LIBERATION OR GANGSTERISM: FREEDOM OR SLAVERY



BY RUSSELL MAROON SHOATS

"Each generation must, out of relative obscuity, discover its mission - fulfill it or betray it."

***The Wretched of the Earth*, Frantz Fanon**

My name is Russell (Maroon) Shoats, and I am a New African Political Prisoner of War, who at this moment is serving a prison sentence at SCI Greene in Waynesburg, Penna. I was originally locked up in January of 1972, and have since spent over 25 years in 15 different state, county, and federal prisons, jails, and a maximum security prison/mental institution ... Over 17 of these years were spent in the "holes" of these various facilities locked down for 23 or more hours daily.

I was born in Philadelphia, PA., in August of 1943, one of 12 children in the household of Gladys & Russell Shoats. I attended school there until the age of 15, after which I was in and out of reform schools and youth institutions until the age of 18 mainly due to gang related activities. These gang activities, though not drug related as the bulk of similar activities are today, still had the same root causes of lack of comprehensive youth oriented programs in the schools and neighborhoods, coupled with high unemployment and police repression in the New African communities.

I married twice and became the father of 7 children between the years of 1964 and 1970. During the early to middle 1960's, I became increasingly politically aware and active in the New African liberation movement. I was a founding member of The Black Unity Council, a Philadelphia grouping that eventually merged with the Philadelphia Chapter of the Black Panther Party in 1969.

In August of 1970, at the height of the nationwide repression of the New African liberation movement, I became a fugitive after a Philadelphia policeman was killed and another was wounded in a retaliatory attack on a Philadelphia police station. In response to the heightened repression of the New African liberation movement in general, and the unjustified killing of a New African youth by the repressive police in that local community, from August of 1970 until January of 1972, the date

of my capture and arrest, I was active on the armed front of the New African Liberation Army. All of my actions and activities during this period were in direct response to, and in direct support of the movement's activities. I was tried and convicted for the attack on the police station and sentenced to Life-Plus Imprisonment.

In September of 1977, myself and three other New African Political Prisoners of War liberated ourselves from the state prison at Huntingdon, Pennsylvania. Two of these brothers were recaptured and a third was killed during the escape. However, I remained at large for a month, in the teeth of a massive "slave style" hunt by local, state and federal forces, who had also recruited large numbers of the local rural white populace to help in their search.

From my capture in October of 1977, until November of 1989, I was kept in various "holes" in numerous state, county, and federal prisons, and a maximum security prison/mental institution. During this period I was locked down daily at the state prisons at Huntingdon, Pittsburgh, Camp Hill, Dallas, Rockview, and Graterford, Pennsylvania, as well as the Allegheny, Wayne, Washington, Lackawanna, Montgomery, and Philadelphia county prisons and the US penitentiaries at Lewisburg, PA and Leavenworth, Kansas.

In 1979, I was forcibly transferred to the maximum security prison/mental institution at Waymart, PA known as "Fairview." During my over one year stay at this facility I was forcibly drugged and on one occasion was hospitalized from a hospital induced overdose of these drugs.

In March of 1980, myself and another New African Political Prisoner of War were able to liberate ourselves from this institution after a female New African activist smuggled a revolver and sub-machine gun into the institution for our use. Three days later all three of us were captured after a gun battle with local, state and county police, and F.B.I. agents.

In the wake of the historic Camp Hill rebellion, during October of 1989, at the state prison at Camp Hill, Pennsylvania, I was transferred from the state prison at Dallas, Pennsylvania, to the U.S. Penitentiary at Lewisburg, PA, and then to the U.S. Penitentiary at Leavenworth, Kansas. Although I had no part in this rebellion (having been at Dallas at the time) I was nevertheless singled out by the prison administration to be transferred over 1,000 miles from family, supporters, and friends with a view towards ultimately having me confined at the notorious federal prison at Marion, Illinois.

While being kept on 23 hours a day lockdown at Leavenworth, during November of 1989, my relatives and supporters mounted a campaign to reveal the lies and falsified records the Pennsylvania prison administration had used to implicate me in the Camp Hill rebellion, which was used as a basis for my transfer to Leavenworth and there to be evaluated for placement at Marion, Illinois. These efforts were successful and I was finally released to the general prison population in December of 1989.

Since June of 1991, I'm now being held on 23 hour lockdown at Dallas and Waynesburg Pennsylvania state institutions, where I remain a committed New African freedom fighter, who will not rest until the New African peoples are free from oppression, and a free and self-governing nation.

Maroon

Things to Read

1. *The Wretched of the Earth*, Frantz Fanon
2. *Black Brothers Inc., The Violent Rise of Philadelphia's Black Mafia*, (?)
3. *Monster: The Autobiography of a L.A. Gang Member*, Sanyika Shakur
4. *Dark Alliance*, Gary Webb
5. *Lost History*, Robert Parry
6. *Down by the River*, (?)
7. *Inspector General's First and Final reports on Iran-Contra and the Illegal Drug Trade*, CIA's official website
8. *We Are Our Own Liberators*, Jalil Muntaquim

Liberation Or Gangsterism: Freedom Or Slavery

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Introduction

Within two generations the youth of this country have come full circle. Starting off in 1955, being driven by two major motivations; the acquiring of enough education or apprenticeships, or the use of their unskilled labor or *street smarts* to land "good" jobs or establish *hustles*, to make as much money and obtain as many material trappings as possible; And, secondarily, to use the education, apprenticeships, unskilled labor, street smarts, jobs, hustles and the material trappings provided by them to win a measure of *respect* and *dignity* from their peers and society in general. Thereby, simultaneously learning to *respect themselves* as individuals of self-worth, and not simply eating, sleeping, laboring and sexual beings.

The First Wave: 1955 - 1980, circa

The Civil Rights Movement in the South successfully motivated Black, Puerto Rican, Euro-Amerikan, Native Amerikan, Chicano-Mexicano Indigenous and Asian youth to use their time, energies, creativity and imaginations to discover their true self-worth and earn the respect of the entire world, while struggling towards even broader goals that were not measured by one's material possessions. And over time, each segment either cheered on , supported, worked in solidarity with and/or discovered their common interests and closely linked *missions* connected to broader goals.

Thus Black youth elevated the Civil Rights Movement to the *Black Power* and *Black Liberation Movements*. Puerto Rican youth energized their elders ongoing struggle to win independence for their home island. Euro-Amerikan youth attacked the lies, hypocrisy and oppression their parents were training them to uphold in the schools, society and overseas. Native Amerikan youth were returning to their suppressed ancestral ways and fighting to regain control over some of the land; and Asian youth were struggling to overcome a system and culture that had always used and abused them.

Indeed, all of them came to clearly see that neither education, jobs, money, hustles or material trappings could - by themselves - win them the victories they needed, or the *new type* of dignity and respect they deserved.

Moreover, from 1955 until 1975 circa, these youth joined, formulated, led and supported struggles - worldwide - against racial oppression and bigotry, colonialism, oppression of women and youth. Thus, winning themselves the respect, admiration and gratitude of the world's *oppressed*, as well as amongst their peers. Furthermore, in addition to becoming people that societies must take seriously, as positive contributors that had much to give and were willing to sacrifice to achieve goals; youth who were more egalitarian than their parents; youth who were capable of imagining a better world and fighting to realize it - while still remaining youthful and having a good time while doing it: All in all, earning them a much deserved place in history.

Yet, here we are 30 years later, and the youth nowadays are ridiculed and have been stripped of that hard earned *freedom, self-respect* and *dignity*, being told - over and over - that the only way to regain it is to *again* acquire education, skills, good jobs, or the right hustle(s); thereby, once again to acquire as much money and material things as one can in order to *again* win respect and dignity from one's peers and society - and thereby begin to start loving oneself, and seeing oneself as more than simply an eating, sleeping, working and sexual animal.

How the Hell did we get back to 1955?!

First off, let me make clear that even with all of the *glorious strides* that youth made within the *First Wave*, they were not the only ones fighting for radical and in many cases revolutionary changes. In fact, more than anything, they were usually only the tip of the *spear*; the shock troops of a global struggle, motivated by youthful energy and impatience, with no time or temperament for elaborate theories, rushing forward into the fray, ill prepared for the *tricks* that would eventually overwhelm them.

So, to understand what happened, we must examine some of the main "tricks" used to slow down, misdirect, control and defeat them. And without a point, a spear loses all of its advantages.

Strategic Tricks Used Against the Youth

Understanding these tricks, their various guises and refinements is the key to everything. You will never really understand what happened to get us to this point, or be able to really move forward until you master their recognition and devise ways to defeat them

They were and remain:

1.) Co-option

2.) Glamorization of Gangsterism

3.) Separation from the Most Advanced Elements

4.) Indoctrination In Reliance On Passive Approaches

5) Raw Fear

Co-option was used extensively to trick just about all of the First Wave youth into believing that they had *won the war*. Strategically, amongst every named segment of the youth; university students to *lower-class communities*, billions were made available - supposedly for these youth to determine what should be done to carry out far reaching changes, while all along being expertly monitored and subtlety coaxed further and further away from their most radical and advanced elements, mainly through control of the largess, which ultimately was part of the *ruling* class foundations and government and corporate strategy of defeating the youth *with sugar-coated bullets*.

In time, consequently, substantial segments of these previously rebellious youth found themselves fully absorbed and neutralized by either directly joining the foundations, sub-groups, the corporations, university faculties, the "*approved*" community groups or by becoming full-fledged junior partners after winning control of thousands of previously out of reach political offices and appointments.

And for all intents and purposes, that same trick is still being used today.

Glamorization of Gangsterism, however, was then and continues to be the most harmful trick played against the lower class segments, and the males - in particular - were then and continue to be the most susceptible to this gambit; especially when used opposite prolonged exposure to raw fear!

Let me illustrate by way of two historic groups that presently enjoy nothing less than "*icon*" status amongst just about everyone aware of them; yet, whose "documented history" clearly shows how that trick is played - and continues to be played throughout this country. Therefore, the following is a brief - but clear - history of how the original Black Panther Party was bludgeoned and intimidated to the point until its key leader(s) "*consciously*" steered the group into accepting the Glamorization of Gangsterism, because it was less of a threat to the ruling class interests, winning them a temporary respite from the Raw Fear those circles were leveling against them, but in the process "*totally*" destroying the organization. And, the Nation of Islam "connected" Black Mafia that had a different background, but against who the same two tricks were played, leaving in their wake a sordid tale of Black young men who were - again - turned from seeking to be *Liberators*, into ruthless oppressors of their own communities, never once engaging their real enemies and oppressors - the ruling class.

Hands down, the original Black Panther Party (B.P.P.) won more attention, acclaim, respect, support and sympathy than any other youth of their time. At the same time, nevertheless, they provoked more fear and worry in ruling class circles than any domestic group since Presidents Roosevelt, Truman and Eisenhower presided over the neutralization of the working class and the U.S. wing of the Communist Party. They were even more feared than the much larger Civil Rights Movement. According to the head of the F.B.I., they were "*the biggest threat to America.*" Albeit, that threat came from their ability to inspire other youth - both in the U.S. and globally - to act in similar ways.

Thus, there were *separate* BPP "style" formations amongst the Puerto Ricans - The Young Lords Party; the Chicano-Mexican Indyenous - the Brown Berets; Asians - I-Wor Kuen; Euro-Amerikans - Young Patriot Party and White Panther Party; even the elderly - Gray Panthers. Also there were literally hundreds of other similar, less known groups! In addition, internationally the BPP had an arm in Algeria that had the only official "Embassy" established amongst all of the other Afrikan, Asian and South Amerikan refugee groups seeking in that - then - revolutionary country. Astonishingly, they even spawned separate Black Panther Parties in India, the Bahamas and Israel!

On the other hand, the Nation Of Islam (N.O.I.) had been active since 1930. Yet, they also experienced a huge upsurge in membership in the same period, mainly due to the charismatic personality of Malcolm X and his aggressive recruitment techniques, which carried over after his assassination, fueled by the overall rebellious spirits of the youth looking for some groups who would lead them to fight against the system.

Therefore, there is a mountain of documents that clearly show that the highest powers in this country classified both groups as *Class A Threats*: Ones that they wanted to either neutralize or destroy, even musing that if that could be achieved, then they could use similar methods to defeat youth in the rest of the country. So how did they do it?

Against the B.P.P. they used a combination of co-option, glamorization of gangsterism, separation from the most advanced elements, indoctrination on reliance on passive approaches, and raw fear: *every trick in the book*

The ruling class's governmental, intelligence, legal and academic sources, fully alarmed at the growth and boldness of the B.P.P. and related groups, as well as its ability to win a level of global support, devised a strategy to split the B.P.P. and co-opt its more compliant elements, while at the same time moving to totally annihilate its more radical and revolutionary remainders. Plus, they knew that they had the upper hand, due to the youth and inexperience of the B.P.P. members, as well as their own deep well of resources and experience in using *counterinsurgency* techniques as early as against Marcus Garvey's U.N.I.A.; the Palmer Raids against Euro-Americans of an Anarchist or Left Socialist bent; the crushing of the I.W.W. and neutralization of other Socialists; their underground work that contributed to the defeat of Germany and Italy; their subsequent destruction of any real Communist power in Western Europe; their total domination and subjugation of the Caribbean - except Cuba - Central and South America - except for the fledgling guerrilla movements; and everything they had learned in their wars to replace the European colonial powers in Afrika and Asia.

Still, the B.P.P. had highly motivated cadre, imbued with fearlessness little known among domestic groups, and the ruling class and their henchmen were stretched thin, especially since the Vietnamese, Laotians and Cambodians were kicking their ass in South East Asia, and the freedom fighters in Guinea-Bissau and Angola also had their European allies - whom the U.S. supplied with the latest military hardware - on the run. So, although inexperienced, it still was a mixed bag, they still had *a fighting chance*.

The co-option depended upon them "*neutralizing*" the B.P.P. co-founder - and by then an *icon* - Huey P. Newton. Afterwards, using him - along with other methods - to *split* the B.P.P. and lead his wing along reformist lines, while *forcing* the still revolutionary wing into an all out armed fight before they were ready, hoping to either kill, jail, exile or break their will to resist and send them into ineffective hiding-out. Plus, even with their extraordinary status globally, no country seemed to want to risk the U.S.'s wrath by "openly" allowing the B.P.P. to train guerrilla units - something they could have circumvented in time.

So, surprisingly, Huey was allowed to leave jail with a still to be tried murder of a policeman charge pending. Thus, the government and courts had him on a short leash, and with it hoped to control his actions, although probably not through any direct agreements. And sadly, the still politically naive B.P.P. cadre and the other youth who looked up to him could imagine "*nothing*" but that "*they*" had "*forced*" his release - and veterans from those times still insist on clinging to such tripe!

Yet, it seems Newton thought otherwise, and since he was not prepared to go *underground* and join his fledgling Black Liberation Army (B.L.A.), he almost immediately began to follow a *reformist script*, completely at odds with his own earlier theories and writings, as well as at odds with basic principles that were being practiced

to good effect by oppressed people around the world. Even further, he used his almost complete control of the B.P.P. Central Committee to expel many veteran and combat-tested B.P.P. cadre, in imitation of the Stalinist and Euro-gangster posture he would later become infamous for, which involved an all-out shooting war to suppress any B.P.P. members who would not accept his *independently-derived reformist* policies.

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At the same time, on a parallel track, U.S. and local police intelligence agencies were using their - now - infamous COINTELPRO operation to provoke the split between Huey's dominated wing and other less compliant B.P.P. members; which finally occurred in 1971, after Huey's shooting war and purge forced scores of the most loyal, fearless and dedicated *above ground* B.P.P. members to go *underground* and join those other B.P.P. members who were *already* functioning there as the *offensive armed wing*: Panther Wolves, Afro-American Liberation Army and Black Liberation Army were all names they were known by, but the latter is the only one that would stick. Yet, the Black Liberation Army (B.L.A.) had already become a *confederation* of *clandestine guerrilla units*, of mostly Black Revolutionary Nationalists from any number of formations who were willing to accept the B.P.P.'s leadership, and who *also* accepted Huey Newton as *their Minister of Defense*, but, obviously Newton didn't see it that way.

Even more telling, it was later learned that Newton's expensive penthouse apartment - where he and other Central Committee members handled any number of sensitive B.P.P. issues - was under ongoing surveillance by intelligence agents who had another apartment down the hall. Thus, Newton and his faction were *encapsulated*, leaving them unable to follow anything *but* government sanctioned scripts; unless he/they went underground, which only occurred when Newton fled to Cuba after his gangster antics threatened the revoking of his release on the pending legal matters the government held over his head.

Added to that, the glamorization of gangsterism was something that various ruling class elements had begun to champion and direct towards the Black lower classes - in particular - especially after they saw how much attention the Black Arts Movement was able to generate. Indeed, they recognized it could be used to "*misdirect*" youthful militancy while still being hugely profitable. They had, in fact, *already* misdirected Euro-American and other youth with the James Bond, I-Spy, Secret Agent Man and other replacements for the "Old West/Cowboys and Indians" *racist crap*, so why not a "Black" counterpart? Thus was born the enormously successful *counter-insurgency genre* collectively known as the *Blacksploitation* movies; Shaft, Superfly, Foxxy Brown, Black Caesar and their like, accompanied by the *wannabe* crossovers like Starsky and Hutch, with the notorious Black *snitch* Huggie Bear: Psychological Warfare!

Follow the psychology: You can be "Black," cool, rebellious, dangerous, rich, have respect, women, cars, fine clothes, jewelry, an expensive home and *even stay high*; as long as you *don't fight the system - or their cops!* But if you don't go along with that script, then get ready to go back to the early days - with its shootouts with the cops, going to the graveyard, prison, on the run and exile! But you can still be cool, even as a Huggie Bear style snitch, and interestingly his buddy, modern day/futuristic *rat* Cipher, of the Matrix, who tried to betray ZION in return for a *fake* life as a rich, steak eating, movie star, and most importantly - no more fighting with the agents! Get it?

Plus, to bolster the government's assault, and to saddle the oppressed with a *Trojan Horse* that would strategically handicap them for decades to come, they began to *flood* their

neighborhoods with heroin, cocaine, marijuana, and "*meth*." Yes, all of these drugs had earlier been introduced to these areas by organized criminals - under local police and political protection - but now the *intelligence agencies* were using them in the same manner that alcohol had long ago been introduced to the Native Amerikans - and with the same intentions - and the later "foreign" trafficking in *opium* by the ruling class of Europe and this country: *to counter their propensities to rebel against outside control* - while profiting off their misery.

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So, Newton began to indulge in drugs as a way to try to relieve the stress of all that he was facing. He became a *drug addict*, plain and simple. That, however, didn't upset the newly constructed *gangster cool* that Hollywood, the ruling class and the government were pushing; although many B.P.P. cadre and other outsiders were very nervous about it, but Newton's control was by then too firmly fixed for anyone to challenge - but the B.L.A., who were by then in a full-blown guerrilla war with the government.

At the same time, the *reformist wing* of the B.P.P. did manage some noteworthy strides under its only female head, Elaine Brown. Newton's addiction/gangster lifestyle provoked exile caused him to - on his own, and without any consultation with the body - "appoint" Elaine to head the Party in his absence. An exceptionally gifted woman, she relied on an inner circle of female B.P.P. cadre, backed up by male Party enforcers to introduce some clear and consistent projects that helped the B.P.P. to become a real power locally. A *reformist paradigm*, though, that could not hope to achieve any of the radical/revolutionary changes called for earlier. In fact, within Newton's earlier writings, he had put the cadre on notice of a point in time when the *aboveground* would have to be supported by an *underground*, in order to keep moving forward. Yet, it was Newton who completely rejected that paradigm on being released from jail, although he still organized and controlled a heavily armed *extortion arm* called "The Squad," which consisted of B.P.P. cadre who terrorized Oakland's underworld with a belt-operated machine gun mounted on a truck bed, accompanied by a cadre who were ready for war!

In classical Euro-gangster fashion, Newton had turned to preying on segments of the community that he had earlier vowed to liberate. But of course, the police and government were safe from him. Since there was no connection to a *true* underground - the B.L.A. - there was no rational way to ratchet up the pressure on the police, government and the still fully operational system of ruling class control and oppression. Newton's B.P.P. had been reduced to completely *sanctioned methods*.

Consequently, we can see all of the government's props bearing fruit: Newton's faction of the B.P.P. had limited itself to both legal and *underworld* sanctioned methods: "Co-option" and "Indoctrination In Reliance On Passive Approaches" - *passive towards the status quo*. They fell for the trick of severing all relations with their armed underground - the B.L.A. - who would lead the B.P.P. if they got to the next level of struggle - open armed resistance to the oppressors: "*Separation From the Most Advanced Elements*." Through Newton's control, his faction was immersed in the "*Glamorization of Gangsterism*." Finally, Newton and his faction and activists from all of the other Amerikan radical and revolutionary groups *succumbed* to the terror and "*Raw Fear*" that was being leveled on them; all but those who waged armed struggle were killed, jailed, exiled, forced into hiding or into continuing their activism *under the radar*.

Epilogue on Huey P. Newton and His B.P.P. Faction

Elaine Brown guided their faction to support Newton and his family in exile while orchestrating the building up of enough political muscle in Oakland to assure Newton's return on favorable terms. Thus, he did return and eventually the charges were dropped. Nevertheless, Newton continued to use his iconic stature and renewed direct control of his faction to again play the *cool-political gangster* role, and like any drug addict who refuses to reform, he kept sliding down hill, even turning on old comrades and Elaine Brown, who had to flee in fear.

Sadly, for all practical purposes, that was the end of the *original Black Panther Party*: Checkmate!

Later, as is well known, Newton's continued drug addiction cost him his life; a sorry ending for a once great man.





Liberation Or Gangsterism: Freedom Or Slavery, Part II

by Russell Maroon Shoats

"When you grow up in situations like me and Cliff... there is a lot of respect for brothers like [drug lords] Alpo and Nicky Barnes, those major hustler-player cats. Cause they made it. They made it against society's laws. They were the kings of their own domain."

Never Drank the Cool-Aid: The Ivy League Counterfeiter, Cliff Evans

The "Original" Black Mafia (BM)

Albeit a touchy matter to many, it's an irrefutable fact that the original Black Mafia was first established in Philadelphia, PA, in the late 1960s, and has since seen its cancerous ideas duplicated, imitated and lionized by Black youth ever since. Moreover, although it's unclear how much the national Nation Of Islam (NOI) leadership knew or learned about the BM, there's no question of the local NOI's eventual absorption of the BM under Minister Jeremiah X Pugh. In fact, although the BM was originally just local "stick up kids," culled from neighborhood gangs, their being swallowed up by the NOI would eventually turn them into a truly powerful and terrifying criminal enterprise – completely divorced from *everything* that the NOI had stood for since its founding in 1930.

Sadly, most of the high level tricks were also used by the government and intelligence agencies to use them against the areas they came from; namely – co-option, the glamorization of gangsterism, separation from the more advanced elements and raw fear. Thus, it must be understood that although the NOI and BPP had different ideologies and styles, to most Black youth, *both* still held out the promise of helping them to attain what they most desired; self-respect, dignity and freedom.

Interestingly, the puritanical NOI's dealings with the founders of the BM were similar to that of the Catholic Church's historical relationship to the Italian Mafia. Meaning, the BM members who attended NOI religious services did so strictly on that basis, while still coming to the attention of the local NOI leadership as unusually good financial contributors. Within the lower class Black community being served, *everybody* knew that they were hustlers, stick-up kids, or both. So the same way the Italian Mafia would contribute huge sums to the Catholic Church, the BM would eventually do the same thing within Philly's Temple No. 12.

The national NOI, however, had been under close scrutiny and surveillance by intelligence agencies for decades. In fact, by the time of his death, the Honorable Elijah Muhammad, had in excess of *one million* pages of files within the archives of the FBI alone! Therefore, anyone who still believes that the assassination of Malcolm X *did not* have a *hidden* U.S. government hand behind it, has no clear idea of the threat the NOI was perceived to be at that time.

Consequently, the BM's financial contributors would have come to the attention of the intelligence agencies through their monitoring. Nevertheless, overshadowing all of that were the bloody assaults the FBI and local police were leveling against other radical and revolutionary Black groups, like the local and national BPP chapters and branches, the Revolutionary Action Movement (RAM) and scores of smaller formations. Indeed, FBI agents *first* tried to recruit Minister Pugh as a snitch against the local BPP by telling him that the BPP was out to get him and supplant the local NOI as competition for the Black youths' loyalties. Pugh, to his credit, didn't take the bait and also avoided getting his Temple No. 12 involved in a war with the BPP; although he had to suspect that his taking the *blood money* from the BM had also come to the attention of the FBI, and thus he was vulnerable.



Miraculously, around the same time, Minister Pugh's name was *removed* from the FBI's Security Index, which contained all of the country's top level threats. After Pugh's being on this list for years, and right after they filed a report on his refusal to be a snitch, why would they relax the pressure? Co-option! How did they think it would unfold? Was it to give Pugh and his temple – and their BM followers – enough rope to hang themselves, or to become addicted to a *game* that was ultimately controlled by their professed enemies – the U.S. government and their underlings – and thus turn the tables on Pugh and force him to be less radical, more compliant, and no longer a threat on the level of the BPP, RAM and company?

For the BM members, the glamorization of gangsterism fit right in. After all, why would a group of Black stick-up kids and gang members call themselves *The Black Mafia*? This was in the era of *Black Is Beautiful*, when millions of Blacks began wearing *Afros/Bushes* and Afrikan clothing and adopting *Afrikan names* – completely at odds with aping Italians! Why not name themselves the *Zulus*, *Watusis* or the *Mau Mau* – like every young street gang was doing? No, Hollywood's projection of gangsterism was getting through!

Consequently, within a couple of years, the BM would uniformly be recognized as expensively dressed, big hat wearing, Cadillac driving, *imitations of the Italian mafia*. And sadly, they turned countless numbers of street gang members, former RAM cadre and militants from dozens of other Philly groups, who were fighting oppression, into *pawns who were used to further destroy their own communities*.

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The third leg of separating them from the more advanced elements operated under cover of Pugh and other *insiders* continuing to preach Black Nationalist doctrines amongst the youth in the street gangs and within the prisons, never missing an opportunity to hold out the illusion that they could gain pride and respect – while fighting oppression – by joining what they believed was a *rebel* group that was only awaiting the *right time* to throw their lot in with the masses of Blacks who were waging non-violent or otherwise bloody battles from coast to coast and on the Afrikan continent. By *tricking* them into diverting their energies into gangsterism, Pugh and company were effectively *separating them from the more advanced elements*; albeit many, if not most, bought into the *rationale* that that their extortion and drug dealing proceeds were a *tax* that was to be used to build *The Nation*. A few years later, that would dubbed *drinking the Kool-Aid*, after Jim Jones and his CIA handlers tricked and forced hundreds of other blacks to their deaths. And undoubtedly, Huey had also tricked his people with a similar game, although decades later that was all shown to be completely false! Yes, that money "did" build and/buy some expensive homes, cars, clothing, women and drugs – as well as a few schools and businesses – but to *fight oppression* – please!

Then, the raw fear being leveled on the entire society had the most devastating effect on them also. Otherwise, how can one explain or account for hundreds – *if not thousands* – of BM *street soldiers*, fearless enough to cow Philly's long-established and ruthless Italian Mafia, and its other mobs, and most of its warring street gangs and independents; the BM that fielded *headhunters* who literally terrorized the city by decapitations – would in turn produce such a lackluster showing whenever it came to confronting *anyone in uniform*?

I'll tell you how: Their leadership had completely disarmed their fighting spirits by always pointing to the shootouts and gun battles that the BPP/BLA and other Blacks were known for and telling them *not to resist the police until they gave the order* – which never came. Comically, after the police and FBI had succeeded in suppressing, jailing, exiling and co-opting most of the BPP, BLA, RAM and others, then they *discovered the BM* and in turn attacked them with a vengeance – while none of the BM put up anything resembling *real* resistance, except to go on the lam; while Minister Jeremiah also made a 180 degree turn, becoming a snitch after being caught in a drug sting.

Thus, their legacy is one of a ruthless group of Black thugs, who have spawned similarly ruthless crews – notably Philly's *Junior Black Mafia (JBM)*and the latest clone, Atlanta's *Black Mafia Family*. But their most harmful effect comes from their deeds and mystique that has returned a huge segment of Black youth to believing that the only way to gain any respect and dignity is through being the best and most heartless hustler around: full circle from 1955.

Finally, I used the BPP/BLA and NOI/BM because they present the most well "documented" examples, although both are surrounded by so much *mythology* that a true analysis is almost never attempted, except by government intelligence sources,

who use their findings to refine, update and revise old tricks in order to continue to check and control this country's rebellious youth, while simultaneously persisting in oppressing the communities the occupy – in line with the ruling class's agenda.

Concurrently the middle and upper class youth – from all segments of the First Wave – allowed themselves *willy-nilly*, and with few exceptions, to be *fully co-opted* as the new managers of the system they had vowed to radically change. They became the champions of – and made a doctrine out of – the *necessity of always using and relying on passive and legal methods*, epitomized by their new *saint*, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

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The Second Wave: 1980-2005 circa

Thus, by 1980, the youth from the First Wave had, for all practical purposes, been *defeated*. Following which, they collectively descended into a long, debilitating, agonizing, escapist period characterized by pouring themselves into *partying*. Not discounting the fringe elements, who had their hands full trying to rebuild their sanity and families, or trying to go back to school or survive in prison or exile; everybody else seemed to be *dancing on the ceiling*, like shell-shocked vets of WWI and WWII and the post-traumatic-stress sufferers of the Vietnam War.

The most *misunderstood* victims, however, were that generations children; The Second Wave – from 1980-2005 circa. Albeit, those are the years when that generation either reached puberty or became young adults. Paradoxically, they were left in the dark about most of what had occurred before. They were instead left to the *tender mercies* of the *reformed*, but still rotten to the core and ruling-class-dominated schools, social institutions and cultural-propaganda machinery.

So, among all lower and working class segments of the youth, Coolio's *Gangsta's Paradise* fit the bill: They were *raised by the State*, either in the uncaring schools, juvenile detention centers and homes, or by the TV sets, movies, video arcades or the streets. Within the greatly expanded middle classes – most notably among the people of color – the youth were *back* to the gospel of relying on getting a good education and a good job as their highest calling; intermixed with an *originally* more conscientious element who tackled politics and academia as a continuation of the First Wave struggles. The upper class youth, however, were doomed to follow in the footsteps of their ruling class parents, since the radical and revolutionary changes sought, failed to alter the country all that much.

Like a reoccurring nightmare, the Second Wave youth *also* fell victim to co-option, *the glamorization of gangsterism, separation from the most advanced elements, relying on passive methods* and the *raw fear* of an upgraded police state. Left to their own devices, the lower class youth began a search for *respect* and *dignity* by devising their own institutions and culture, which came to be dominated by the gangs and Hip Hop – which on their own could be used for good or bad, but lacking any knowledge of the First Wave's experiences, they were *tricked* like their parents.

Comrade Russell "Maroon" Shoats is a former BPP-BLA member who is currently a Political Prisoner/POW (#AF-3855, SCI Greene, 175 Progress Drive Waynesburg, PA 15320).

Gangs are a working and lower class phenomenon that dates from the early beginnings of this country, having also been in evidence overseas. In fact, many of those who first joined the First Wave were themselves gang members, most notably Alprentice *Bunchy* Carter, the martyred founder of the Los Angeles Panthers and head of the notorious *Slausons*, the forerunners of today's *Crips*. As little as it's understood, they are in fact the lower class's counterpart to the middle and upper class's youth clubs, Boy Scouts/Girl Scouts, fraternities and sororities. The key difference is the level of *positive* adult input in the middle and upper class groups. And Hip Hop is just the latest manifestation of artistic genius bursting forth from these lower class youth – *seeking respect and dignity*.

> Orthodox hiphoppers speak a holy trinity of hip hop fathers: Herc, Afrika Bambaataa, and Grandmaster Flash. But, like moisture in the air before it rains, the conditions were ripe for hip hop before the holy trinity began spinning. Hip hop's prefathers or grandfathers are James Brown, Huey Newton, Muhammad Ali, Richard Pryor, Malcolm X, Bob Marley, Bruce Lee, certain celebrity drug dealers and pimps whose names won't be mentioned here..."
>
> Toure. *never drank the kool-aid*, PICADOR,2006

Alas, Hip Hop culture is daily being *co-opted* in ways so obvious it needs no explanation. But woe be it to us if we don't come to grips with how the Second Wave's gangs have been co-opted; an ongoing tragedy, moreover, one that if not turned around will ultimately make the shortcomings of the First Wave pale in comparison!

> "Ronald Reagan and crack were hip hop's 80s anti-fathers: both helped foster the intense poverty and teenage drug-dealing millionaires as well as the urge to rebel against the system that appeared to be moving in for the kill, to finally crush Black America."
>
> Ibid

Certainly, the gangs have comprised a sub-culture that has historically been a thorn in the side of the ruling class: One that either had to be controlled and used - or eradicated. Usually, that was accomplished by co-option and attrition, with older elements moving on, or being jailed long enough to destroy the group. Our First Wave, as noted, was able to – somewhat – outflank the ruling class by absorbing some key elements that lent their prestige to the rank and file's acceptance of radical and revolutionary ideas; which were *pumped* by BM style groups.

It is fascinatingly simple to understand how the Second Wave was *tricked* and continues to be bamboozled into destroying itself while just about all of the pillars upholding this giant confidence game (*con-game*) are familiar to everyone through the movies, TV, street culture and our own experiences with friends, family associates, cops, courts, jails, prisons, death and *our own unfunded yearnings for respect and dignity*

All of the above – more than anything – crave *respect* and dignity! Forget all of the *uniformed ideas* about the homies wanting the families, fathers and love they never had. That plays a part, but if you think that the homies only need some more *hugs*, then you've *drank the kool-aid*! Actually, even if you did have a good father, a loving family and extended family; if everything in society is geared towards lessening your self-worth because of your youth, race, tastes in dress, music, speech, lack of material trappings, etc., then you will still hunger for some *respect* – which will lead to you knowing some *dignity* within yourself. Even suburban, middle and upper-class youth confront this – to a lesser degree. No, all of the beefin', flossin' frontin', set-trippin', violence and bodies piling up around them comes from the pursuit of respect and dignity.

This is how *50-Cent* put it:

> "Niggas out there sellin drugs is after what I got from rappin .. When you walk into a club and the bouncer stop doin whatever the fuck they doing to let you in and say everybody else wait. He special. That's the same shit they do when you start killin niggas in your hood. This is what we been after all the whole time. Just the wrong route."
>
> "50 Cent, *Rolling Stone*, 2003, in Toure, *never drank the kool-aid*: The Life of a Hunted Man, PICADOR, 2006

Admittedly, at times that simple – but raw – truth is so intertwined with so many other things, that it's hard to grasp. Namely, nowadays, *the drug game* and other *git money* games, as well the fact that most sets do provide a sort of alternative family, as well as a strong cohesion that is mistakenly *called love*. Hence, to cut through the distractions I'll illustrate my point as follows:

When the Second Wave was left hanging by the defeated and demoralized First Wave, they unknowingly reverted to methods of seeking dignity and respect that the First Wave had elevated themselves above during their struggle for radical and revolutionary change; a period when gang wars and gang-bangin' was anathema! The revolutionary psychiatrist, Frantz Fanon, in *Wretched of the Earth*, notes that the colonized and oppressed are quick to grab their knife against a neighbor or stranger, thereby in a sub-conscious way *ducking their fear of directing their pent up rage at those responsible for their suffering: their colonial oppressors*.

So, the notable early sets like Bloods, Crips and Gangster Disciples' primary activity was *bangin'* or gang warring over "turf," neighborhoods, schools, etc., as well as over real or imagined slights. But the *real* underlying motivation was all of the parties' desires to build their reputations and earn *stripes*, meaning gain prestige in the eyes of fellow bangers – which translated into respect among their peers. It also caused these youth to bond with each other like soldiers do in combat: a bonding like a family's – even more so. Not surprisingly, many *outsiders* decreed the bonding was "love," which also caused some youth to parrot that thought, but to exchange love, you first have to *love yourself*, and the gang-banger, by definition, has no love for his or her self – in fact they are desperately seeking *respect*, without which anyone's idea of love being present is fooling themselves.

Example: If you "respect" your body, you can also "love" your body, and you would not dare destroy it with drugs or alcohol. But if you *don't respect* your body, and you go on to destroy it in that fashion, then it follows that you have *no love* for it either.

The bangin raged on for years, piling up as many bodies as the Vietnam War – each elevating the attacker's or victim's stature in the eyes of their peers. During those early years the overseers of the oppressive system bemoaned the carnage, while locking up untold numbers of bangers for a few years, but overall, they did nothing to arrest the problem.

Now here's where it gets really interesting! Drugs, as noted, had been flooding into these same communities since the 1960s. However, back then, it was mainly heroin, with marijuana and meth playing relatively minor roles. Remember the *Serpico* and *French Connection* movies exposing that? But the early gangs, to their credit, never got deeply involved in that. They saw dope fiends as weak, and although they would *blow* some *sherm* or *chronic*, it was just a pass time activity for them: They were serious about bangin'!

Consequently, the bangers were all *co-opted*, wedded as they were to their form of *tribicidal gangsterism* and totally separated from the remnants of the First Wave – who they knew next to nothing about. And the "good kids" were being indoctrinated in *passive, legal – get a good education* – approaches, while both groups were scared to death of the police! Despite the bangers hate and contempt, any two cops could lay a dozen of them out on all fours at will.

Hence *Tupac's* later iconic stature with them, since he could walk his talk:

> "...the fact that while everyone else talks about it, Tupac is the only known rapper who has actually shot a police officer; the walking away from being shot five times with no permanent damage, and walking away from the hospital the next day and the rolling into court for a brief but dramatic wheelchair-bound courtroom appearance – it's been dangerously compelling and ecstatically brilliant."
>
> "Tupac," *The Village Voice*, 1995, Toure, *supra*.

But something was on the horizon that was about to cause a seismic shift in this already sorry state of affairs and alter things in ways that most still cannot or will not believe. Apparently, since this madness was contained in the lower class communities, the ruling class's henchmen had no desire to do anything but keep their Gestapo-like police heavily armed and fully supported, since technology had made what they dubbed the *underclass* obsolete anyway. See Sean Penn and Robert Duvall's movie *Colors*.

Peep the Game

The South Amerikan *cocaine* trade replaced the French Connection and *CIA-controlled* US distribution of Southeast Asian Golden Triangle-grown and processed heroin as the drug of choice in the early 1980s. Remember *Miami Vice*? Well, as usual, the country's government intelligence agencies and the large banks immediately began a struggle to control this *new cocaine trade*. Remember: *control not get rid of*, as their lying propaganda projects with their hyped up *War on Drugs*! Thus, they were contending with South Amerikan *governments, militaries*, and *large landowners* who controlled the

raising, processing and shipping of the cocaine; although for a few years, the latter had to also do battle with a few independent drug lords, most notably the notorious Pablo Escobar and the Ochoa family-dominated Medellin Cartel.

Within this country, the youth gangs had next to nothing to do with the *early* cocaine trade, which was then primarily servicing a middle and upper-class – white – clientele, which had a few *old school* big time hustlers, along with some Spanish-speaking wholesalers, who also had their own crews to handle matters. Although, after the fact the Hip Hop favorites *Scarface* and *New Jack City* are good descriptions of that period. But, they both – purposefully - left out the dominant role that the US government intelligence agencies played in *controlling things*.

Alright, I know you're down with all of that – and love it! So, let's move on.

In the middle 1980s, the US began backing a *secret war* designed to overthrow the revolutionary *Sandinista* government in Nicaragua. The *Sandinistas* had fought a long and bloody civil war to rid Nicaragua of its US-sponsored dictatorship in 1979.But after being exposed to the world, the US Congress forbade President Ronald Reagan from continuing his secret war. Like a lot of US presidents, he just ignored Congress and had the CIA raise millions, recruit mercenaries, buy or steal military equipment, and *continue the war*.

That's *how and why crack and the mayhem it's caused came upon us*. However, you won't see Hollywood and TV giving that up raw, with few exceptions, like Black director Bill Duke's *Deep Cover*, staring Laurence Fishburn and *Above The Law* with Steven Segal, otherwise, you have to search hard to see it portrayed so clearly – later I'll explain why.

Anyway, most people have heard that crack was dumped into South Central Los Angeles in the mid 1980s – along with an arsenal of military style assault rifles that would have made a First Wave BPP member ashamed of how poorly equipped s/he was. Needless to say, the huge profits from the crack sales, counted with everyone being *strapped*, magnified the body count! Since crack was also so easy to manufacture locally, and so dirt cheap, just about anybody in the hood could get into the business. Gone were the old days of just a few big time hustlers, except on the wholesale level.

But, make no mistake about it, *the wholesale cocaine* sold for the production and distribution of crack was *fully controlled by selected CIA-controlled operatives*. So, to all you *around the way dawgs* who have been bragging about how *big* you were/are, an organizational flow chart would look something like this: At the top would be President Ronald Reagan, Vice President and former CIA Director, George Bush, Sr., the National Security Advisor, the Secretary of State, General Secord, Colonel Oliver North, major banking executives, Central and South American military and government leaders, arms dealers, mercenary pilots and drug lords like Escobar and the Medellin Cartel, (originally) Justice Department attorneys, US Navy and Coast Guard officers, US Customs and Border Patrol officers, state and local police officers, county sheriffs and deputies, and *their successors in office* – and at the bottom of the barrel: *you dawg!*

Now, I know you already knew in your hearts that there were some *big dawgs* over you, but I'll bet you never guessed that the game came straight out of the White House, or that you were *straight-up pawns* on the game board. If that sounds too wild, then tell me *why* it is harder to find any government, CIA, military or bankers – like George Bush, Sr. and his crew – in prison than it is to win the lottery? Yeah, they double-

crossed Noriega, Escobar and the Medellin Cartel, and made Oliver North do some community service, but that's all. *The real crime lords; the government, CIA, military and banking dons all got away.* Albeit, after Congresswoman Maxine Waters made a stink about it, the CIA was forced to do two investigations and posted on their official website their findings and *admissions of being drug dealers.*

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Now dawg, yall were all played! Face it... That's what happened to you OGs from the 80s. But like *Morpheus* said in *The Matrix*, "let me show you how deep the rabbit hole goes."

Gradually, the US government was forced to crack down on the cocaine coming through Florida, but by then, the South Amerikan cartels and their government and military allies had found new routes through Mexico. At first, the Mexican underworld were just middlemen but quickly recognizing a golden opportunity, they essentially seized control of most of the cocaine trade between South America and the United States, forcing the South Amerikans into becoming junior partners, who were responsible for the *cheaper* growing and processing, after which the Mexicans would purchase mountains of cocaine for the transshipment overland and smuggling into the United States and its wholesale markets, that produced *oil and automotive industry type profits.*

One would wonder how and why would the South Amerikans – powerful players – go for a deal like that? As ever, the answers can be found amongst the *Machiavellian* and *serpentine* maneuverings of the US government and their *poor* Mexican counterparts. You see, in the 1980s, the Mexican government was overseeing an economy that was so bad, that for all practical purposes, they could have – or did – go belly-up *bankrupt*. Indeed, the US and their underlings within the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB) were forced to periodically give them millions upon millions in loans, in return for further unfair trading concessions, in order to save their economy. Note that the US was then, and remains today, extremely vulnerable to Mexico, because common sense, and past experience, told them that that the worse things got in Mexico, the more destitute their already – dirt poor – majority would become, *forcing* millions of them to find a way to get into the US to find the means to feed themselves and their families. Rather than keep prevailing on the IMF to keep lending Mexico money, they saw another way to temporarily plug up the hole in their control of international financial matters.

Thus, *another unholy alliance* was formed. This one was between the US State Department, the CIA and the big banks and other usual suspects on one side, and their Mexican counterparts – including their first fledgling cartels, on the other; with the South Amerikans *now* in a junior partnership role. However, I don't want to give the impression that it was all arranged diplomatically, all neat and tidy: Far from that!

No, it evolved through *visionaries* among the usual suspects putting their ideas before selected insiders and working to craft an *unwritten consensus*, the same way that they – along with Cuban exiles in Florida – had earlier created the cocaine trade to fund the growth around Miami, only this time it would be Mexico; a much more pressing and unstable situation. But, it was recognized by all parties that Mexico's underworld would eventually land in the driver's seat, due to their ability to take the kind of risks called for; their geographic proximity to the US border; and, most importantly, their strong desire to avoid confronting the US and Mexican governments – like Pablo Escobar had done – thus, they were more than willing to guarantee that most of their drug profits would be pumped back into the moribund Mexican economy; through large building projects, upgrading the tourist industry, large-scale farming and other clearly national ventures. And, on the messy side,

their gunmen were becoming experts at making reluctant parties fall into line by offering them a stark choice between *gold or lead*.

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Nevertheless, avoid thinking that that the Mexican or South Amerikan underworlds ever became anything more than hired hands of the *big dawgs* in the US government and their partners in the banking industry, who always remained in control. In fact, under President George Bush, Sr., the invasion of Panama – which was/is a major hub of *offshore money laundering* - was ordered after their *hired hand, Manuel Noriega*, became unmanageable in 1989.

These hired hands would ensure that the chosen corrupt politicians would garner sufficient votes in the Mexican elections by bringing in *plane loads* of money that the South Amerikan gangsters and government/military partners would make available as part of their overhead expenses. But more importantly to the United States, a major part of the profits would be pumped into the Mexican economy in order to forestall its looming bankruptcy.

Consequently, by the middle 1990s, the Mexican underworld had established the super powerful Gulf, Juarez, Guadalajara, Sinaloa and Tijuana cartels. Moreover, they had consolidated their power by not only controlling who all were *elected* to key political posts in Mexico, but had also perfected the art of bribing key local, state and regional police heads, as well as strategic generals in Mexico's armed forces. Check out the movie *Traffic* and the Antonio Banderas/Selma Hayek *Bandalero* and *Once Upon a Time in Mexico* and again – *after the fact* – you'll see Hollywood spilling the beans, but don't let the fancy stunt work lull you into thinking that there's no substantive truth to the plots!

Remember: Mexico's cartels would not be able to function without the collaboration and protection of the highest levels within the US Establishment; just as the CIA has openly admitted it was *an illegal drug merchant* during an earlier period, you can believe nothing has changed – except their partners!

The hilarious part is that none of the *wannabe real gangstas* in the US know that in reality, they are *low-level CIA flunkies*; or can't wait to get out of prison and become *undercover government agents – slinging crack*. Alas, most think it's crazy to believe that the government of the US would allow it's cities and small towns to be flooded with cocaine, clinging to the illusion that they are something more than pawns on a chess board.

If one doesn't go beyond the idea that this whole thing is just a plot to destroy the *Black and Brown* peoples – a favorite though short-sighted theory – there is no way to see just how deep the *rabbit hole* really is. I repeat: the main objective was to pump billions of dollars into the Mexican economy in order to avoid a complete meltdown and the subsequent fleeing to the US of 60 million or more Mexicans out of its "then" 90+ million inhabitants. This would have been a crisis that would have *dwarfed* the numbers who did cross over and are just beginning to make their presence felt.

Actually, the *big dawgs* in the US probably didn't know just how they were going to control the fallout that would inevitably accompany their *cocaine/crack tax* – they routinely tax alcohol, gambling (from the lotteries to the casinos) and even prostitution in certain areas, don't they? – So, yeah, a *clandestine operation to use cocaine to rescue Mexico and stave off an economically-induced invasion of the US by population*, made poverty-stricken by five hundred years of colonialism, slavery, peonage, neo-colonialism and the theft of one-third of their country by the United States in the 19th Century, was an indirect tax.

Sadly though, our First Wave's degeneration into the glorification of gangsterism, the Second Wave's hunger for respect and recognition that fueled the gang carnage, and the Hip-Hop generation's ability to provide the youth with *vicarious fantasies* to indulge their senses with the hypnotic allure of the temporary power that the *drug game* could bring them – led the youth in the US *back* to emulating the First Wave's *Superfly* and *Scarface* days. Others also see that:

> "My theory is that nine times out of ten, if there's a depression, *more a social depression than anything*, it brings out the best art in Black people. The best example is Reagan and Bush gave us the best years of hip hop... Hip hop is created thanks to the conditions that crack set: easy money but a lot of work, the violence involved, the stories it produced – crack helped birth hip hop. Now, I'm part conspiracy theorist because you can't develop something that dangerous and it not be planned. I don't think crack happened by accident... Crack offered a lot of money to the inner-city youth who didn't go to college. Which enabled them to become businessmen. It also turned us into marksmen. It also turned us comatose."
>
> Ahmir Thompson, aka? U est love, *The Believer*, 2003, Toure, *supra*.

With the deft moves of a conjurer, the big dawgs in the US seized upon all of this and began to nudge these elements around on the international chess board – *within their guilt con game*. Moreover, these big dawgs in the United States had very little choice as to where to start their *triage* in order to gain some relief from their *manufactured domestic crisis*. I'll tell you why!

Cocaine in its powder and crack forms is so addictive, and the ambiance of the cultures that use them regularly. *the rich and famous; the Hollywood set; corporate executives; lawyers; doctors; weekenders; entertainers; athletes; college kids; suburbanites; hood rats; hustlers; pipers; etc.*, until its demand is guaranteed! In most ways, it could be argued, it's just like alcohol and tobacco – which have never been able to be successfully suppressed in the US for long.

It follows then that, despite all of their *propaganda* about "*Just Say No!*" and the bogus *War On Drugs*, the big dawgs never had *any* intention of even *trying to eradicate the use of cocaine*. However, at the same time, the Black and Brown communities were becoming major headaches; ones that if left unchecked could evolve into a real *strategic threat*. Yes, crack had turned their lower class neighborhoods into lucrative mainstays of the big dawgs' *alternative taxing scheme*, however, the urgency was graphically driven home by the *non-Black/Brown* communities' consumption of more – mostly powder – cocaine. And the trade in the Black/Brown hoods and barrios was accompanied by an unforeseen, exponentially rising rate of ever more sophisticated, drug-related violence, especially since the gangs got seriously involved.

Now, as I've pointed out, the gangs were mainly *just* pursuing respect prior to getting involved with hustling drugs; and the carnage connected with that was *not a real* concern to the big dawgs. But unlike the earlier dumping of *heroin* in those communities, accompanied by the comparatively isolated violence of the Black Mafia-style groups whose violence, though terrifying, was also more selective; the widespread availability of *crack and assault rifles* led the big dawgs to come to understand that if they did not aggressively deal with the ultra-violent, inner-city drug gangs, they would eventually move to consolidate their gains by forming South American and Mexican-style cartels. They could eventually take over inner city politics, like the Mexican cartels, threatening to become less predictable – once they realized

that the money and power would not of themselves provide the them with the kind of respect and dignity they sought. To understand why not, just observe *the rich and famous Hip Hop artists who continue to wild-out, because they still lack the respect and dignity that comes with struggling for something other than money or power.* In short some type of *cause*

Anyway, the Hip Hop generational favorite TV drama *The Wire* lays out the entire phenomenon pretty much like it had earlier played itself out in Baltimore and other urban areas; in fact, the fictionalized TV series derives its realness from an earlier long-running expose featured in a Baltimore newspaper: Another *after the fact* but still useful piece of work to study. Indeed, the show depicts the *earlier years* of the Black gangs getting deeply involved in the crack trade and clearly illustrates my point about the gangs evolving into proto-cartels – and subsequently being *triaged* before they matured into real strategic threats; leaving the crack trade intact.

That's why the "Prison Industrial Complex" was formed! It was formed as a tool to neutralize the Second Wave *before* they woke up to the fact that – despite their money and power – *they were being used and played like suckers.* A rub that the more astute of the big dawgs feared that money would not sooth. Thus, all of your draconian *gun-related and mandatory sentencing laws* were first formulated on the federal level – where most of the big dawgs have their most power – and then were forced upon the states. It was all to ensure that the Second Wave would *never* be able to consolidate any real power, precisely because they were proving themselves to be such ruthless *gangstas, in imitation of their Hollywood idols*, coupled with the potential power derived from their share of the *undercover tax* being extracted from their communities that convinced the big dawgs to *triage them every time they get too big*, which averaged from one to three years in a *run*, then everything they acquired was taken. The *martyred Hip Hop icon The Notorious B.I.G.* put it all together in his classic song – rightly entitled *Respect*.

> "Put the drugs on the shelf / Nah, I couldn't see it / Scarface, King of New York / I wanna be it... Until I got incarcerated / kinda scary... Not able to move behind the steel gate / Time to contemplate / Damn, where did I fail? / All the money I stacked was all the money for bail."
>
> Biggie Smalls, *The New York Times*, 1994, Toure, supra.

Let's get another thing straight! I mean an angle that continues to have short-sighted people chasing *ghosts* about *why powder cocaine and crack are treated so differently.* Within the big dawgs' calculations, there was *no reason* to harshly punish the powder cocaine dealers and users in the same manner as they were doing with the crack crowd. And, *racism was not the driving motive – it was the potential armed threat within these proto-cartels!* The big dawgs witnessed a clear example of what was to come by way of the Jamaican posses that cropped up in the Black communities at this time. Young men from the Jamaican and Caribbean Diaspora, who were also a consequence of the degeneration of its lower class's attempts to throw off the economic and social effects of its former slavery and colonial oppression. Led by the socialist, Michael Manley, and inspired by the *revolutionary music* of Bob Nestor Marley, which can be glimpsed in the later Steven Segal *Marked for Death* and DMX/Nas *Belly* movies, the Jamaican posses were the Black Mafia on *steroids!*

Moreover, their quasi-religious nationalism, coupled with their ability to operate nationally and in the Caribbean, as well as their heavily armed soldiers, put the big dawgs' teeth on edge. Their ten thousand or so were *nothing* compared to the *hundreds of thousands in the wings in the Black and Brown communities!*

The cry from the big dawgs' mouthpieces in Congress was about the *gunplay*, not so much the drugs. What was not said, however, was the big dawgs' anxieties about stopping these gunslingers *before* they got over their *mental blocks* about using their weapons against the police – or the system. They wanted to stop them while they were still hung up on imitating their Hollywood and Euro-Mafia icons, who made a mantra out of instructing their gunmen *not to use their weapons against the police*. Indeed, with few exceptions, the Second Wave allowed themselves to be disarmed and carted off to prison like pussycats!

Add to all that the unforeseen windfall of thousands of new jobs for the rural communities that were being destroyed economically by capitalism's drive for fuller *globalization*. These conservative rural communities are vital to the big dawgs, who need their religious-fanatical support.

We must struggle against the short-sighted view about *racism alone* being the driving motive force that fueled the construction of the prison-industrial complex. Instead, if you do a follow up and add your own research, you'll be able to detect and *document the who, when, where and how the big dawgs set everything in motion; as well as how they continue to use us as pawns in their giant, international, con game.*

Conclusion

Ask yourself the following questions:

1. How can we salvage anything from the how the First and Second Waves allowed their search for *respect* and *dignity* degenerate into *gangsterism*?
2. In what ways can we help the *Next Wave* avoid our mistakes?
3. What can we do to contribute to *documenting* who *the real big dawgs behind the drug trade are*?
4. Why have they *never* been held accountable?
5. How come our *families and communities* are the only ones to suffer?
6. How can we *overcome our brainwashing*?
7. How can we *truly gain respect and dignity*?
8. In what ways can we *atone* for our wrongs and *redeem* ourselves, our families and our communities?
9. What are some of the ways to fight for *restitution* and *reparations* for *all those harmed by the government imposed – undercover – drug tax*?
10. How can we overturn the "13th Amendment" of the US Constitution and *finally abolish slavery in the US*?

Once you've answered these questions and begun to move to materialize your conclusions, then you will have made the choice between *Liberation or Gangsterism Freedom or Slavery*

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