

Former Black Panther Wins Settlement After 22 Years in Solitary



Philadelphia, July 13 (RHC)-- In the United States, a former Black Panther held for more than two decades in solitary confinement has won a permanent reprieve from solitary and nearly \$100,000 in a settlement with the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections.

Russell "Maroon" Shoatz was convicted in 1970 of first-degree murder for an attack on a Philadelphia police station that left one officer killed and another wounded. In the 1980s, he became active with the Pennsylvania Association of Lifers and worked to abolish sentences of life without parole. He was placed in solitary confinement for the next 22 consecutive years.

Shoatz issued a response to the settlement through his lawyers, saying: "I have always chosen to fight! Frederick Douglass was right when he said 'Power concedes nothing without a demand.' So have no doubt that I see this settlement as anything but the latest blow struck."

Many people say Shoatz's more than two decades stay in solitary confinement was retaliation for his activism.

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