The Government's attacks on Geronimo Pratt did not stop with incarceration. They have continued for 17 years and continue today!

- The Community Release Board (Parole Board) refuses to release him, citing his so-called “prison record” (his 8 years in solitary confinement as the reason)! In 1979 this Board was headed by the former Deputy Chief of Police from Oakland, who in the '60s and '70s ran the department's “Black Panther Detail.”

- In May, 1987 the Parole Board again refused to release him, citing the 300 letters of support they had received as “proof” that he is a dangerous leader. In an editorial by Austin Long-Scott the day of his parole hearing the Oakland Tribune said: “prison reports say, he remains remarkably free of rancor, bitterness and self-pity. ... He’d be a credit to his community—if the state would only let him have one.”

- Geronimo sought justice through every procedure available in the judicial system. The courts, police, prisons and FBI have denied his suits every step of the way. His case is now before the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals and is being brought to the attention of an international tribunal at the United Nations.

Did You Know:

Geronimo ji Jaga Pratt is one of the longest held Political Prisoners in the U.S. today.

- After 17 years, he remains in San Quentin Prison—a loved and respected leader of the Black Liberation Movement, framed by the FBI.
All over the world repressive regimes lock up the people who resist them.

In South Africa Nelson Mandela has been in prison for over 25 years. The US government also imprisons people who fight for social justice.

Geronimo Pratt was Framed

- Geronimo Pratt was falsely accused of a robbery and murder in Santa Monica, California in 1968. The FBI knew that Geronimo is innocent, and that he was attending meetings of the Black Panther Party in Oakland, California, 400 miles away. FBI surveillance reports of these meetings have mysteriously disappeared.

- Geronimo Pratt was wrongly convicted. FBI informants infiltrated Geronimo’s defense team. 7,000 pages of FBI documents pertaining to his case were withheld by the FBI. After the trial, jurors said they had voted to convict based on the testimony of witness Julio Butler. They had no way of knowing at the time that Butler was a paid FBI informant—this was not exposed until 5 years after the trial.

- In 1981 Amnesty International acknowledged that Pratt was a victim of official government repression.

- Geronimo spent 8 years in solitary confinement, the “hole,” a 5’ x 7’ cell without books, bed or basic toilet facilities.

- In 1982 the court ruled that the only reason for this additional punishment was political harassment and that he be released into general population.

The persecution of Geronimo Pratt was and still is part of an official black liberation movement.

In 1968, the name of this strategy was COINTELPRO

- COINTELPRO (Counter Intelligence Program) defined its goals as: “to prevent the coalition of militant Black nationalist groups, to prevent the rise of a leader... to prevent these militants from gaining respectability and to prevent the growth of these groups among American youth.”

- In Los Angeles, the LAPD implemented COINTELPRO by “arresting them (Black Panther Party members) on every possible charge until they can no longer make bail.”

- Geronimo Pratt was a leader of the Los Angeles Black Panthers. A Geronimo Pratt Squad was formed inside the police department to “neutralize” him. Prior to his arrest on the Santa Monica murder charge, Geronimo was arrested often.

- In 1969 thirty-three members of the Black Panther Party were shot and killed by police across the country. Thousands were jalled.

COINTELPRO Lives Today!

Twenty years later, it’s not called COINTELPRO anymore, but the strategy remains. There are over 100 political prisoners in the U.S., serving sentences of up to 150 years!

Beyond this, of the 1½ million prisoners across the country, 80% are Black, Puerto Rican or Latino. Virtually all are poor. There is a political dimension to the situation of every prisoner.