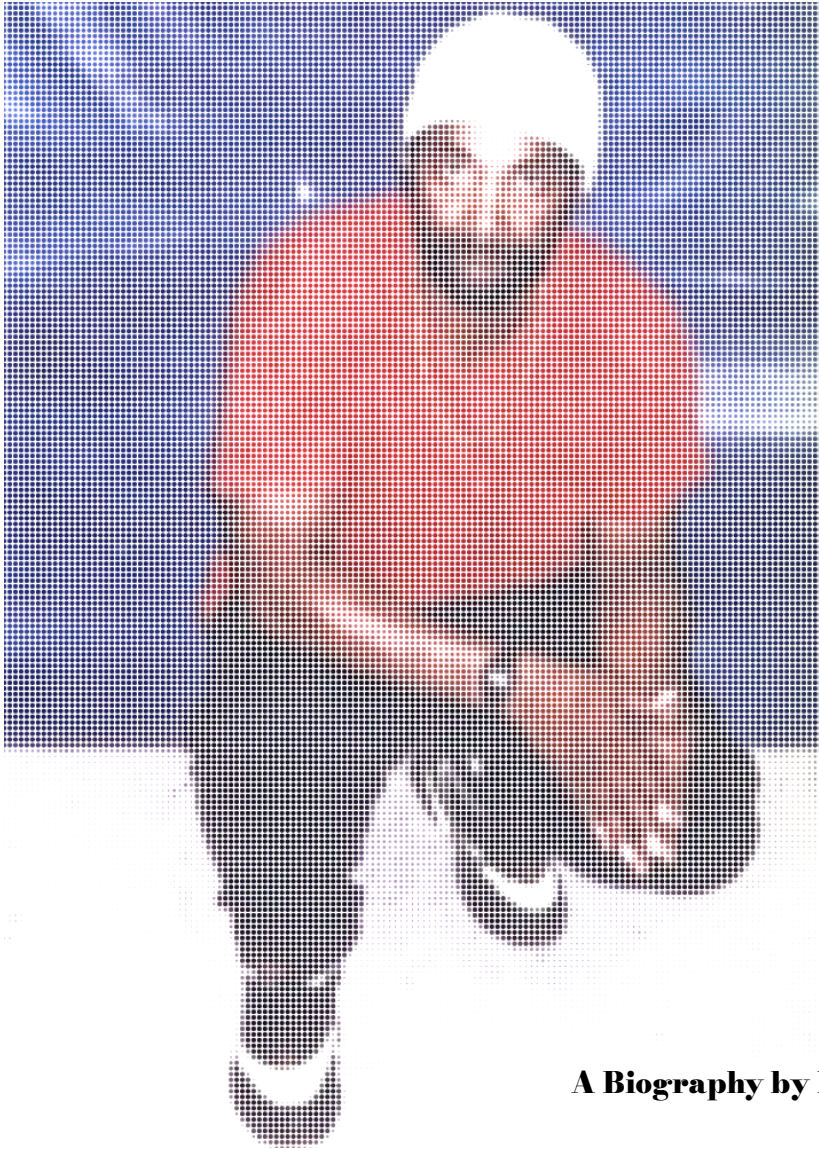


# **The Revolutionary Life & Legacy of Brother Ali Khalid Abdullah**

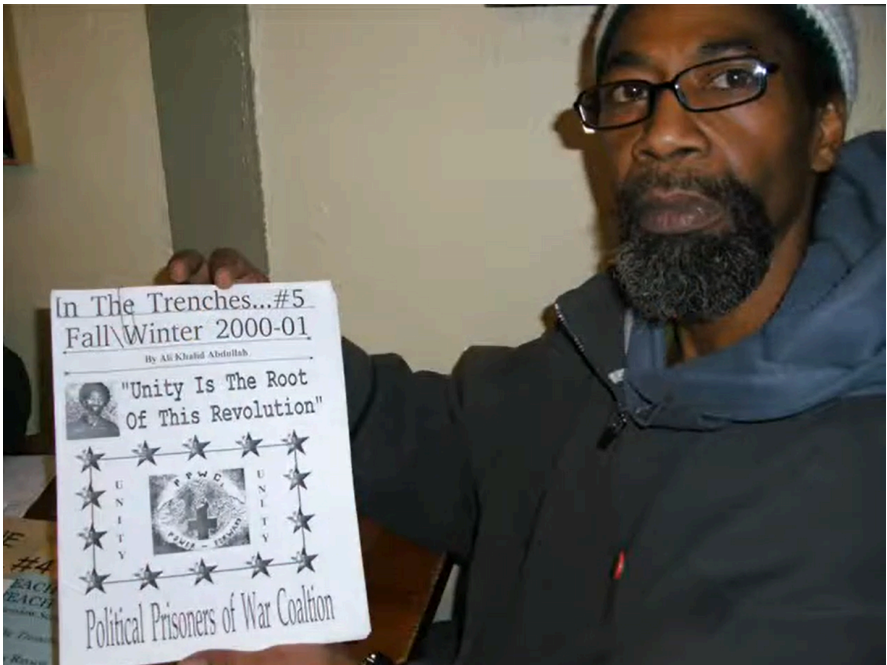


**A Biography by Mutt.**



*“We have no time to think that self-liberation is some futuristic event that will come to pass after some marvelous revolutionary savior come. That will not happen. Our individual battle for liberation and autonomy is political, and we must act in a way that our very social interaction displays this fact. For how we conduct ourselves in the here and now will determine what our tomorrow will bring to us.”*

*- Ali Khalid Abdullah, Black Liberation and Anarchism, 2002*



Ali, Holding a copy of In The Trenches, after his release.

Before I begin, I would like to acknowledge that without the research by my comrade Christian Kennedy and several online contacts of mine who have taken the time to scan some of Ali's work, this article would not have been possible.

## Who Was Ali?

When you think about Black and New Afrikan Anarchism, most wouldn't think of Ali Khalid Abdullah, no books of his work are in bookshops, his zines aren't in infoshops, his quotes aren't on posters and his ideas aren't debated amongst Anarchists. When I edited together the first volume of *A Black Autonomy Reader*, I didn't know who he was, I was closing tabs on my laptop a few days after sending the book to press and on Filler Distro's archive.org page there was a badly scanned zine by him called "Black Liberation and Anarchism" which is unfortunately missing four pages right in the middle of the text. His texts aren't in a book but instead scattered across hundreds of early 2000s blogs and archives (more on that later) and strangely no 'proper' biography of his exists, but at the same time, when he was alive his networking took his ideas from the so-called US to Britain to Puerto Rico.

From what I've managed to trace together, Ali Khalid Abdullah was a New Afrikan revolutionary arrested in 1990 for '*assault with intent to rob while armed*' for his involvement in trying to shut down a major drug dealer because said drug dealer molested an 11 year old girl as payment for her mother's drug bill. Ali and three of his comrades went to take 'People's Justice' out on the drug dealer and his companion by going after one of the dealers' businesses where volumes of drugs were distributed and large stashes of money was held and transferred. In court he was accused of taking the law into his own hands.

From the onset of his incarceration, he spent a huge amount of his time educating himself and supporting other prisoners, from forming a support group on the inside to teaching other prisoners about Islam to earning a Bachelor's degree in Behavioral Science.

Furthermore in 1994 he founded the *Political Prisoners Of War Coalition* (P.P.W.C) which was a non sectarian network for prisoners to support each other against attacks by the prison system run on the principles of free association and mutual aid. He edited the network's later publication *In The Trenches*, he wrote dozens and dozens of articles and conducted many interviews on Anarchism, Islam, the patriarchy, the prison system and several other topics. He networked with several anarchists on the outside to help turn his writings into zines, Anthony Rayson (Whom I've unfortunately not been able to contact) of the South Chicago Anarchist Black Cross to this day still distributes his work to people on the inside.

Prison authorities took his proactive refusal of the demoralisation caused by the prison system as a threat to the prison system itself, the punishment the state imposed upon him has ranged from denying him parole over five times, tampering with his mail, constant prison transfers to break up his organising work, community and line of connection to the outside world. Even on one occasion trying to throw terrorism charges on him for his writings, then again following 9/11 he was questioned by federal agents because of his faith. The prison authorities even went as far as attempts on his life through

denying him insulin, which eventually temporarily blinded him and left him in a diabetic coma. They even spun a bullshit story on him so that other prisoners would attack him in the hope that it would end his political work, but they failed.

Anarchists of the time did read his work, rather widely it seems, it was both praised and critiqued. The Anarchist Black Cross of Ghent, Belgium interviewed him and translated his works into Dutch and French. Anarchist Prisoner Ronald Young initially published a critique of the PPWC calling the organisation cross class and of Ali's own writing calling it vague and claiming he wanted Anarchists to embrace nationalism, this critique was largely in response to the article "Why Aren't More People Of Color In The Anarchist Movement" however Ronald corresponded with Ali later and redacted these comments. The critique and later apology were published in British Anarchist newspaper Organise! Who also apologised to their readers alongside Ronalds apology In their 55th & 56th edition respectively. Mike Ward (who I've not been able to contact) even started a UK branch of the PPWC in the early 2000s, however all I could find on there was the PPWC's principles and political statement.

Ali had been up for parole since 1996 and was finally released in 2008. Spending over 18 years in prison. Outside of prison he continued to agitate for Anarchism and revolution, for example he appeared for a talk at a Boxcar Books (Wilmington, Indiana) for a Benefit on February 21st, 2009 and spoke about his experiences. A youtube upload by his supporters titled A.P.B. on

A.K.A. mentioned that he sought support for his living and medical expenses.

After his release I have yet failed to find more info about what he got up to, until I came across a article on a peculiar radio show's website featuring an interview with Anthony Rason (the recording of which is unfortunately corrupted and can't be played) and photographs of what was likely the last letter he wrote to Anthony, dated June 18, 2014. In this letter Ali explains that he had a bowel obstruction that when treated the staff noticed he had cancer so he was transferred from the prison's medical centre to a hospital in New Jersey. (Seemingly he'd been sent back to prison after his release at some point) he was told that he had weeks to live as the cancer was inoperable. He talks about his fear of death but also of his confidence that his peers will carry on his unfinished work and he finishes with the statement:

*“Stay strong, fight the good fight. Live life and educate*

*In the trenches...”*

## A look at Ali's Revolutionary Theory

Below, I've attempted to highlight some of the points he made in the limited amount of his vast body of work I have access to, to begin, let's look at a supporter website:

“Ali Khalid Abdullah has dreams of seeing the world united, without war, hunger and poverty. He wishes to contribute to making the world a better place for all inhabitants, including animals. He aspires to be a good human being and hopes to be a good husband and father one day, and to reach out to many people. He hopes that we can save our planet from global destruction and preserve a livable future for the millions of babies that are today coming into the world. He would like to see people shake up the current political stranglehold on the world's economy, and to eradicate capitalism so that all people's basic material means can be met. He aspires to destroy all elements of imperialism, racism, sexism, xenophobia, and acknowledges that accomplishing this will be a long struggle.”

On the subject of violence, in a 2002(?) interview with Ghent (Belgium) Anarchist Black Cross militant Bart De Geeter (who would later be arrested after getting into a firefight with police in Germany alongside Spanish comrades.) He is asked: Is your stance purely pacifist or is violence in some way necessary?

To which he replies: “violence is necessary, but only when in defence of one's life. Again, when one is attacked and abused then they have a right to become violent. If I see someone ready to do physical harm to another and that person has done nothing,



then I will stop the one who is trying to do harm. If that means I must be violent to do this then I will be violent. As for being passive... passivity has never brought anything but it has invited someone else to be aggressive, abusive and dominating against you/us. It would sure be a nice thing to see a world where there is no violence, but we do not live in such a world. [...] My stance is this... I want peace. I want harmony, but I am not going to allow [anyone] to hurt me or those around me who are innocent.”

Along with running an anti-drug educational program in prison, he was a keen advocate of revolutionary discipline when it came to the use of drugs and alcohol:

“There should be no time or room for getting high on drugs, because this doesn’t allow you to be in focus or your right state of mind. The same with drinking and getting drunk, This is not revolutionary and it only plays into the hands of those who want to keep us high and unable to function [...] We must rise up and recognize that this is not a game. Being serious about political change, real social change, is not a game and the powers that be are not playing any games. They are serious. Dead serious and will terminate any one of us if we aren’t really prepared to fight.”

He put a great emphasis, which is echoed by other Black Anarchists such as JoNina Ervin and Ojore Lutalo on the value of prisoner solidarity to the Anarchist movement, he writes: “There are many professed Anarchists/anti-authoritarians who aren’t reaching inside these prisons to either work with us known anarchists or to establish ties with politically active/conscious

prisoners so they can be utilised in the struggle. This is sad. A sad statement. Yet one which is true and must be discussed openly if we are to change our present day thinking "There are Anarchist prisoners scattered all over the world who aren't getting the real support they need."

He also opposed capital punishment, in a 1998 article he wrote: "These so-called revolutionaries and Black Nationalists, who support State sponsored executions for certain groups of people [...] have not studied history and noted in the U.S. those on death row are predominantly poor people, the uneducated, mis-educated, the chronically unemployed or those employed at substantial slave wage jobs often earning less than \$7,000 a year. Or they are those who stand on the left side of the nation's ultra-conservative political, sociological and religious spectrum. These are the ones who wind up on death row and are executed by the State."

As with many of his peers, and the later Anarchist People of Color network in the US, he pointed out the lack of people of colour in the anarchist movement:

"If we don't break free from a basically white-concentrated group to a movement of all colors and representing all interests, then we will not be an effective movement and will choke on our past glorifications at the exclusion of others who could contribute, benefit and gain from the Anarchist movement here in Amerikkka and around the world."

In an article titled: “Facing The Capitalist Bourgeoisie Without Fear” he puts forward a brutal reality that the oppressed peoples of the world must escalate the conflict if they hope for any sense of autonomy and freedom.

“We must face the challenges placed before us by the kapitalist bourgeois without fear or intimidation. We must not bow down when faced with anything if we are to make a difference if we are to succeed. Being afraid inhibits us from being effective and allows the kapitalist bourgeois to march their agents (police and other enforcers of property) against us in arrogance. Our fear gives them victory. Our hesitation gives them an advantage and that advantage only knows one thing ... oppress!

Whenever we are attacked, beaten, brutalized, we have a right and a duty to give it back but with relentless extremes. Our actions (to survive) must go beyond the brick and the bottle throwing. Beyond the window smashing because this isn't effective nor does it pose a threat to the established bourgeois who is insured and will have these minor problems, not only fixed, but also receive something as a result of this incident. No, we must be more extreme. Extreme Action.'.. Extreme Relentless Direct Action must be the new order for us to rely on or the domination we're all facing and living under will grow even worse. We must be the example for check n' balance. Already we see governments around the world taking guns from the people, or making it so difficult to obtain that many don't try to own one. This tactic is being enforced, leaving the masses defenseless and

unable to fend off any brutal attacks by the agents of the kapitalist bourgeois.

A defenseless people are a people subject to unchecked aggression, oppression, repression, brutality and other undesired treatment. If we do not face the kapitalist bourgeois now and remain firm in our community and minimize our differences, soon it will be too late to develop any resistance. We will simply become human robots.”



Ali With Generations of Comrades

# Documents of the PPWC

## Principles and Points of the PPWC

1. PPWC does not discriminate against any person because of race, gender preference, sex, age, national or geographical origin, religious or non-religious beliefs.
2. PPWC does not show a preference to any person, race, culture or group, but we do recognize and acknowledge that some people have suffered more than others because of their race or culture, and therefore, we do not hide this fact.
3. PPWC does not exclude women and wholeheartedly believes that the backbone of any legitimate struggle, whether political, social, economic, environmental or religious, are women. Because of this principle point, we welcome, support and work with women on the issues that also affect women's lives.
4. PPWC does not place the role of men above or below women and believes that all hints as to status, patriarchal dominance, gender superiority or learned superiority of women by men, are to be instantly rejected.
5. PPWC will work with any group, movement, organization or individual, regardless of political theory, doctrine or non-political theory or doctrine, as long as the group, movement, organization or individual is for freedom of all people. PPWC accepts their right to autonomy, as long as they do not hinder, hurt, harm or destroy others at the others' expense.

6. PPWC will not declare to be anarchist, communist, socialist, syndicalist, liberal, progressive, or any such titles, because of the fact that such titles have kept many good people apart from each other who are fighting for the same humanitarian issues.

7. PPWC believes we should be able to work with anyone who is about abolishing all forms of oppression, repression, imperialism, colonialism, racism, sexism, homophobia, class divisions, age discrimination, immigrant bashing, and the destruction of the environment. As well as about abolishing any and all forms of oppression against free speech, free assembly, free association, autonomy, personal privacy, the abolition of prisons and all forms of torture, unjust courts, laws, and the agencies which enforce such unjust laws upon the people.

(Note: PPWC has members of various political doctrines, religious and non-religious philosophies, but we firmly stress mutual aid and cooperation and will demand tolerance of others unless that cooperation or tolerance proves to be detrimental to PPWC's Principles & Points.)

8. PPWC shuns all discriminatory acts against the gay/lesbian/bi/trans communities and will not support any group, movement, organization or individual that does discriminate against people with an alternative sexual lifestyle and/or practices.

9. PPWC shuns all discriminatory acts against immigrants and believes they have a right to flee any country or land where there is hardship and enter a country or land where they can improve their lives and the lives of their children.

10. PPWC shuns all discriminatory acts against the physically challenged and believes they are whole persons and have the right to live and pursue the same fruits of life as those who are not so challenged.

11. PPWC shuns all predatory acts against children whether these acts are of a sexual, emotional or psychological nature or for the exploitation of their youthful labor and energy.

12. PPWC shuns any acts of violence against children and will go to any extreme to ensure the safety and welfare of ANY child.

13. PPWC shuns all discriminatory acts against the elderly regardless of their past. (We must never forget that compassion must be shown to them and allow them to live the remainder of their lives free from stress, worry, and unnecessary pain.)

14. PPWC will not support the denial of education or employment to any person who seeks to have an education or employment.

15. PPWC will not support the denial of technologies to any people, whereby these technologies would greatly enhance the quality of life for them. Nor do we support the denial to people of the means to defend themselves against any and all manner of hostile aggression, be it by any government, its agencies, or other groups, movements, organizations or individuals.

## **PPWC STATEMENT**

PPWC believes in the right of human beings to live lives free from all forms of oppression.

PPWC believes in the people having the autonomy to govern their lives, as long as they don't hurt or harm others.

PPWC believes in the total destruction of racism, sexism, homophobia, class distinctions and the division of labor.

PPWC adopts the philosophy of MUTUAL AID, FREE ASSOCIATION, and COOPERATION.

PPWC believes in supporting Political Prisoners, Prisoners of War and Politicized Prisoners (prisoners who have politicized - politically aware - while in prison.)

PPWC believes in the need to support worthy causes that will enrich the lives of All People, no matter wherein the world they may be.

PPWC believes in fair labor and believes that all workers are to enjoy the fruits of their labor.

PPWC believes in ending capitalism, imperialism, apartheid-ism, and other types of exploitation that are the root causes of war and social ills.



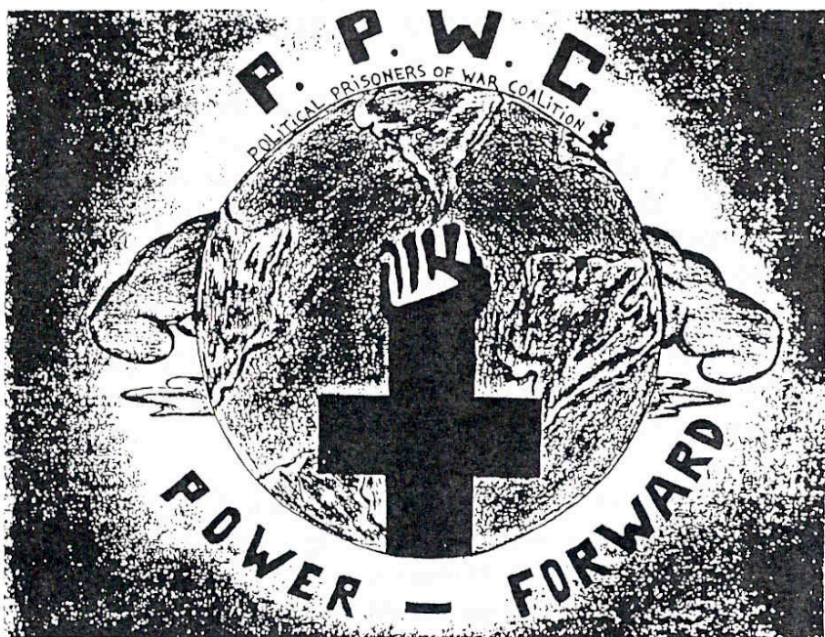
# POLITICAL PRISONERS OF WAR COALITION

P. P. W. C.

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## PPWC GOALS, AIMS & OBJECTIVES



## Final Thoughts

Despite Ali's death and the end of *In The Trenches* and the P.P.W.C the recognition and praxis of Black & New Afrikan Anarchism grows, groups like In The Belly & the many chapters of the ABC & IWOC and the hundreds of people working alone or with no label carry on the work he dedicated his life to, for Ali let us never give up, no matter how hopeless it seems at times or how much shit gets thrown our way.

To honour his legacy as one of our revolutionary elders and ancestors and to make Ali's & the P.P.W.C's writing available to the public I am founding the *Ali Khalid Abdullah Black Autonomy Archive*, here we will digitise and upload all of his & the P.P.W.C's works, at monthly intervals I will upload the items to other archives too so if I get taken down the materials will remain. As a long term goal, once the lion's share of his work is digitised I will produce a book of his work and sell it to benefit groups such as *In The Belly* and the ABC & IWOC here in the UK.

This isn't going to be an easy task and could take years at my current rate so I need your help, especially comrades in the So-Called US where his work is stored in several archives.

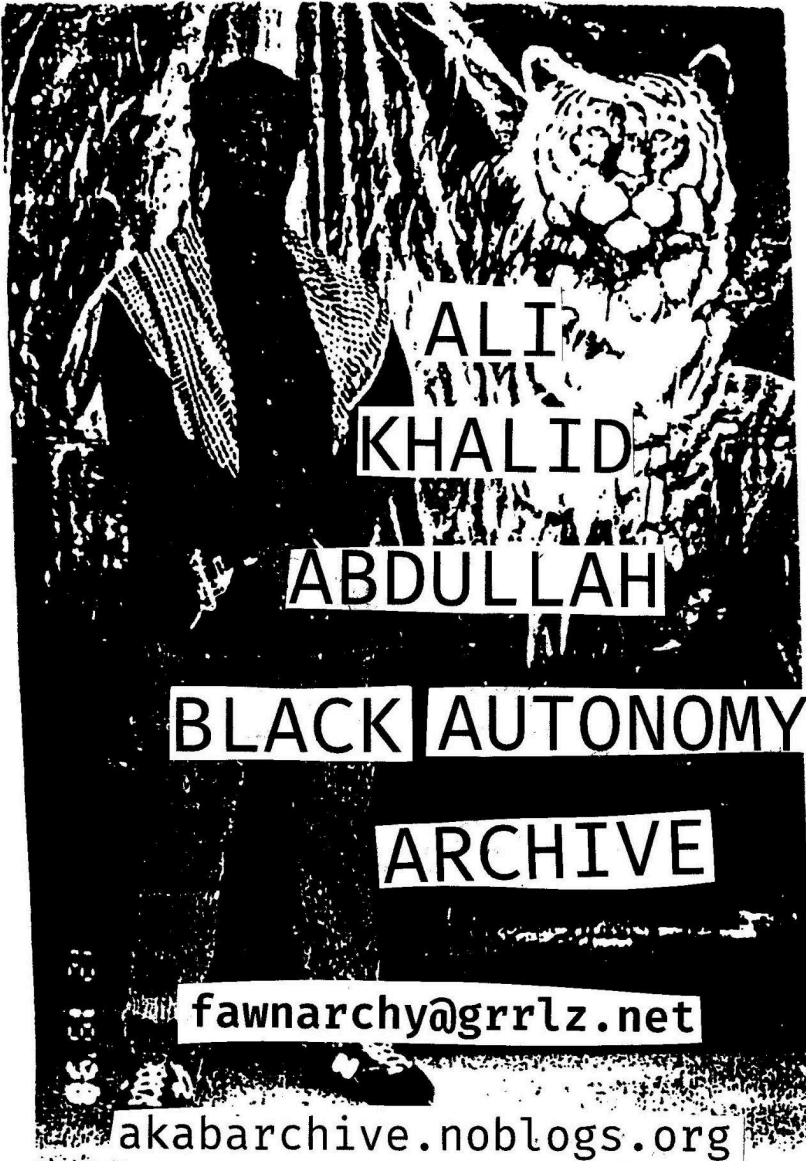
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