

3 Copwatch Monitors Arrested

Written by Robert ID861

Wednesday, 09 February 2005 06:06 -

Three members of the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement, Lumumba Bandele, Dasaw Floyd, and Djbril Toure were arrested in the Bedford-Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn just past midnight this morning. At the time of their arrest, the three were engaged in the legal monitoring of police activities as part of the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement Copwatch Program.

According to Bandele, he Floyd and Toure were driving down Greene Avenue when they heard sirens blaring. They observed an unusual amount of police activity on the block. They parked their car, turned on their video camera and approached the scene when a witness to the events ran past them stating that the police were beating someone. Bandele, Toure and Floyd continued to walk toward the scene when they were stopped by an officer who told them that they had to leave. Bandele told the officer that they had a legal right to observe the activities, and that they were not interfering with the arrest, only witnessing it. At that point, the officer, who was never touched by Bandele, Toure or Floyd placed the three under arrest, charging them with assault and obstruction of governmental administration.

The copwatch program was initiated in 2000 as a response to police brutality in central Brooklyn said Monifa Bandele, Lumumba's wife and a founder of MXGM. We'd been involved in a year-long struggle to bring the men who killed Amadou Diallo to justice and felt we had to do something to respond to the ongoing abuse of Black men, women and children by police. They were killing us, savagely beating us and they still are and they were doing it with apparent immunity. For Lumumba and I, as the parents of two small children, this issue had even greater personal resonance. Every time he or any of us stand up for some other parent's child, it's as though we are standing up for our own.

This arrest is outrageous, states Kamau Karl Franklin, attorney for the three. They were involved in completely legal activities, and the irony is that their treatment by police underscores the very need for a program such Copwatch. We look forward to our day in court because it will clearly demonstrate the contempt law enforcement too often feels towards the Black community. Franklin hopes that this unfortunate event will serve as a catalyst to make significant changes in who polices Black

communities, and how they police it.

The Malcolm X Grassroots Movement was officially organized in 1995 as an attempt to raise

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awareness about human rights violations in the Black community. It was part of the coalition of organizations that filed a lawsuit against the notorious street crimes unit, an effort which ultimately resulted in the unit's disbanding

We are encouraging folks to call the 79th precinct demanding the release of Lumumba, Dasaw and Djbril!!!

Call the 79th Precinct at 718-636-6611

Sent from Malcolm X Grassroots Movement www.mxgm.org