

Crips Gang Life Redemption and Tookie Williams

Written by Davey D ID2155

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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war between various sets.

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

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

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

He can be reached at ageelas@msn.com

You can peep this interview by going to this link: <http://odeo.com/audio/460407/view>

To read further on the situation in Watts and gang life

peep this article here: www.laweekly.com/ink/05/3...korian.php

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