

These days one hears little about the Black Liberation Struggle...

Its message seems like a whisper amidst the noisy rhetoric of the current debate between liberal and conservatives. In contemporary politics, there seems to be little difference between both political parties in regards to issues concerning Blacks in America. On one hand, there exists the pro-rich, anti-poor, veiled white supremacist Republican Party; while on the other hand, there exist a party willing to concede to the right wing on every issue that's crucial to Black folks' survival. Our Struggle is falsely defined in terms of affirmative action and welfare reform. And slavery is now referred to as the "criminal justice" system.

Veterans of the Black Liberation Movement, which was at its height in the 1960s and 70s, know now, as they knew then, that the struggle of Black people in America is for self-determination, economic justice, and decent living conditions. Our task is to bring to an end the current unjust social and economy order which is run in the interest of a wealthy 1% of the population.

A Foot Soldier in His Youth

Since the mid-1960s the Black Liberation Movement has confronted the establishment on many levels and with varying degrees of intensity. Shakur was one among thousands of young Black people who stepped forward to confront the system. As a student at Shimer Junior High School in Jamaica, Queens, New York, Shakur worked with Sekou Odinga (aka Nathaniel Burns), former Black Panther and now a Prisoner of War) to form a student organization and demanded that Black history be included in the curriculum. At the time, young brothers and sisters on the block were the leaders and foot soldiers of the struggle and had a high degree of political consciousness and commitment to their people. That same commitment is emerg-

ing in today's youth.

At age 15, he met the Black revolutionary educator, Herman Ferguson- a Junior High School principal- who was to have a major influence on New York City Black youth.

As a teenager, Mutulu had already concluded that the number one priority for Black people in America was the struggle for self-determination- total control over every aspect of their lives. He believed Blacks were owed land and reparations for 250 years of slavery and another 100 years under a white supremacist social and political system. He joined the Republic of New Africa and later worked with the New African People's Organization to pursue the goals of establishing an independent Black nation in the southern United States.

Advocate of Alternative Health

In 1970, Shakur was asked to teach political education to clients of the Lincoln Hospital Detoxification Program. This program was founded by Black and Latino revolutionary youth in the South Bronx, NY. Shortly after starting there, two of his children were badly injured in an auto accident. Looking for alternative treatment, he approached activists of the I Wor Kuen, a revolutionary Chinese organization, that ran a health service for the older Chinese community. An Asian woman, who was an acupuncturist, cured his children using traditional Chinese Medicine.

Discussions with the Chinese and sessions with addicts at Lincoln Detox showed Shakur similarities between the struggles of China against opium addiction, which had been brought there by the British colonizers and the struggles in the Black community against the genocidal drug traffic recently revealed to have been orchestrated by the US Central intelligence Agency (CIA).

Shakur attended the Quebec Acupuncture Association where he obtained a Doctorate in Acupuncture. He used his skills to treat nar-

cotics addiction and eventually became Director of the Lincoln Detox Acupuncture Research Unit.

After losing a legal battle with the New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation over the control of the Lincoln Hospital Detoxification Program, Dr. Shakur and several other acupuncturists were transferred out of the program. As is true with many programs and ideas developed by young revolutionaries, the treatment of addiction with acupuncture continues at several public hospital sites in New York City but the names of the pioneers are not mentioned in the official history.

Shakur and several comrades later found the Harlem Institute of Acupuncture where community residents received holistic health care and students were trained in acupuncture and other healing arts and sciences.

A Multi-Faceted Revolutionary

Dr. Shakur's contributions were not limited to health care. In the spirit of a true community activist, he supported tenant housing, fought along side parent organizations for control of their children's educational destiny and participated in every significant struggle in the Black community.

In response to the revolutionary practice of Shakur and thousands like him, the US government implemented the Counterintelligence Program (COINTELPRO) to destroy the Black Liberation Movement. As a result of this vicious war against the Black Liberation Movement, prominent Black Leaders like Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, Jr. were targeted and assassinated and many lesser known activists were slain or imprisoned. Many remain in prison today.

Mutulu Shakur- a freedom fighter who had been targeted by COINTELPRO- was captured by the Joint Terrorist Task Force in February, 1986 and was placed on trial. The government claimed Shakur was part of an armed under-

ground unit that conspired to free BLA solidier Assata Shakur from prison. He was also charged with conspiring to carry out several armored car and bank "robberies" (or revolutionary expropriations) the proceeds of which, the governments alleged, were used to support political activities. He was convicted under questionable circumstances and was sentenced to 60 years in federal prison. His revolutionary nationalist spirit remains strong despite continuing efforts by prison official to crush him.

Dr. Shakur is the father of six children. His son, Tupac Shakur, known to many because of his music, was assassinated in 1996. Tupac Shakur's mother was also a target of COIN-TELPRO and stood trial in the infamous Black Panther 21 case. The Federal Bureau of Prisons with law enforcement made every effort to keep Dr. Shakur separated from his son, Tupac.



"The struggle to free Black political prisoners is an integral part of the Black struggle. Victory for our people and our struggle will not be complete unless they are set free"

-Mutulu Shakur

Free Mutulu Shakur

You can write to him at:

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YOU CAN HELP BY GIVING POLITICAL PRISONERS A VOICE AND VISIBILITY

Mutulu Shakur



Black Liberation Army
and
People's Warrior

