

NCBL's August Political Prisoner Calendar

Marcus Mosiah Garvey was born on August 17, 1897 in St. Ann's Bay, Jamaica. He was a journalist, orator and publisher as well as a nationalist and Pan-Africanist. Garvey is credited with having founded the popular Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). His position was that black people throughout the Diaspora should return to Africa and become self governing. He developed the Black Star Line to help reach that goal. He spoke fearlessly about United States' racism and injustice. Garvey was a target of J. Edgar Hoover's FBI. In considering how to destroy Garvey and thereby the movement he was leading, Hoover wrote in a memo dated Oct. 11, 1919, to special agent Ridgely: "Unfortunately, however, he (Garvey) has not yet violated any federal law whereby he could be proceeded against on the ground of being an undesirable alien, from the point of view of deportation." Garvey was eventually jailed on Mail Fraud charges and deported. He died on June 10, 1940 at the age of 52 in London, England.

Mutulu Shakur was born August 8, 1950 in Baltimore, Maryland and moved to the Jamaica section of Queens at age 7. As a youth, Mutulu joined the Republic of New Afrika (RNA) and later joined the Black Liberation Army. Mutulu, like Marcus M. Garvey, advocated for black self governance as a citizen of the RNA. A licensed and certified Acupuncturist, Mutulu founded and directed Black Acupuncture Advisory Association of North America (BAAANA) and Harlem Institute of Acupuncture. In those capacities, he treated people addicted to drugs both in the United States and abroad. On February 12, 1986, Mutulu was captured in connection with charges stemming from what became known as the "Brink's robbery." He was also implicated in successful liberation of Assata Shakur. Mutulu was tried in a Manhattan federal court for the Brink's robbery under the federal Racketeering Influenced Corrupt Organization (RICO) statute, convicted and sentenced to 60 years with recommendation of no parole. He has spent 25 years in prison under some of the most oppressive conditions. In fact, he is currently incarcerated at the infamous maximum security prison in Florence, Colorado. Despite the recommendation of no parole, according to the Bureau of Prison's (BOP) official records, Mutulu Shakur is projected to be released on February 10, 2016. Mutulu Shakur needs NCBL's continued support for his release in 2016.

Russell "Maroon" Shoats was born August 23, 1943 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He founded Black Unity Council which merged with the Philadelphia chapter of the Black Panther Party (BPP) in 1969. In 1970 tensions rose in Philadelphia as police chief Rizzo ordered a crackdown on militant groups in anticipation of the national convention of the Black Panther Party which took place in Philadelphia. Shoats was targeted by the Philadelphia police and following the murder of a police officer, the BPP headquarters were raided and he was arrested. In 1972, Russell Shoats was tried, convicted and sentenced to several life sentences. He has spent much of his incarceration in solitary confinement. He reports being forcibly drugged, resulting in an overdose requiring hospitalization. The forced drugging and lengthy incarceration in solitary confinement raises concerns about violation of human rights, specifically the guidelines of the Committee Against Torture (CAT). Shoats is now sixty-eight years old and has been

incarcerated for 39 years. NCBL urges the release of political prisoner Russell “Maroon” Shoats.