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Exclusive Interview With Huey P. Newton Gun Club Leader

Across the country, as race riots and protests ensue under the banners of “Black Lives Matter” and “Stop Police Brutality,” local police departments have been the subject of much criticism and pressure, both from below on the streets and above from the Obama administration and the Justice Department. Following the tragic fatal shootings of four Dallas Police Department officers and one DART (Dallas Area Rapid Transit) police officer by Micah X. Johnson, much attention was placed on militant Black Nationalist organizations, such as the New Black Panther Party and the Huey P. Newton Gun Club, for their alleged connection to Johnson. In an exclusive over-the-phone interview with *The New American*, General Babu Omowale, the co-founder of the Huey P. Newton Gun Club and the national defense minister for the People’s New Black Panther Party, discussed the gun club, his open admiration for communist Chinese revolutionary Mao Tse-tung, plans for the creation of a sovereign independent black nation within the United States with the expected support from China and Cuba, and his thoughts on Micah Johnson.



The New American: *What is the difference or relationship between the Huey P. Newton Gun Club and the People’s New Black Panther Party?*

Babu Omowale: The Huey P. Newton Gun Club is made up of multiple organizations. It was founded with at least four organizations at the time of its conception. Those organizations would include the People’s New Black Panther Party, a local militia called Guerrilla Mainframe, also another local militia called African Angels, and the fourth organization being the Black Militia Nation. So ... it is made up of multiple organizations, whereas the People’s New Black Panther Party is just one singular organization.

TNA: *Why did you and those who founded the gun club choose to name it after Huey P. Newton?*

Omowale: We choose Huey P. Newton specifically because he was the founder of the original Black Panther Party. If you go to the original 10-point platform of the party, point number seven says that we want an end to police brutality and terrorism in the black community. This is the one statement that all of the organizations that founded the Huey P. Newton Gun Club have in common. So we rallied around this specific point, this specific ideology, in creating the format for the gun club itself. And Huey P.



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Newton was also about self-defense, and that's what ideology and belief that all of these organizations that I named have in common.

TNA: *Does the Huey P. Newton Gun Club or the People's New Black Panther Party work with or in some way coordinate events with Black Lives Matter, or Bob Avakian's Revolutionary Communist Party USA, or Louis Farrakhan's Nation of Islam?*

Omowale: The whole foundation and basis of the gun club is to be able to work with other organizations. That's why the gun club is made up of multiple organizations. We've never sat down and structured anything with these organizations that you mentioned, but we have done some collective work with N.O.I. [Nation of Islam] here in Dallas concerning issues of what we deem as white supremacists trying to do protests at their mosque.... We have done the collective work in self-defense against another organization called BAIR, the Bureau of American Islamic Relations. It's a white supremacist group based out of Garland, Texas, that wanted to come and protest in front of the mosque to protest against Muslims. So we have done some collective work, and we're willing to work with anybody who is for a righteous cause and who is making an attempt to liberate our people mentally from bondage.

TNA: *At a lot of the rallies and demonstrations throughout the United States you see flyers that say "Black Lives Matter," "Stop Police Brutality," and on the bottom of many of those signs you see the web address "RevCom.us," which is the website for the Revolutionary Communist Party led by Bob Avakian. Do you in any way work, coordinate, or talk with them?*

Omowale: I can't say specifically that we have. They have not reached out to me, and for us to be able to work together in some aspect, I would have to at least get a note or something saying that they wanted to work together. At this time they have not reached out to us, but we're willing to work with anybody, again, who is for a righteous cause here in the United States and that's regardless of their skin color or their ethnic background, just as long as they are for a righteous cause. But again, they have not reached out to the Huey P. Newton Gun Club at this point.

TNA: *Do you encourage members and those affiliated with the Huey P. Newton Gun Club to read the writings or works of Huey P. Newton?*

Omowale: *Yes we do, yes we do. One of the books that is on our reading list is Revolutionary Suicide written by Huey P. Newton, and it basically gives what we call the revolutionary idea of what they will be dealing with as far as the government is concerned and the counter-intelligence program. So we do encourage reading material from Brother Huey P. Newton as well as Brother Robert F. Williams who wrote the book Negroes With Guns. So we do have reading material that we request our membership to go through.*

TNA: *In a few excerpts from Newton's book Revolutionary Suicide, he speaks very highly of other revolutionary leaders from his time period such as Che Guevara and Mao Tse-tung in China. Do you share Newton's admiration for those historical figures in any way? Do you view Che and Mao as role models or inspiration for the type of revolutionary leader that the black community needs here in America?*

Omowale: Of course, we follow this literature. We follow Mao Tse-tung. We follow some of these revolutionary leaders, but we understand that the times that they were going through their revolutionary process and the times now are absolutely different. We encourage all of our membership



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to research these individuals and find out what their struggles were so in case we have to deal with some of the same things in this day and time. But yes, we do encourage people to familiarize themselves with Chairman Mao and Che Guevara because basically what these men were doing [was] they were trying to liberate their own people from oppression, and we stand by those ethics.

TNA: *Do either you General Omowale, the Huey P. Newton Gun Club, or the People's New Black Panther Party advocate for the specific self-determination of what's called the "Black Belt" in order for those states to become a new sovereign country?*

Omowale: Yes, we do advocate that people start purchasing land in Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina. And what we believe is that we can have our own nation within a nation. We believe that we don't have to fire one shot to bring this into accomplishment. All we have to do is basically start a migration back to the South. As you know, if 40 million black people move in, 40 million white people will move out willingly. And with that being said, we will control the economics, we will control the education, and we will control the politics of these states, which will give us what we call our own nation within a nation, here in the United States. We would also get support from African countries, as well as China, and countries throughout the world as far as economics.

TNA: *How do you know specifically that China would help you out, or are you hoping China would be one of the countries that would help you out?*

Omowale: We always have seen China as a supporter of what blacks here in America go through. Some of our leaders have been exiled from the original Black Panther Party, and they had to live in China. They were supported by the Chinese government. So we believe that China would be right on time with having trade with a sovereign black nation, and it's also economically a good thing for China as well. We're not just asking them for their support without them getting anything in return. It would be an economic stimulation as well to do trade with a sovereign black nation.

TNA: *How do you view Vladimir Putin? Would you or a sovereign black nation look to Putin and Russia as a potential ally similar to China and many of the other countries in Africa?*

Omowale: As far as trade, [but] we also see Putin as a tyrant as well. Just because he's in another country, he's still a dictator. Putin has been the president of Russia for well over two decades. We believe when people are in power this long that absolute power breeds absolute corruption. So we're going to have to be very well versed and very well educated before we decide with who we would deal with as far as commerce is concerned. So I can't give you a thumbs up for Putin nor can I give you a thumbs down, because we've really not thought about with dealing with Russia as a whole in a political form or as a sovereign black nation. We have to get to that point we have the sovereign black nation established before we can start trying to figure out which leaders we're going to deal with and which leaders we're not going to deal with, but we're not going to deal with anybody who is a dictator and who is a tyrant. We're not saying these things about Putin, because we just don't have a complete picture. What we're saying [is] we're not going to deal with any dictatorships, and we're not going to deal with anybody we deem is a tyrant when it comes to the people.

TNA: *Would you consider the Castro family to be tyrants, or are they not tyrants in Cuba? They've been in power longer than Putin.*

Omowale: We've had a long history with the Castros taking in Black Panther members who are or have been exiled from the United States. We have a dear beautiful sister who is in Cuba now exiled from the



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United States: Assata Shakur. And Cuba has kept her safe. They have not made any arrangements to return her to America. So we have to look at these people as individuals. We understand that Castro fought against a tyrannical government himself to bring himself to power. So we would have to go back and examine everyone's individual record. But right now, we would have to say yes we would have an open relationship with Fidel Castro and his Cuban regime.

TNA: *You previously mentioned that if 40 million black people start moving to those states that 40 million white people would willingly leave, but what if there were some white people who didn't want to leave and instead chose to stay there, would that still be acceptable if there were some white people living in the black nation?*

Omowale: Of course, it would be acceptable. And you have to understand that some of these people have been rooted in these states going back generations. So if someone white wanted to stay in these states, we would not force them out but what would change is their education system would change, their economics would change, their political power would change, because these would collectively come under control of the black nation. But we're not saying that we want to force anybody out of their homes. Their demographics would change [and] their neighbors would change.

TNA: *Regarding the fatal shootings of five police officers in Dallas, Texas, by Micah Johnson, does the Huey P. Newton Gun Club in any way condone or support those shootings?*

Omowale: I can't say that we support it. I can't say that we condone it, but what I can say unequivocally is that we understand why it happened. And we believe this belief is not just the belief of the Huey P. Newton Gun Club or the People's New Black Panther Party, but we believe that people throughout the country understand why these shootings took place regardless of your ethnic background — black, white, brown, red. I think people have a complete understanding of why these shootings took place. You have black men, women, and children, and when I say children I am talking about Tamir Rice who was 12 years old, who are being murdered around the country by our police departments, and there are no repercussions for these shootings. These police are not even going to trial. When a man reaches a certain point, a man is going to snap, and he is going to deem what he sees as self-defense. We believe that these men reach these certain pinnacles in their lives where they just cannot bear to see another black man, woman, or child being murdered, and they made individual decisions to bring these murders to attention by not only sacrificing the lives of the police officers but sacrificing the lives of themselves as well. So again, we don't condone it, but we understand why it took place. I believe every man and woman in America understands why it took place.

TNA: *On Micah Johnson's Facebook account he "liked" or belonged to groups such as the Huey P. Newton Gun Club. How would you respond to those who would cite this as proof that he was linked to your organization?*

Omowale: We have over 18,000 people who have "liked" the Huey P. Newton Gun Club page. So just because somebody pushes a "like" button on social media does not mean that they are a part of our organization. We have an application process, and Micah never went through that process. We have multiple races of people that have pushed the "like" button on the social media page, so that doesn't necessarily put him into affiliation or contact with the Huey P. Newton Gun Club. We think that it's basically hilarious to the point of ludicrous for people to try to associate him with the gun club because he pushed a damn "like" button. He pushed the "like" button on a lot of black power organizations on



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his social media site, but that doesn't directly say that he was part of those organizations as well.

TNA: *Would you say that Micah Johnson's death makes him a martyr for the cause of trying to push back against "police brutality"?*

Omowale: Right, I'm going to have to answer that question and say yes. Micah is going to be a martyr in the minds of some black people. There are some people who have made a martyr out of Christopher Dorner, who was the ex-Los Angeles Police cop who decided to turn against his organization, the police department in Los Angeles, California, and killed police. And he did it in the name of liberation of his people because he saw injustices. There are some revolutionary people out there who will agree with the acts of Chris Dorner or would agree with the acts of Micah Johnson and the shooter of Baton Rouge, Louisiana. There are some people who believe that is timeout for turning the other cheek, and you have to meet violence with violence, violence beget violence. So, yes he is going to be martyred by some people in the country most definitely.

TNA: *Would you consider him a martyr or hero for yourself?*

Omowale: I see him as a brother. There's not a whole lot people that I consider heroes but I do see him as a brother.

TNA: *You've said that Micah Johnson was not a member of the Huey P. Newton Gun Club inasmuch that he did not go through the normal membership procedures of filing any paperwork, but were any of his relatives, or anyone else that he was close to, a member of the gun club?*

Omowale: Again, just to make it a public statement. We really didn't know Micah Johnson and who he was until after he did what he did. The only interaction that we, the Huey P. Newton Gun Club, had with Micah, I would give you an example of going to the grocery store and you saw the same person at the grocery store five or six times, you would be able to say, "Well, this person lives somewhere close around here, he's part of this community." This is the only interaction that we had with Micah. Me, personally, I've seen his face at a few events, such as the Malcolm X festival, the Kwanzaa festival, and things of that nature. Most of these were social events. They were not events held by the Panthers or held by the Huey P. Newton Gun Club. These were mostly just black social events. And again, I only knew him through facial recognition. We've never sat down or had a conversation together.

TNA: *Looking around on your personal Facebook account, you have a lot of content that you make public for other people to see, and among your "likes" was a page dedicated to Micah Johnson. What would you say to someone who would look at that and say that you support him or that you're condoning him or his actions by "liking" his Facebook page?*

Omowale: Well, the only thing that I could say to that is that is my personal opinion, and all I did was push a "like" button on Facebook. I didn't make any statements supporting Micah. I didn't make any statements condoning Micah. All I did, again, was push a "like" button on social media that so many people around the country do — millions of people around the country. I don't hear a lot of these questions when it comes to people who are pressing the "like" button on the KKK, pushing the "like" button on the Nazi movement. See how these white supremacist groups that far outnumber the Black Nationalists in this country and we don't hear a lot of these questions when it's being asked of what we deem is the white supremacist organizations. There are probably only a few thousand Black Nationalist movements here in the country, but there are thousands of thousands and thousands of what we deem as white supremacist Aryan Nation skinheads, but we don't see the same attention to detail being



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[given] to these particular groups. So again, to try to answer your question again, just because I may have “liked” a certain post or “liked” a certain image that does not say into detail of where my heart is or what my concerns may be.

While Houston shooter Micah Johnson may not have been an official card-carrying member of the Huey P. Newton Gun Club, it is clear that Johnson was at the very least influenced by many of the same militant, anti-capitalist, and Black Nationalist sentiments espoused by the People’s New Black Panther Party and Huey P. Newton Gun Club. One can expect to see and hear more of the Huey P. Newton Gun Club as further tensions and violence rise against local police and law enforcement in response to perceived instances of alleged police brutality.

Both the People’s New Black Panther Party and the Huey P. Newton Gun Club are outgrowths of the militant communist Black Nationalist domestic terrorist organizations in the United States from the 1960s and ’70s. The resurgence of such groups underscores the continued threat of militant communist ideology and the need to reorganize the House and Senate internal security subcommittees, the Attorney General’s Subversives List, the Subversive Activities Control Board, the counterintelligence units of the armed forces, and the intelligence units of most state and municipal police organizations.

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