

Former Black Panther Veronza Bowers is freed after more than 50 years in prison

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New York, June 19 (RHC)-- After half a century behind bars, former Black Panther Veronza Bowers has been released.

Bowers was sentenced to life in prison in 1973 for the murder of a U.S. park ranger, based on testimony from government informants. He has consistently claimed his innocence. Many call him one of the longest-serving political prisoners in U.S. history.

Veronza Bowers was freed in May from the Federal Medical Center in North Carolina. In a video shared with Democracy Now!, 78-year-old Bowers said he became a healer in prison and hopes to continue his work on the outside.

Veronza Bowers: “And I learned one thing during incarceration, that a man or a woman has to, sooner or later, make a decision, make a choice, as to how they intend to live life inside. Long ago, I made a decision. I made a choice to help my fellow man to heal and to find peace in the chaos. And that chaos be raging all around, swirling. Anyway, I was able to do that by utilizing the soothing and healing sounds of my beloved shakuhachi — that’s the bamboo flute that I blow — and meditation.”

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