

Who is Sekou Kambui?

Sekou Cinque T.M. Kambui (s/n William J. Turk) is a New Afrikan political prisoner currently serving two consecutive life sentences for crimes he did not commit.

Born on September 6, 1948, in Gasden, Alabama, Kambui is of Afrikan/Cherokee heritage. Throughout the 1960s, Sekou participated in the Civil Rights movement, mobilizing youth in Alabama and providing security for meetings of the Southern Christian Leadership Council (SCLC), Congress for Racial Equality (CORE) and the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC).

In 1967, Sekou became affiliated with the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense while living in Chicago and New York. Before returning home to Birmingham, Alabama, he became a member of the Republic of New Afrika. Once in Birmingham, he coordinated community organization activity with the Alabama Black Liberation Front, the Inmates for Action (IFA) and the Afro-Amerikan People's Party in the mid-70s.

On January 2, 1975, Sekou was arrested in North Birmingham for allegedly running a yield sign and/or speeding. During the stop, a Smith and Wesson 9mm pistol was found in his car, lying between the two front seats. A subsequent investigation by police on the scene discovered that the pistol was listed as a stolen item during a Tuscaloosa, AL murder.

Sekou was taken into custody and charged for the murder of Olmstead Copeland and John Harbin, two men that had been killed on the night of December 14, 1974. Copeland was a fireman and KKK official from Tuscaloosa. John Harbin was a multi-millionaire oilman from Birmingham. In both cases, a black power



activist accused of murdering the men, would be viewed as a slap in the face of the white power structure.

To add insult to injury, a wide-range investigation followed, which included inquiries into his personal relationship with a white woman.

Sekou's perceived violation of the social taboos infuriated the establishment. He was told by one of the investigators, "We don't really give a damn whether you committed these crimes or not, but you should have because we are gonna hang your ass with them anyway."

The courts tried to paint the picture that Sekou had robbed and killed Harbin with a .38 Colt borrowed from Glenn Williams, an acquaintance of Kambui's. Williams was no longer in possession of the weapon, stating that it was stolen during an armed robbery at the service station he was employed at the night before Christmas. Kambui has borrowed and returned the weapon but since it was stolen, he could not prove the weapon wasn't used in the crime.

The government also argued that while fleeing from the scene, the vehicle Sekou was allegedly driving, the car stolen from Harbin, got stuck in the mud. They contend the Copeland pulled over to assist Sekou and the other occupants in the vehicle. They allege that after Copeland pulled Sekou's vehicle out of the mud, Sekou shot him with the .38 caliber.

Found near the body of Copeland was a twelve gauge loaded shotgun shell. The shell bore an indentation of its primer indicating an unsuccessful effort to fire the shotgun. Several weeks later a single barrel twelve gauge shotgun was found under the bed of a man named Willie Alexander.

When brought into questioning Alexander claimed that Sekou had robbed and killed both men. Alexander claimed he feared Sekou and it was for this reason he did not report the killing to the police. He also claimed that another man, named "Bobo", was at the scene, but that man has never surfaced.

Sekou's attorney however argued that Alexander had come to Sekou's home, requesting that he store some items including a Smith and Wesson pistol. These items were among those listed as stolen from John Harbin when he was killed. Sekou had not participated in either incidents. Sekou's political activity, combined with his personal relationship with a white woman, angered the police enough to set him up for the crime.

Despite immense pre-trial publicity, the court denied a motion for a change of venue. An appeals court later affirmed this decision, citing examples of ineffectiveness of the counselor. In fact, the nature of this case was so intense that during a 1985 investigation of the crime, persons in Tuscaloosa vividly recalled details of the murder, the accused (Sekou), and the entire issue of the killing.

Major witnesses in both cases have admitted that they had been forced to testify against Sekou and had been repeatedly visited by the Birmingham Police Department, as well as the Jefferson County Sheriff's Department.

Defense witnesses in the first trial were so terrified after continuous threats and racial intimidation by the Birmingham Police for providing an alibi testimony that they fled Alabama, leaving Sekou without a defense for his second trial. To this day, no direct evidence has ever been found to connect Sekou to the murders. The pistol that he was captured with has never been conclusively linked to the crimes.

The Alabama Department of Corrections, through the seizures of legal material and mail, repeated retaliatory transfers and threats to interfere with impending parole dates, have continuously thwarted Sekou's legal challenges to both convictions. For over thirty years now, Sekou has been held captive by the Alabama Department of Corrections.

As a jailhouse lawyer, his legal reputation precedes him at every institution. Indeed, many prisoners owe their freedom to Sekou's legal efforts on their behalf. He has won numerous other civil actions regarding medical malpractice, abusive treatment, abusive segregation and abusive prison conditions, all of which have earned him nothing but retaliatory transfers. Every attempt made to appeal his original conviction has been stymied by missing legal transcripts and illegal confiscation of law books and legal research/trial preparation materials.

Prior to every parole consideration there has been a punitive transfer and escalation of harassment due to legal action taken by Sekou on behalf of other prisoners. He co-founded the Social Consciousness Development Group, which unites prisoners, families and outside supporters to struggle for prisoners' rights.

Free Sekou Kambui

Write to Sekou Kambui at:

Sekou Kambui (W. Turk)
113058/ Box 56 SCC (B1-21)
Elmore, AL 36025-0056

Local groups working with Kambui:

JERICO AMNESTY COALITION
PO Box 34186
Los Angeles, CA 90034

**Anarchist Black Cross Federation
(ABCF)**
PO Box 11223
Whittier, CA 90603
email: la@abcf.net
www.abcf.net

YOU CAN HELP BY GIVING
POLITICAL PRISONERS A VOICE
AND VISIBILITY

THE TRUTH CAN SET THEM
FREE!

Sekou Kambui



**NEW AFRIKAN
POLITICAL PRISONER**

**SENTENCED TO TWO LIFE
SENTENCES**

