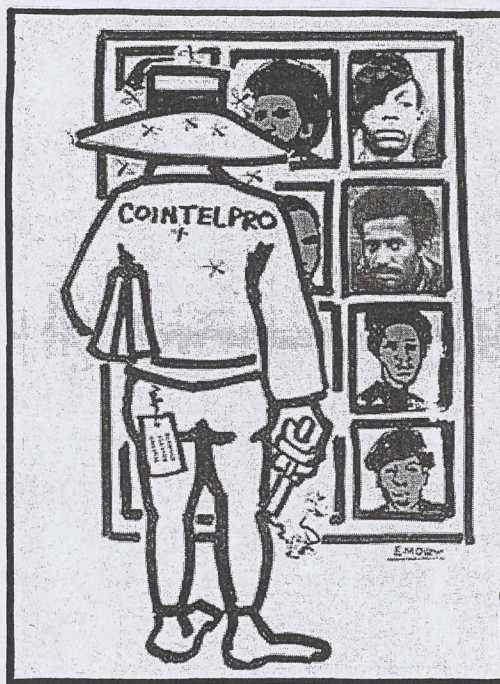


Criminalizing 'Panther Love' and the New Wave COINTELPRO tactics in Texas prisons

2018/02/03 • by moorbey

*by Keith 'Comrade Malik' Washington, Deputy Chairman of the
New Afrikan Black Panther Party Prison Chapter, Texas Region*

"Panther Love is revolutionary love, liberating love, world-changing love. Panther Love is a concrete expression of our social commitment to the masses as well as a moral stance that breaks free of the old and backward social relations in the Black sub-culture of criminality and gang warfare and in the 'perfumed circles' of the Black bourgeoisie." – from "Mass Line of the New Afrikan Black Panther Party" by Shaka Sankofa Zulu, Chairman, NABPP-PC [i]



Revolutionary greetings, comrades.

We continue to see and hear lies coming from U.S. law enforcement and intelligence agencies in respect to their hyper-surveillance of groups and individuals who are New Afrikans and who engage in constitutionally protected activities such as protests, rallies, marches, litigation and political efforts.

Many mistakenly believe that the fascist oppressors within the U.S. are only interested in disrupting the New Afrikan organizations in free society. With this essay, I seek to give a detailed explanation into the ongoing campaign of retaliation and harassment the members of the NABPP-PC have been subjected to.

We are not Black separatists

Kevin "Rashid" Johnson is the minister of defense for the NABPP-PC. Prior to Rashid's arrival in Texas in June 2013, I had read about his experiences with the Virginia Department of Corrections. One day I was studying a volume of the journal *Socialism and Democracy* and in the footnotes to an essay written by Rashid, I noticed a report by the Virginia State Police and the Virginia Fusion Center.

I was very alarmed because these Fusion Centers were established post 9/11 in order to promote the sharing of intelligence information among federal, state and local law enforcement in the manufactured war against Islam and terrorism.

In other words, you usually only hear the words "Fusion Center" in the context of counter-terrorism investigations. I read the analysis provided by the Virginia State Police and they had classified and falsely labelled Rashid as a Black separatist.

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For clarification's sake, I state for the record that the NABPP-PC is an above-ground political organization that embraces socialist and communist doctrines. We are anti-racists, anti-imperialists and we do not promote, condone or sanction illegal activity. We do believe in self-defense and we do believe in serving the people with a special focus on the incarcerated lumpen in the U.S., Europe, Asia, the Middle East and Africa.

We are abolitionists who can't wait to see the demise of the prison-industrial slave complex. Our broader vision is to create conditions where a dictatorship of the proletariat becomes a stark reality within the United States and throughout the world.

It is clear that the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) had a special interest in Rashid and the NABPP-PC, but the \$6 million question is "why"?

Rashid spent a large amount of his time reporting on the barbaric conditions and heinous acts of abuse he witnessed and at times was subjected to at Wallens Ridge and Red Onion slave camps in Virginia. So what made Rashid such a "person of interest" to the pigs at the Fusion Center?

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I believe scholar and activist Angela Y. Davis may be able to shed some light on that as I quote from her essay, "Political Prisoners, Prisons and Black Liberation":

"Finally, a major catalyst for intensified political action in and around prisons has emerged out of the transformation of convicts, originally found guilty of criminal offenses, into exemplary political militants. Their patient educational efforts in the realm of exposing the specific oppressive structures of the penal system in their relation to the larger oppression of the social system have had a profound effect on their fellow captives." [ii]

This quote from Professor Davis does an incredible job of illuminating the real "Rashid" Johnson. However, what has happened is that DHS has collaborated with the State Police and various prison agencies throughout the U.S. in order to abuse their authority and discretion to make or create terrorism suspects out of prisoners who exercise their constitutionally protected free speech rights.

Since I took time to illuminate who and what Rashid is really about, let's take a closer look at the fascist pigs at DHS and see what they are about. Here is a quote from Department of Homeland Security spokesman S.Y. Lee in an email sent to the Intercept:

"The Department of Homeland Security fully supports the right of individuals to exercise their First Amendment rights and does not provide resources to monitor any specific planned or spontaneous protest, rally or public gathering." [iii]

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Well, I think Black Lives Matter, Occupy Wall Street and the Water Protectors at Standing Rock would agree that these are lies.

Most people who follow Rashid's work know that he is no longer here in Texas. After doing multiple exposés describing the untimely deaths of numerous prisoners who were housed at the Bill Clements Unit in Amarillo, Texas, Rashid was unceremoniously transferred out of Texas to Florida, where he continues his revolutionary journalism.

All eyes on me

Truthfully, as far as my situation is concerned, I knew something wasn't quite right when I was at the H.H. Coffield Unit in Tennessee Colony, Texas, in 2016.

I got serious about the Movement to Amend the 13th and End Prison Slavery in November of 2015. In March 2016, the San Francisco Bay View National Black Newspaper published my essay, "End Prison Slavery in Texas Now."^[iv] This was the first time I did a serious critique and analysis of the ultra-racist and bigoted prison agency known as the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (sic).

In April 2016, there were multiple work stoppages at various male and female prisons across Texas. When the dust settled, the prisoncrats and legislators were mad as hell. Who was stirring up our "Happy Slaves"?

The first move was made in May 2016 when the TDCJ-CID (Correctional Institutions Division) Director William Stephens retired. He was replaced by Lorie Davis. I soon discovered that Lorie Davis had vowed in her heart to place me in long-term solitary confinement.

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The first step was to find a snitch, or informant, who could get close to me and track my moves. They found a Muslim prisoner who I had befriended; we will call him "Big Boy." I was going to refer to him as "Big Man," but I decided that would be disrespectful to the original Big Man, Comrade Elbert Howard. No. This fool could not hold Comrade Elbert's jock strap, so we will stick with "Big Boy."

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Bruce Toney of the Office of Inspector General (OIG), Robert Grant of the TDCJ Security Threat Group Department along with members of the Joint Terrorism Task Force, FBI and DHS all wanted to know what Keith "Malik" Washington was up to.

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I spent most of the month of June 2016 in pre-hearing detention on the H-Line at Coffield. My status was Transient (Other), the "Other" was a special indicator that I was the subject of an investigation but no-one would say who was investigating me. Then something extraordinary happened.

On or around June 21, 2016, Big Boy was visited by STG, OIG and DHS officials from Huntsville, Texas. When I pressed him about the meeting, he broke down and said, "They were wanting to know about you, Malik, but I didn't tell them nothing."

OK, so here I am in lock-up under some mysterious investigation – the pigs come see my closest comrade on the unit? Very strange.

Things got even stranger from there. One week later, after Big Boy met with his new handlers, I am released from lock-up. I am given a job on the utility squad and moved to a laid-back housing unit called N-Wing, or Nancy-Wing, at Coffield.

Would you like to guess who was housed directly above me on Nancy-Wing? That's right, my respected comrade, Big Boy, the informant.

While all this was going on, other dedicated members of the Incarcerated Workers Organizing Committee (IWOC) were being subjected to "New Wave" COINTELPRO tactics.

Imam Siddique Abdullah Hasan was targeted by a Muslim volunteer in Ohio who falsely claimed that my brother in struggle asked him to bring in some type of explosive device.

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You see, Comrades, there was a coordinated effort by the U.S. government to disrupt the organizing of the 2016 national prison work strike.

Specific prisoners were targeted. After the Sept. 9 work stoppage began, the tactics of repression became even harsher. Kinetik Justice of the Free Alabama Movement was set up to be assassinated by the Alabama Department of Corrections. The method they used was withholding Kinetik's high blood pressure medication and isolating him in such a manner that his free world support network couldn't reach him.

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Kinetik survived. However, we must understand that as we proceed in this protracted struggle to abolish legalized slavery in Amerika that the prison agencies and U.S. government, especially the FBI, DHS and JTTF (Joint Terrorism Task Force), will collude and conspire with each other in order to harm our most advanced political elements. It may be that we have become blind to the sinister nature of the capitalist ruling class and their dupes inside the labor aristocracy.

Abolishing prison slavery has been characterized as a threat to national security, and those of us who have defined ourselves as dedicated freedom fighters have been labelled as domestic terrorists.

Lorie Davis, the director of TDCJ's Correctional Institution Division, hatched a plan to take me out. She had me placed in positions where I would face attacks and threats to my personal safety and security.

Days before Sept. 9, 2016, she had a white supremacist placed in my cell who had attempted to decapitate a Texas senator's wife. Then she had me transferred to the Telford Unit in New Boston, Texas. I was there only a month when I was placed on a bus in which there were three bloody assaults. I had no enemies on the bus, which was headed to the Eastham Unit in Lovelady, Texas. Once on Eastham, things really began to develop into a full-fledged counter-intelligence operation.

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Lorie Davis, Robert Grant, Eva Shiver and Bruce Toney have shown themselves to be rabid racists and white supremacists. They orchestrated the fabricated riot case and placed me in ad-seg (solitary confinement). They created a bogus Security Threat Group designation and confirmed me as an STG, and then they attempted to infringe upon my religious rights by fabricating an arbitrary Escape Risk designation.

And most people would think that this would be enough for them, but it wasn't.

Big Boy, the informant, had done such a good job slithering up close to me at the Coffield Unit that TDCJ, OIG, DHS and STG decided to run him at me again, but this time I was ready.

In March 2017 I discovered that Big Boy had arrived at the Eastham Unit in Lovelady, Texas. I smelled a funky-ass rat.

I really want you to understand the high-level collusion we are dealing with here.

Coffield Unit and Eastham Unit are in totally separate regions within the framework of the corrupt and racist TDCJ prison agency. So this move operation had to be coordinated by TDCJ State Classification Committee members in Huntsville, Texas – employees Bonnie Fiveash, Tara Burson, Region I Director Tony O'Hare and the sinister and conniving Lorie Davis. All of them engaged in an elaborate conspiracy to violate my civil rights.

And what exactly am I guilty of? Striving hard to achieve the following goals:

- Pay for all Texas prisoners and a clear path toward freedom
- Clean and safe water supplies for prisoners and guards
- Eradication of black mold in Texas prisons
- Proper treatment for mentally ill prisoners
- Closing down these ad-seg units and abolishing the death penalty in Texas.

At the end of the day, these are my perceived "crimes" against the state.

If there is one thing that I want everyone to learn this Black History Month, it's that the FBI in Amerika executed and assassinated our most promising and gifted Black leaders during the Civil Rights Era. The FBI continues to target Black organizations, Black individuals, our communities and neighborhoods. Their tentacles have stretched into departments of corrections all over the United States.

While here at Eastham Unit, Big Boy reported to Security Threat Group Sgt. Richard Stower, another bona fide white supremacist who feigned ignorance when I questioned him about his spy tactics. Eastham Unit prison officials utilized Big Boy to infiltrate the Muslim community in order to place my brothers in harm's way.

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With the help of the National Lawyers' Guild Prisoners Legal Advocacy Network, I have been able to expose Lorie Davis and all of her dupes who work in the prison administration at Coffield, Eastham and throughout TDCJ.

What we have discovered in Texas, Ohio, Alabama, California, New York and all points in between is a program not much different from the FBI's original COINTELPRO activities which sought to "expose, disrupt, misdirect, discredit or otherwise neutralize the activities of black nationalist, hate-type organizations and groupings, their leadership, spokesmen, membership and supporters, and to counter their propensity for violence and disorder." [v]
Comrades, this is not my language, this is from J. Edgar Hoover's FBI, a memo from 1967. The targeted organization was the original Black Panther Party.

Fifty-one years later, and nothing has changed at the FBI. The FBI is still targeting New Afrikans who engage in civil rights and human rights activism. Christopher Wray, the current director of the FBI, has created a new "label" for us: Black Identity Extremists. As with most police agencies in Amerika, the FBI is full of bigots and white supremacists; they just have advanced college degrees.

I want to be crystal clear about a few points: One is that there are white folks in Amerika and Europe who have strongly supported the right to self-determination of Black people, Palestinians and women. Not every white person is a racist, but we must call out those who are and isolate them. Activists and freedom fighters of all stripes must stop being naïve. Our survival depends on it.

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I have said this once and I will say it a million times if necessary: Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors and Opal Tometi, co-founders of Black Lives Matter, have never promoted, condoned or sanctioned the use of violence in their fight to protect the lives of Black people. So the question presents itself: "Why has the FBI and the Department of Justice attempted to target them and demonize and ridicule their message?"

However, it is not just BLM that the FBI is targeting. The IWW and IWOC, the Free Alabama Movement, Amend the 13th, the New Abolitionist Movement, the Black Riders Liberation Party, the National Black United Front, the New Afrikan Black Panther Party, the Free Ohio Movement, and even the young soldier of the people, Kwame "Beans" Shakur in Indiana, have all become targets of the "new wave" COINTELPRO tactics.

To be aware is to be alive

Bennu Hannibal Ra-Sun, formerly known as Melvin Ray, is a key spokesperson for the Free Alabama Movement who has crafted an amazing strategy for the way forward. I highly recommend every imprisoned and free world abolitionist read and study Bennu's essay: "We are all bound by the same chain." [vi]

To our free world allies and supporters, I leave you some words of wisdom from Maurice Mitchell, an organizer with Blackbird. Mitchell says: "This continuing surveillance serves not only to keep tabs on Black activists, but also to deter them from pushing forward. Surveillance is a tool of fear. When the police are videotaping you at a protest or pulling you over because you're a well-known activist – all of these techniques are designed to create a chilling effect on people's organizing. This is no different. The level of surveillance, however, isn't going to stop us. After all, we organize because our lives depend on it." [vii]

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Fifty years ago, this beautiful, intelligent and passionate Black man, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., attempted to organize and educate all of us in respect to his "dream." I haven't forgotten about the suicide letter the FBI crafted aimed at Brother Martin. I haven't forgotten about the tape the pigs played for our sister Coretta Scott King hoping to destroy the bond between her and her husband. And when every other tactic of the FBI failed, they conspired to have Dr. King murdered in Memphis.

Yes, I see you, FBI, but do you see me? I represent a new generation of freedom fighters who have learned from the mistakes of our fallen ancestors, and even if you succeed in killing me, another wiser and stronger comrade will take my place.

If anything I have said helps to awaken just one free world person or imprisoned human being and directs that person to action against this imperialist system I will have done my job.

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I leave you with the words of Bennu Hannibal Ra-Sun: "In 2016, we had one nationwide event on Sept. 9. In 2017, we had one nationwide event on Aug. 19. Now what? The government doesn't take off. Our suffering goes on daily.

Nationwide. Thus, it's time for our planning and organizing of campaigns to expand, too. ... We have to be mobilizing and organizing people around a singular, clear cut plan to solve the problem." [viii] [8]

I send a clenched fist salute to all sisters and brothers in the struggle. Dare to struggle, dare to win. All power to the people.

To whom it may concern: The person referred to in this essay as "Big Boy" is a Texas inmate named Michael Lewis, also calling himself Mustafa. He is an agent provocateur and an enemy to the movement. Please proceed with caution when encountering this individual. You have been warned.

Your Brother and Comrade, Malik

Keith "Malik" Washington is a co-founder and chief spokesperson for the End Prison Slavery in Texas Movement, a proud member of the Incarcerated Workers Organizing Committee and Deputy Chairman of the New Afrikan Black Panther Party Prison Chapter. Malik has been instrumental in calling for the abolition of legalized slavery in Amerika and is very active in the Fight Toxic Prisons campaign. You can view his work at comrademalik.com or you can write him directly at Keith "Comrade Malik" Washington, 1487958, Eastham Unit, 2665 Prison Rd. 1, Lovelady, Texas 75851.

[i] "What Is Pantherism Ideology: As We March Towards Building Base Areas of Social, Cultural and Political Revolution in the 21st Century?" by Chairman Shaka Sankofa Zulu, "Mass Line of the New Afrikan Black Panther Party"

[ii] "Political Prisoners, Prisons, and Black Liberation" by Angela Y. Davis, historyisaweapon.com

[iii] "Exclusive: Feds Regularly Monitored Black Lives Matter Since Ferguson" by George Joseph, Intercept

[iv] Ibid.

[v] "The COINTELPRO Papers: Documents from the FBI's Secret Wars Against Dissent in the United States" by Ward Churchill and Kim Vander Wall, Chapter 5, "COINTELPRO and the Black Liberation Movement"

[vi] "We are all bound by the same chain, Part IV: Campaign to Redistribute the Pain 2018" by Bennu Hannibal Ra-Sun, formerly known as Melvin Ray, Free Alabama Movement, SF Bay View

[vii] "Exclusive: Feds Regularly Monitored Black Lives Matter Since Ferguson" by George Joseph, Intercept

[viii] "We are all bound by the same chain, Part IV: Campaign to Redistribute the Pain 2018" by Bennu Hannibal Ra-Sun, formerly known as Melvin Ray, Free Alabama Movement, SF Bay View

Source: Criminalizing 'Panther Love' and the New Wave COINTELPRO tactics in Texas prisons