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New York, July 13 (RHC)-- Longtime political prisoner Mutulu Shakur has died from cancer at the age of 72, just seven months after his release on parole and nearly 37 years in prison. The stepfather of the late hip-hop icon Tupac Shakur was convicted in 1988 of conspiracy in several armed robberies and for aiding the 1979 prison escape of Assata Shakur, who fled to Cuba to escape trumped-up charges.

In the 1970s, Mutulu Shakur was part of the Black nationalist group Republic of New Afrika that worked with the Black Panther Party and Young Lords to start the first acupuncture detoxification program in the U.S. as drugs flooded their communities.

From prison, in an interview granted to the documentary "Dope is Death," directed by Mia Donovan, Mutulu Shakur said: "People would come to the Bronx, dope fiends, hardened dope victims. We would massage their ears and massage their hands and their legs. And we would stand there with our fingers in their ears or in the different points, and we'd do deep breathing, and they'd fall right out to sleep and just relax. And then the next day they'd be back for that treatment. And we were detoxifying people off of heroin and cocaine and methadone with acupressure, a lot of love, a lot of commitment to it."

Mutulu Shakur, dead at the age of 72.

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