

Ture in Havana hospital undergoing cancer treatment

HAVANA (AP) — His hair is going gray, and his body is fighting cancer.

But when Kwame Ture, once widely in the news as black activist Stokely Carmichael, reaches from his hospital bed for the telephone, he answers it as always: "Ready for Revolution."

A central figure in the United States' "black power" movement of the 1960s and a crusader for pan-Africanism since, Ture came to Cuba in April for treatment of prostate cancer discovered in January.

Ture, whose name is pronounced KWAH-may tour-Ray, said he first felt leg pains in November, while home in the West African country of Guinea, and took medicine for the pain.

When the pains became more severe, he visited Dr. Barbara Justice during a trip to New York and wound up spending nearly a month undergoing treatment at Columbia Presbyterian Hospital.

Smiling frequently, often laughing, Ture seemed as upbeat and polemical as ever during an hour-long interview at the Cir-Garcia clinic in Havana.

"Actually, I lived on borrowed time," he said. "In my job, death is an occupational hazard. So whether it's a bullet, whether it's cancer, makes no difference."

He said he came to Cuba for care because he is a socialist.

"Cuba does have excellent health care. As a socialist, I must be consistent. I cannot attack capitalism and attack an entire system, and when I get sick, run to capitalism and ask them to patch me up."

Ture, 54, has responded well to treatment, said Justice, who accompanied him to Cuba. She said the tumor and sites to which

the cancer has spread seem to be regressing. "So we're quite optimistic at this point."

Ture said Justice, a cancer specialist, accompanied him without pay. It is one sign of the regard with which he is held in much of the black community in the United States.

"He is a living legend, a hero who dedicated his life to the liberation of African people worldwide, and it's very important that we, the members of the community, support him in the same way he has supported us," Justice said.

Ture said he has also received financial help for his treatment from the Nation of Islam, led by Louis Farrakhan.

In the 1960s, the Trinidad native, then known as Stokely Carmichael, led the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. He participated in some of the first U.S. civil rights sit-ins and freedom rides, was repeatedly arrested, and became a national figure leading a group that challenged the credentials of the official Mississippi delegation to the 1964 Democratic convention.

Growing more frustrated with the American system, he became prime minister of the Black Panther Party, then embraced pan-Africanism and, in late 1968, moved to Guinea.

He founded the All-American People's Revolutionary Party under his new name, taken from African leaders Kwame Nkrumah and Ahmed Sekou Ture.

Ture said he hopes to see a single, socialist state for all of Africa, which would give Africans there and abroad pride and power. He rejects the term "African-American."

"For us, once Africa is uni-



Kwame Ture, formerly known as Stokely Carmichael, talks on the phone in his hospital room in Havana, Cuba, May 2, 1996. A central figure in the U.S. Black Power movement of the 1960s and a crusader for pan-Africanism since, Ture arrived in Cuba last month from his home in the

fied and strong, the problem will be solved, because Africans will be respected wherever they are. And if they're not, they can just get up and go home," he said.

The state that comes closest to his vision, he said, may be Libya, led by Moammar Gadhafi. Ture defines himself as a revolutionary. "Revolution is the continual and constant qualitative change of humanity. That's all it is."

That doesn't require outright war, he said, pointing to the end of legal segregation in the United States as a revolutionary step.

"We are still the only people who create urban rebellions in America, without planning," he said. "You know what's going to happen when we plan it?" he added with a chuckle. "It will be planned, of course."

Ture said he sees progress for some American blacks, but also growing poverty.

"The number of (black) congress people has increased, the number of newspaper commentators, the number of basketball players. Put that in there," he added with a grin, "because they

think they got there without their people's struggle."

Also growing among American blacks is a consciousness of oppression, he said. He cited community efforts to combat drugs, the rise in interest in Africa, and the big turnout for the "Million Man March" organized by Farrakhan.

"The people are ready for our struggle," he said. "Worsening conditions and rising consciousness must lead to revolution, and I am a revolutionary. So for me, everything is going well."

Ture said a lack of organization and petty quarrels had diluted black political power at a national level in the United States, but predicted that would change. "America and capitalism itself is pushing us to revolution. If I shed my blood for the vote to reform something and I don't get anywhere, I might as well shed my blood for revolution, overthrow the whole system. Let's get it now. Makes sense to me. I'm shedding my blood anyway. I might as well shed it for victory."

Customer's petition result in hiring of college students

By MAURICE CROCKER
Community News Reporter

For college students from Winston-Salem State University and elderly residents, employment opportunities will soon increase with the development of a managers training and elderly employment program at McDonald's Restaurant located on Martin Luther King Drive.

The new programs are the result of a petition signed by over

50 residents complaining of poor quality service they received from employees at the restaurant. The petition stated, "We the undersigned who are frequent customers at the McDonald's store, located at M.L.K. Drive in the city of Winston-Salem, NC, are petitioning the McDonald's Corporation for better and improved services at this location. Our concerns are (1) long waiting periods, (2) no, or very little prepared food in the holding bents, and (3) a shortage of quality employees."

Willie Cunningham, a Winston-Salem resident, developed the petition after he found out others had the same concerns as he.

"I'm glad I did what I did because I got the community involved," he said.

"Among our people we do a lot of complaining than anything else, it's time we done something."

Cunningham, who is also a student at Winston-Salem State, said he has been patronizing the restaurant since the fall of 1992. "I would always stop there on my way to or from class for a cup of coffee," he said. According to Cunningham, he began noticing the problems in service a year ago. Some of the problems Cunningham said he encountered were slow service, unfriendly

employees, and a sense of low morale. A meeting was held between the petitioners and Darnell Crews, operation manager for McDonald's Corporation. During that meeting Crews gave suggestions for some of the problems customers were experiencing.

Low morale, a high turnover rate, and managers working against one another were some of the explanations Crews told residents.

As a result of the petition and customer complaints, Crews said 20 new employees have been hired at that particular location. Crews said the corporation is very interested in hiring colleges students and placing them in a management training program. According to Crews, the students would receive 10 hours of college credits to work toward their graduation, and at the same time earn extra income.

Also during the meeting present employees raised complaints concerning pay and said that they may have something to do with the type of service people were receiving, Cunningham said.

Crews said the average pay scale is \$6.15 to \$7.50 an hour. He also said the scale doesn't depend on the length of time an employee has been working for the corporation. "If they don't pay people on the length of time, then what constitutes who gets \$6.15 and who gets \$7.50," Cunningham said. According to Cunningham a committee was formed, which consisted of five petitioners. The committee will help regulate and see that improvements are made.

"It's about taking action, we can solve problems, but you have to do something to bring about change," he said. "Just complaining isn't going to get it."

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