

Human Rights Held Hostage

By Shaka Shakur

I want to begin this piece with a few definitions in hopes of providing some context for the overall essay. (1)

Human: Of relating to, or characteristic of man or mankind; Having or manifesting the form, nature, or qualities characteristic of man. Pertaining to or being a man distinguished as distinguished from a lower animal, intellectually and morally superior.

Humane: Having the good qualities of human beings as kindness, mercy and compassion. 2) Tending to promote these qualities, refining, civilizing....

Human Right: A right that is believed to belong justifiably to every person.

The right to be free from oppression should be something that you're born with, an inalienable right.

The right to be treated like a human being and free from processes and systems of systemic dehumanization, and human destruction. To be free of this warped authority should be a human right, the same as the right to be treated humanely.

To most civilians, people free of/from incarceration/captivity, this is something that is often taken for granted until one finds themselves trapped behind the walls of the iron curtain of prison.

In most prison systems, Human Rights is a rare commodity. People can be desensitized to see you as non human, as a 'thing', as the 'other', as a fixture and persona of whatever State propaganda or reactionary narrative is being pushed at the time by prisoncrats, some opportunistic politician or the media. What did Bill Clinton call us "Super Predators", "The Worst of the Worst", etc.

The United Nations, and although it is not a democratic institution, have established guidelines, treaties, covenants, resolutions, etc that most civilized countries have either agreed upon or is a part of.

For example; The Human Rights Charter establishes certain rules and guide lines for systems of govt to follow as a guide. The Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, now known as the Mandela Rules, establishes the same guidelines, laws based on International Law and Treaties that so called civilized 'Nations' suppose to be bound by.

As someone that has done multiple tours in Supermax & Control Unit Prisons in different States, as someone who has been tortured in prison and held in Solitary Confinement for 13 consecutive years (2005-2018), I am here to tell you that these rules are not being followed and

that the criminal justice system and its Prison Industrial Complex is rife with Human Rights Violations.

You do not have to go to some 3rd world country to look for these. You do not have to look to Syria, Iran, Afghanistan, Israel, North Korea, etc. You can look right here, as close as down the street or in your city and do something. Create an Oversight Comte. Reach out to the prisoners and communicate with them about their reality. Do your own investigation into the conditions of confinement and operating procedures of the jails and Prison System in your state or area.

For e.g. iam currently in domestic exile in the Commonwealth of Va., a 'former' Confederate State.

How is it in the 21st century in a so call former confederate state that you have k-9 officers with attack dogs releasing them on prisoners (the majority of whom are black or suffer from some kind of mental health condition) in non lethal situations, e.g. for mere fist fights. Literally chewed up and maimed for a fist fight, a non lethal situation. Is this not a Human Rights violation?

In some of the higher security prisons on all of the walkways, k-9 Units on foot are posted with attack dogs, straining, snarling, barking while on a leash and less than 3 ft away from you. Now imagine that every morning between between 5am and 6:30 am you have to walk the gauntlet of barking, snarling dogs straining at the leash to attack you all the while some sadistic guard intentionally allows to much slack in the leash and as you exit the kitchen door unaware a dog lashes out at you just inches away from your body, startling you. Now let's say you go through 15 or 20 yrs of this because if you have a lengthy sentence you have to remain at a high security level for at least 20 yrs before you can drop down to a lower security level.

What happens to a person that goes home and walks in the neighborhood, comes across a pet that begins to bark and snarl. It will be a trigger. A trigger to what extent is the question.

It is these types of acts and systemic systems of micro and macro expressions of abuse that violate Our Human Rights, that violate International Law and both Our Civil and Human Rights. It is also these acts and system that contribute to the recidivist rate and the catch and release and recatch again practices of the Prison Industrial Complex.

(1) All definitions are from The Oxford Dictionary

Dare to Struggle – Dare to Win

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