

AFRIKAN RESISTANCE, AFRIKAN LIBERATION
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FROM:
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CNN

CRIPS, GANGLIFE, REDEMPTION, & TOOKIE – CAN WE HAVE PEACE IN THE HOOD?
by Davey D on Breakdown FM

This is an insightful interview with former gang member/ Peace Warrior Aqeela Sherrill

You can peep this interview here:

<http://odeo.com/audio/460407/view>

Former LA gang member AQEELA SHERRILLS was instrumental in the historic 1992 gang truce between the Crips and Bloods in the aftermath of the Rodney King Uprisings.

In this interview he gives us a serious breakdown and understanding of what LA gang members are going through, how they see the situation surrounding Tookie and the on going efforts to bring about peace in the hood.

Sherrill who is cited in Jeff Chang's Hip Hop history book 'Can't Stop Won't Stop' explains that he runs a pro gang agency and expounds upon the fact that gangs have come to be surrogate parents for many over the years. He notes that many gang members are victims to larger enemies and societal ills like poverty and abuse at home.

Aqeela talks about the abuse he suffered at the hands of an older brother who molested him. He explains that violation was something he picked up in prison and it resulted in Aqeela lashing out and becoming a hardened gang member himself. He talks in depth about the concept of reverence and healing and that a lot of work is needed to heal the deep wounds that have been inflicted by this country by those who live in the inner city.

In this interview Aqeela talks about the economy of the hood and how there are a number of new laws put in place under 'Operation Nutcracker' designed to cripple and undermine the legitimate efforts being made by reformed gang members to gain an economic foothold. He talked about how gang members who get released from prison after serving a 10-15 year bid are suddenly hit with a 70-80 thousand bill from the government for child support. Anyone who owes more than 5gs in child support is limited in where and when they can travel.

Currently reformed gang members have opportunities to do businesses with third World countries like Ghana and in places throughout South America. These are the results of programs and efforts put forth by people like Harry Belafonte. Very few reformed gang members are able to take advantage of those opportunities.

Aqeela talks about the types of terrorism that has been going on in South Central by the police, including unresolved murders and drive bys designed to break the gang truce and spark war between various sets.

Aqeela goes into depth about the gang scene in LA and the type of influence Tookie Williams is perceived to have. He explained that Tookie only became known to younger Crip gang members after the movie 'Redemption' starring Jamie Foxx. He noted that the movie falsely depicts Tookie as being a shot caller to Crips on the streets of LA when that in fact is not the case. Aqeela explains that there is no central leadership amongst the LA gangs and that Crips kill Crips and Bloods kill Bloods and that in some of the larger sets you have warring divisions. He also broke down the type of organizational structure that has existed in gangs back east and in Chicago versus what goes on in Cali. He said it's very much the wild wild West.

He noted that within prison you tend to find old line organizations like the Consolidated Crips. He concludes that Tookie is not only reformed, but that he's spent many of his 25 years of incarceration in solitary confinement before he reformed. Tookie has very little to do with the Crips and the type of legacy that exists that they have left behind on the streets today. He has noted that Tookie's turn around has been an inspiration because it's been publicized and is reflected in books.

This is an incredible interview and will leave you with lots to think about. The music played throughout the interview is off the new Peace Warrior CD put out by Watts records which was started by Aqeela Sherrill and his organization..

You can peep this interview here:

<http://odeo.com/audio/460407/view>

<http://www.wattsrecord.com>

email: aqeelas@msn.com

To read further on the situation in Watts and gang life
Peep this article here:

<http://www.laweekly.com/ink/05/34/features-krikorian.php>

STATE'S HIGH COURT WON'T SPARE WILLIAMS – SCHWARZENEGGER COULD STILL STOP EXECUTION

<http://www.cnn.com/2005/LAW/11/30/williams.execution/index.html>

SAN FRANCISCO, California (CNN) -- California's Supreme Court Wednesday refused to stop the execution of convicted killer Stanley "Tookie" Williams, the founder of the Crips street gang who became an anti-gang crusader while on Death Row, a court spokeswoman said.

Williams' attorney, Jonathan Harris, told CNN he was disappointed by the court's 4-2 decision.

But Harris said he plans to make a compelling case before Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger or his staff at a December 8 clemency hearing to commute Williams' sentence to life in prison without parole.

Schwarzenegger or a federal court could still intervene to stop the execution of Williams, who would turn 52 December 29.

The defense petitioned the high court November 10 to reopen the case.

Williams' lawyers alleged there was faulty testing of shell casings found near the scene of a triple slaying at a motel in 1979, said Natasha Minsker, director of death penalty policy for the American Civil Liberties Union.

She called the forensic evidence used in the case "junk science."

The defense also contended informants lied to prosecutors and sought to re-examine other evidence, she said.

Williams, who is scheduled to die by injection December 13, was convicted in the 1979 killings of four people. The first victim was a 17-year-old Los Angeles convenience store clerk.

Williams also was convicted of killing an immigrant couple and their daughter while stealing cash from their motel. Both cases were handled in a single trial, and he was sentenced to death in 1981.

After his imprisonment, Williams denounced gang violence and began writing children's books with an anti-gang message, donating the proceeds to anti-gang community groups.

He said he was trying to prevent young people from making the choices he did, which led to a life of crime.

"The only thing that I was doing was destroying my own kind," Williams said in an interview from his cell at San Quentin State Prison.

Actor Jamie Foxx portrayed Williams in a 2004 made-for-television movie, "Redemption: The Stan Tookie Williams Story."

On Tuesday, Virginia's governor spared the life of Robin Lovitt a day before he was to become the 1,000th person executed in the United States since capital punishment resumed in 1977.

Lovitt's sentence was commuted to life in prison without parole for stabbing a man to death with a pair of scissors during a 1988 pool hall robbery.

SCHWARZENEGGER TO CONSIDER CONVICTED KILLER'S CLEMENCY

<http://www.cnn.com/2005/US/11/26/williams.execution.ap/index.html>

Saturday, 26 November 2005;

Posted: 8:37 p.m. EST (01:37 GMT)

SAN FRANCISCO, California (AP) -- California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger said he would consider granting clemency to convicted killer Stanley "Tookie" Williams, the Crips gang founder who became an anti-gang activist while in prison and was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize.

The governor said Friday he would meet December 8 in a private hearing with Williams' lawyers, Los Angeles County prosecutors and others involved.

Schwarzenegger has the authority to commute a death sentence to life without parole, but he is not obligated to hold a hearing. In Schwarzenegger's case, he decides clemency requests on a "case-by-case basis," spokeswoman Margita Thompson said.

Two other clemency petitions have come before Schwarzenegger. Neither was granted.

Williams, 51, faces a lethal injection on December 13 for the 1979 slayings of a Whittier convenience store clerk and three people at a Pico Rivera motel. He has maintained his innocence and has asked the California Supreme Court to reopen his case, alleging shoddy forensics wrongly connected him to three of the murders. The Supreme Court hasn't ruled on the petition.

Los Angeles County prosecutors and victims' relatives have demanded his execution.

Along with asking Schwarzenegger to commute Williams' death sentence, his lawyers submitted what they said were signatures of 32,000 people supporting his petition for clemency.

Supporters, including rapper Snoop Dogg and Ras Baraka, the deputy mayor of Newark, New Jersey, have urged Schwarzenegger to spare Williams' life so he can continue his work with young people as an anti-gang activist.

Williams founded the Crips with a childhood friend in 1971 in Los Angeles, where the gang battled rivals for territory and control of the drug trade.

In prison, however, Williams gained international acclaim for co-writing children's books about the dangers of gang life. An award-winning television movie starring Jamie Foxx, "Redemption," was based on his life.

Schwarzenegger, in dealing with the two previous clemency requests, denied a hearing last year for Kevin Cooper, whose execution was later stayed by a federal appeals court, and held a public hearing this year for Donald Beardslee but declined to spare him.

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[PRISON OUT TO OFFSET INMATE'S GOOD PRESS](#)

<http://www.cnn.com/2005/US/11/17/crips.execution.ap/index.html>

SAN QUENTIN, California (AP) -- As Crips co-founder Stanley Tookie Williams tries to stave off execution next month, California prison officials have launched an unusual counterattack against the notion that he has redeemed himself behind bars.

The corrections department earlier this month posted a news release on its Web site about the upcoming execution, detailing Williams' crimes and asserting that he has continued to be a gang leader while on death row at San Quentin Prison.

San Quentin spokesman Vernell Crittendon, speaking on behalf of the department, went further in an interview last week, saying he suspects Williams is orchestrating gangland crimes from his cell.

"I just don't know that his heart is changed," Crittendon said.

Williams, 51, has been behind bars since 1979, when he shot and killed four people during two robberies in Los Angeles. He has been on death row since 1981 and is set to die by injection December 13 in what could be the biggest death-row cause celebre in California since capital punishment was reinstated in 1978.

Celebrity supporters

He and a childhood friend founded the Crips in 1971 in Los Angeles. In the years that followed, the gang did battle

with its main rival, the Bloods, for territory and control of the drug trade, leaving hundreds of people dead. Hundreds of offshoots and copycat gangs with thousands of members have emerged across the nation.

Williams' supporters contend he has made amends for his crimes, and they are pleading with Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger to spare his life.

In prison, Williams has gained international acclaim for writing children's books about the dangers of gang life. He has been nominated repeatedly for the Nobel Peace Prize. And he has attracted a cadre of celebrity supporters, including Jamie Foxx, who played Williams in a TV movie, "M*A*S*H" actor Mike Farrell and rapper Snoop Dogg, who is scheduled to appear at a rally Saturday outside the prison.

The Los Angeles District Attorney's office is expected to respond to Williams' clemency request this week. But Los Angeles Police Department spokeswoman April Harding said there is no evidence of any illegal gang activity on Williams' part.

"None," she said. "His name doesn't come up."

Williams supporters called the prison system's allegations ridiculous.

"What troubles me about the devaluing of Stan's work and its impact on many low-income youngsters ... is they're saying, 'We don't care if Stanley Tookie Williams could help another 5,000, 10,000 or 100,000 kids,' " said Barbara Becnel, Williams' spokeswoman.

In his 2004 memoir, "Blue Rage, Black Redemption," Williams said that his gangster life ended in 1992 and that he knew prison officials "would try at every turn to discredit me."

'Trying to drum up business for death row'

State Sen. Gloria Romero, a Los Angeles Democrat, called the corrections department's allegations an effort to malign Williams and an abuse of power.

"I do see it as a very serious offense and one that is intended to help the governor make up his mind," she said. Schwarzenegger, who has not spared anyone's life on death row, has not said whether he will schedule a clemency hearing.

On its Web site, the corrections department said of Williams: "By 1994, having firmly entrenched himself as the leader of the Crips at San Quentin, he wielded his power as his lieutenants and other minions were dispatched to carry out his objectives." The paragraph was removed a day after it was posted following a call from The Associated Press.

Daniel Vasquez, who was warden at San Quentin from 1983 to 1993 and wrote a letter supporting clemency for the most recent death row inmate executed, said he had never seen such an inflammatory statement in a news release from the prison.

"It's like they're trying to drum up business for death row," he said.

But Crittendon, who has worked at the prison nearly 30 years and regularly deals with Williams, said Williams has refused to formally renounce his gang membership and submit to "debriefing" -- that is, inform on his old friends. Crittendon also cited Williams' willingness to share an exercise yard with Crips and his unusually large prison bank account. And he said Williams' younger son is a trouble-making Crips member in prison for murder.

"A con always will say one thing to you while the whole time he has another agenda," the San Quentin spokesman said. "I'm concerned that possibly this marketing that's going on ... leads the public to hear the words but not to see that sleight of hand."

In August 2004 a committee of prison officials noted Williams' prior gang activity but said it had not seen any recent gang involvement, according to a report cited by Becnel. The committee commended Williams for his positive steps in the past 10 years.

In his book, Williams addressed nearly all of Crittendon's accusations, saying that informing on gang members would "rip my dignity out of my chest," that he gets along with everyone in the yard, and that his son is trying to change his ways.

As for his bank account, Crittendon said that while other high-profile inmates -- such as Scott Peterson, sentenced to death earlier this year for killing his wife and their unborn son -- usually get checks for \$10 or \$20, Williams receives

checks for \$500 or \$1,000 at a time.

Becnel said people who appreciate Williams' work send him money.

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