

Ex-Black Panther Released From Prison After 45 Years

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Bell was released on Friday after a judge rejected a petition from a police union organization to have his patrol blocked.

Former Black Panther and Black Liberation Army **Herman Bell** was released from a prison, in upstate New York, after spending **45 years being incarcerated**.

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Bell's support group release the following statement upon his release: "We hope that Herman's release will be a source of inspiration for more changes. Herman feels very honored and grateful for all the expressions of trust and support, but out of respect for the feelings of the relatives of the victims, he will not make public statements. We welcome you."

Bell was released on Friday after a **judge rejected a petition** from a police union organization, Benevolent Patrol Association, to have his patrol blocked. The ex-activist has mentored thousands of young people during his time in prison and has a record of excellent behavior.

After the decision was made to release the **former Black Panther**, the New York

State Supreme Court was charged to dismiss a lawsuit to stop the action, qualifying that the parole board “did not act irrationally or outside its bounds.”

A police spokesperson told The Intercept that the decision would be appealed.

New York Mayor **Bill de Blasio** was among those who wrote to the parole board to urge the commissioners to not release Bell. But weeks before Bell's release, CBS New York ran a public poll on support for the parole board's decision and ended up with 86 percent of the over 6,000 participants being in favor of the release.

The New York State Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic and Asian Legislative Caucus, some 160 advocacy groups and organizations as well as the son of one of the slain officer.

The officer's son wrote to the parole board in support of Bell's freedom and condemned the “media-fueled hysteria” surrounding his release.

Bell was sentenced to 25 years and life in prison for killing two New York City police officers in 1971.

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