

The Assassination of Malcolm X: It's Time To Heal The Wounds Part II

Hoover created the Counter Intelligence Program (Cointelpro) precisely for the purpose of disrupting the civil rights revolt and the black liberation movement.

No tactic was off limits within Cointelpro: the massive infiltration of organizations; the use of agent provocateurs; disinformation campaigns; and character assassination and physical assassination were all accepted methods for Cointelpro. One of the favorite tactics of Cointelpro was to deliberately sow seeds of dissension and division between leaders and organizations or to take advantage of internal disputes to discredit or destroy organizations and leaders. The rift between Malcolm X and the NOI was tailor made for a Cointelpro operation.

Indeed, near the end of his life, Malcolm sensed that the conflict with the NOI of playing into the hands of the government. Based on his knowledge of the capabilities of the NOI, Malcolm concluded that things were happening to him that were beyond the capacity of the NOI. Something else was afoot. Malcolm's instincts were correct. Both the NOI and Malcolm's OAAU were infiltrated by government agents who were in a

position to collaborate on any operation that the government wished to conduct. In my judgement, the U.S. government, exploited the rift between Malcolm and the NOI to orchestrate his assassination. The gunmen who killed Malcolm may have been members of the NOI, but most assuredly some among them were also government agents. The puppets may have been Muslims, but the puppeteers were outside of the NOI. The United States Government conspired to kill Malcolm X.

As I stated from the outset of this discussion, the only productive reason for recounting and assessing this painful history is to learn the lessons from that history so that we do not repeat the same mistakes again. And, in this tragic matter there were mistakes on all sides.

Our beloved Malcolm fueled the flames of conflict with his attack on his former leader and teacher the Honorable Elijah Muhammad and Farrakhan's rhetoric stoked the fires of revenge and retribution which ultimately consumed Malcolm. The NOI and the Honorable Elijah Muhammad had weaknesses, but the NOI and the Honorable Elijah Muhammad also had enormous strengths which contributed to the rehabilitation of the race. It is questionable

whether Malcolm's airing of the NOI's dirty linen in the "white media" was wise. Malcolm himself in "Message from the Grassroots" cautioned against this. The moral and ethical concerns about the Honorable Elijah Muhammad should have first been aired through structures internal to the black community.

It must always be absolutely clear, however, that no organization or leader that claims to be working on behalf of black people is above criticism. The willingness of the NOI to respond to Malcolm's criticisms by the ready use of intimidation and political violence must be condemned as reprehensible and counter productive. Unfortunately, the tendency to use political violence against black people internal or external to political organizations was all too characteristic of this period. The deadly conflict between the Black Panther Party and the US organization as well as the conflict between the Black Panther Party and SNCC are other notable examples of this tendency; a tendency which leads itself to exploitation by government intelligence agencies. It is a tendency which should not be tolerated in our community.

One of the most critical lessons to

be learned from an examination of the events surrounding the assassination of Malcolm X is that the Black Nation needs mechanisms/structures to resolve conflicts between leaders and organizations. As the bogus indictment of Qubilah Shabazz graphically illustrates, the U.S. government has not changed its method of operation. Leaders, organizations and movements which have the potential to spark mass opposition to the government will be targeted for disruption and destruction. As a maturing people/nation, we cannot afford to fall prey to the deadly machinations, plots and schemes of the U.S. government.

The lessons drawn from the assassination of Malcolm X should also encourage us to begin the process of healing the awful wounds that have plagued our struggle since this tragic occurrence 30 years ago. That healing process is essential to building the kind of operational unity required for the defense and development of the Black Nation into the 21st Century. Perhaps, the government's attempt to exploit these wounds through the persecution of Qubilah Shahazz and the Black Nation's response to her entrapment can set the stage for the healing process to begin.

CSD Seeks Solutions To Child Abuse

Continued from front

tutes child abuse and neglect, requiring people who work with children to report suspected abuse, giving CSD and law enforcement agencies joint responsibility for investigation and response to reports of child abuse and neglect and also requiring the state agency to provide protective social services to safeguard the child's welfare.

But the translations of these provisions has opened a groundswell of resentment and have angered some parents.

"Parents have all the statutory rights and there are no laws that talk of children's rights," Karen Lee, CSD communications director, said.

Many parents are asking when is it spanking and when is it child abuse? How is a parent suppose to draw the line if the intention is discipline?

The law defines child abuse as any assault of a child and any physical injury to a child which has been caused by other than accidental means, including any injury which appears to be at

variance with the explanation of the injury.

It also defines neglect or maltreatment of a child, including but not limited to, failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter or medical care.

These definitions and provisions, parents say are too vague. Even CSD's most vocal critic Rep. Bob Tierman, R-Lake Oswego of the House Committee on General Government and Regulatory Reform, agrees.

Anthony Stoudamire of Portland's Self Enhancement, Inc. (SEI) and a CSD program coordinator, said the law needs to be more clear so that there's a better definition of what is discipline and what is abuse.

Stoudamire said parents need to understand "you cannot discipline when you are angry at a child.

"The overriding factor is that this agency is committed to protecting children and if errors are going to be made, most of the CSD workers prefer to make an error on the side of the child and protect that child," Stoudamire said.

A CSD study done between 1987-1993 discovered that more children are experiencing abuse and consequently an increase in behavioral, mental and physical problems.

The report also showed a slight reduction in both the number of children reported to be endangered and in the number of child abuse and neglect victims.

But a frightening abuse of drugs and alcohol by parents, the CSD could argue, has made it even more cautious.

The CSD said most parents they deal with (65 percent) have drug and (45 percent) alcohol-related problems. The agency revealed that these percentages have increased 7.5 percent over the last two years.

Stoudamire regretted that there has been a poor perception of what the agency provides.

"We don't go looking for families to pick on. We get reports from the hospitals and other agencies and we evaluate and investigate to find if they are founded or unfounded," Stoudamire said. "Part of our job is making parents more responsi-

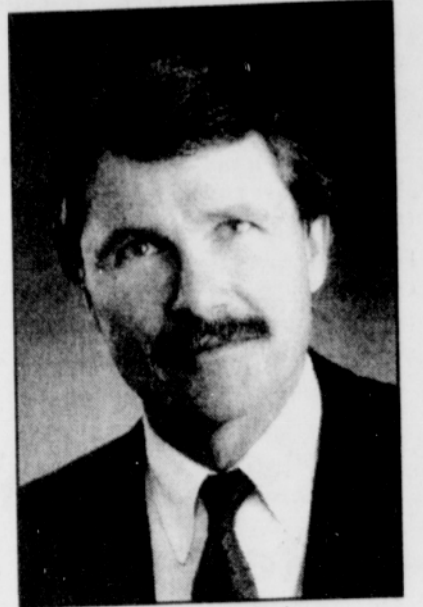
Governor's Planned Attack On Crime

Gov. John Kitzhaber has unveiled a plan to reduce violent crime and drug abuse. The effort will include the application for \$5.6 million from the Edward Byrne Memorial fund.

Kitzhaber will try to incorporate Oregon's urgent needs with national priorities at combating drugs, violent crimes and building community-based law enforcement. "Violent crime is an epidemic. It's infecting our state with fear and diverting resources from education and other important areas," Kitzhaber said. "This strategy represents tangible action toward fighting crime."

The plan was drafted using the governor's "Four Pillars of Crime" as a blueprint for a balanced crime fighting approach that includes juvenile justice reform, juvenile crime prevention, domestic violence prevention and increasing prison capacity.

Kitzhaber said the plan had the



Governor John Kitzhaber

potential to effectively attack crime because of its balance of punishment, deterrence and prevention.

"To reduce crime tomorrow, not just control it today, we must treat the causes of crime as well as the symptoms," he said.

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