



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0805-2023, **Version:** *

Res. No. 805

Resolution condemning the federal government's repression of the African People's Socialist Party and the Uhuru movement.

By Council Member Barron

Whereas, On July 29, 2022 at 5:00 a.m., the FBI stormed the home of Omali Yeshitela, Chairman of the African People's Socialist Party (APSP) in St. Louis, Missouri. Yeshitela stated that the agents deployed flashbang grenades, carried automatic weapons, damaged the property of his neighbors, and handcuffed himself and his wife. Agents refused to show him a search warrant and absconded with cellphones and other devices from his home; and

Whereas, The assault on Yeshitela's residence was part of a coordinated onslaught against locations affiliated with the APSP across the country; and

Whereas, That same day, the FBI invaded two sites of the APSP-led Uhuru Movement, the Uhuru Solidarity Center in St. Louis and the Uhuru House in St. Petersburg, Florida; and

Whereas, The FBI also raided the APSP's radio station, Black Power 96.3 FM, and reportedly detained a prominent APSP leader. The FBI's flimsy excuse for its operation is that the APSP, by exercising its free speech rights about the war in Ukraine, was spreading "Russian propaganda;" and

Whereas, The Council of the City of New York strongly condemns the illegal and racist FBI raids on the offices and homes of the APSP and the Uhuru Movement, whose persecution continues to this day; and

Whereas, The Council of the City of New York stands in solidarity with the activists and organizations targeted by this domestic spying entity (FBI), whose job it has been to consistently and historically squelch dissent and resistance to violations of human rights, civil rights and political activism against the status quo of American inequality and exploitation; and

Whereas, the government raids were an indefensible, politically motivated witch hunt. They are part of an increasing assault on civil liberties in a time of growing hardship for the working-class majority, escalating clashes between rich and poor, and rising injustice, especially against those who are fighting for justice and liberation for oppressed communities; and

Whereas, The African People's Socialist Party was targeted because it has relentlessly fought for the liberation of Africa and African people for the past 50 years; and

Whereas, The FBI raids on the Uhuru Movement posed a threat to the African community's hard-won democratic right to participate in elections in their own interests; and

Whereas, African people have a right to petition the United Nations to investigate the Genocide Convention as it applies to the conditions of African people in the U.S. and the "original sin" of slavery and colonialism in this country; and

Whereas, African people and all those in the United States have the inalienable right to freedom of speech, association and assembly including public statements of dissent regarding the official position of the U.S. on the Russia-Ukraine war; and

Whereas, millions of African people in the 1960s struggled for basic human rights as well as economic and political power and faced the effects of the FBI's COINTELPRO program which carried out assassination, political imprisonment, slander and harm; and

Whereas, Malcolm X, Marcus Garvey, The Black Panther Party, and other human rights and civil rights activists were targeted, threatened, surveilled and/or assassinated by the FBI, often with the complicity of the local police department right here in New York City; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that the New York City Council strongly condemns the actions of the FBI raid on the African People's Socialist Party and the Uhuru Movement and calls for all of the trumped up charges to be dropped immediately. In addition the New York City Council calls on all local police departments to commit to non-cooperation with the oppressive tactics of the FBI; and

Be it further resolved, that the New York City Council strongly supports and protects the rights of all individuals and organizations to engage in the exercise of free speech and the organizing for human rights without the harassment and tyranny of the FBI

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