



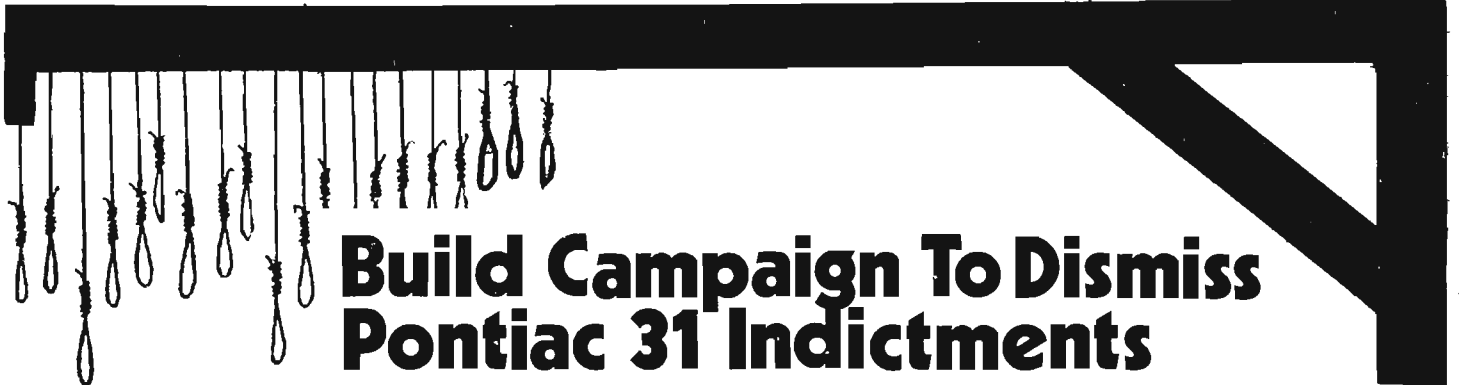
THE FUSE



NO. 12

NEW AFRIKAN PRISONERS ORG.

OCT. 12, 1979 / 14-ADM



Build Campaign To Dismiss Pontiac 31 Indictments

On January 10, 1977, two guards at Stateville prison were stabbed, one fatally. After a four-month "investigation" during which prisoners were beaten, intimidated and bribed, four New Afrikan (black) prisoners were hand-picked by the state to be framed for the stabbings.

In April of 1977, Bro. Charles Jennings was falsely indicted for murder; Bros. Thomas Blair, Andrew Craig and John Myles were falsely indicted for aggravated battery.

NAPO (then the Stateville Prisoners Organization), other Stateville prisoners — and the state — knew that these charges against the "Stateville Four" were without foundation. We sent out appeals to the black community for support of these Brothers — and the support never materialized to the degree demanded by the situation. Long before the indictments were delivered, documented evidence was available to show that none of the Four were in the areas where the stabbings took place, and that the state — including then-Stateville Warden David Brier-ton — had bribed and coerced several prisoners to give false testimony against the Four.

With the assistance of several attorneys and prisoner support organizations, primarily the Illinois Prisons and Jails Project, We were able to carry on a campaign which exposed the attempted frame-up and the political base upon which it rested. The aggravated battery charges were dismissed, and Bro. Jennings' trial ended in acquittal after the bribed and coerced witnesses of the state folded, and the evidence of the frame-up was presented in court.

NAPO supported the Four at that time, not only because the reality of the frame-up was clear, but because of the political reasons for the state's attempt

to frame four black prisoners. Interestingly, to some, the Four were then labeled by the state as "gang members" and the stabbings were called "gang hits."

During the struggle to free the Four, We issued a Political Statement explaining our reasons for supporting them: ". . . this attempted frame-up of the Four by the state is the most immediate reason for (NAPO's) support of them. But We have other reasons for supporting these Brothers, and it's not possible to present those reasons without placing them in a wider, political context. Because, on that ultimately determining line, the issue here is between black people and our enemy. For (NAPO) to talk about its support of the Four, is for it to talk about its involvement in the struggle to liberate our people. For (NAPO) to talk about the threat being presented to the Four by their frame/trial, is for it to talk about an aspect of the genocide which every black person in amerikkka is a victim of."

It was clear to us that to talk about the danger facing the Four was to talk about the danger facing all black people in the u.s. If We ignored the Four and their struggle, We would in practice be ignoring ourselves, all our people, and our collective responsibility to struggle as a nation against u.s. oppression.

On March 5, 1979, thirty-one (31) of our Brothers were falsely indicted by a Livingston County, Illinois, grand jury in what is another attempt by the state to carry on the barbaric amerikkkan tradition of genocide and national oppression.

The thirty-one Pontiac Brothers have been hand-picked by the Ill. Dept. of Corrections (DOC) to serve as scapegoats for the death of three guards and the destruction of state property during the Pontiac Prison Rebellion of July 22, 1978.

The Pontiac 31 have been selected by the state for a legal lynching which is designed to help create public acceptance of the mass use of the death penalty against Afrikan (black) people, and the long-term imprisonment of Afrikan youth.

Again quoting from our Statement on the Four: "The purpose of the lynching of black folks in amerikkka has always been to 'punish' those of us who seek freedom, who dared to strike out at the symbols and perpetrators of our oppression. Its purpose has always been to instill fear into black hearts, to paralyze black minds so that (We) wouldn't follow the logic of our degradation and begin to devise bold plans to end it."

In line with our belief that the people are the best judges, and the perspective from which We view the struggle to put the state on trial and FREE THE PONTIAC BROTHERS, NAPO calls for a mass campaign to quash the indictments of the thirty-one.

We are also basing this initial call to quash the indictments of the Pontiac Brothers upon the facts already known to us, which clearly point out the frame-up nature of the case.

Letters of support should be sent to the Pontiac Brothers:

John Bailey	Stephan Mars
Michael Evans	David McConnell
Anthony Gilberry	Ronnie Newby
Robert Harris	William Ozzie
Jessie Hill	Angelo Robinson
Larry Hoover	Joe Smith
Albert Jackson	Ike Taylor
Ernest Jackson	Kevin Tolbert
Benny Lee	

Cook County Jail
2600 South California Avenue
Chicago, IL 60680

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Lamont Richards, C-81385	Stateville Corr. Ctr.
John Lee, C-72595	P. O. Box 112
Lee Clark, C-50785	Joliet, IL 60434

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Larry Johnson, C-72565	Pontiac Correctional
Arthur Jones, C-15221	Center
Hurries Johnson, C-72665	P. O. Box 99
Manuel Santiago, C-72016	Pontiac, IL 61764
Robert Tosado, C-73545	
Willie Hardy, C-15411	
Lewis Perez, C-73777	
Mike Mitchell, A-80726	

Some of these facts were presented in a legal document filed in February before a Livingston County judge, calling for an end to the grand jury proceedings which resulted in the indictments. The document pointed out, and asked for an inquiry into, prosecutorial misconduct and the use of manufactured and coerced evidence and testimony to secure the indictments.

The document stated, in part:

- As a result of the years of injustices at Pontiac Prison, a Rebellion occurred on July 22, 1978, which resulted in the death of three guards and substantial destruction of prison property;
- As an immediate response to the incidents of July 22nd, the Ill. Dept. of Law Enforcement (IDLE) took full control of the prison, instituting a massive "investigation" with the intent to place the responsibility for the rebellion on the prisoners and to find scapegoats to blame for the conditions created by the DOC;
- Pursuant thereto the IDLE ordered all prisoners to be placed on 24-hour lock-up; terminated family visits, attorney visits, phone calls, showers; and deliberately created an atmosphere as coercive as possible to carry out these "investigations";
- Over the period of the following six months, and continuing until the present, the IDLE, joined by the Livingston County State's Attorney and specially appointed prosecutors Baliunas and Breen, have used the lock-up conditions, promises of transfer and early parole, and threats of indictment and the death penalty, to coerce statements from prisoners and manufacture indictments against specially selected scapegoats;
- Upon information and belief, prosecutors Vogel, Baliunas and Breen are now presenting coerced and sometimes bribed testimony through investigators and prisoner-witnesses to the regular sitting Livingston County grand jury;
- The evidence that the prosecutors have obtained from prisoner-witnesses is untruthful, unreliable, and the product of illegal and improper prosecutorial and investigative methods that are shocking to fundamental concepts of due process and fundamental fairness;
- Any indictments returned by the regular Livingston County grand jury would be subject to challenge as products of governmental, prosecutorial and investigative misconduct.

The motion also included a sworn affidavit by an attorney which stated, in part, that during the IDLE-conducted interrogations of Pontiac prisoners as part of the so-called investigation, "prisoners were offered

transfers to less restrictive prisons and help with the Parole Board if they would give testimony against other prisoners or prison organizations (usually names or organizations suggested by the interrogators), as having participated in the July 22nd Rebellion. They also were threatened with indictments themselves if they did not cooperate, and were told to tell other prisoners that they were going to get the electric chair.”

Examples of the statements made by state interrogators to prisoners during these sessions are:

“We’ll guarantee you will make parole if you say _____ beat and stabbed Officer _____.”

“We will help you if you will just testify that _____ is the leader of _____, and that he gave the orders.”

Afrikan people must not stand by while the Pontiac Brothers fight for their lives, and while the governments of illinois and amerikkka use this struggle and others like it to strengthen the crumbling foundations of u.s. colonialism and imperialism.



Build The National Black Human Rights Campaign!

The national mobilization at the United Nations, November 5, 1979, that is being called by the National Black Human Rights Coalition, is truly a historic event. It is being called on Black Solidarity Day (the first Monday in November). Black Solidarity Day has historically been a day of general strike and boycott of big businesses, who are economically exploiting the black community. The political significance of having a day when black workers do not go to work and boycott big businesses, is clear. It is one of the most concrete expressions of militant black protest against social, economic and political oppression that black people in the u.s. are forced to live under every day of our lives.

The National Black Human Rights Coalition is calling for the intensifying on a national level, the general work strike and boycott for November 5th. This strategy of the general strike and boycott will sharpen the role of black working class participation, in the November 5th activity, in general, and in building the National Black Human Rights Coalition, in particular.

There is an inseparable relationship between the extreme economic depression in the black community, the history of the super-exploitation of black labor, and the sharpest expression of human rights violations in the black community: right-wing attacks (ku klux klan, white citizens’ councils, etc.), police brutality, the courts and the dehumanizing prison system. Gross human rights violations against black people must then be seen as the historical method of maintaining white supremacy and the domestic colonization of the black community in america. As the economic crisis in the u.s. grows, the subsequent economic depression in the black

community also intensifies. The level of repression by the state, as history has shown, also intensifies. Every economic crisis that the u.s. has undergone for the last 100 years has always meant for black people, who are forced to bear the major brunt of this economic crisis: more murders and attacks by the ku klux klan; more murders and brutality by the police; and more imprisonment of black youth.

The signs of this repressive situation are all around us. In New York, black youth as young as 13 are being imprisoned. In Philadelphia, white snipers are killing black youth from rooftops. In Tupelo, Miss., Decatur, Ala., and all across the south, as well as the north, the klan and white right-wing terror organizations are on the rise. 34 states have revised the death penalty and more have legislation on the way. The carter administration says that the recession hasn’t come yet. So, it is clear for black and other oppressed nationalities in the u.s. what the 1980’s have in store for us.

The National Black Human Rights Coalition, in building a vehicle to consolidate the re-emerging Black Liberation Struggle, sees that the general strike and boycott will have to become a major weapon in combatting the intensifying repression that is all around us.

Black Solidarity Day, Nov. 5, 1979, is just the beginning. For all of our people who will not be able to make the march and rally in New York, they can participate in a concrete way by staying home from work and boycotting big businesses.

There are two other aspects to the issue of general

strike and boycott, that must also be seen. The role of black prisoners, who are a source of slave labor, and a source of super-profits for a billion-dollar-a-year prison industry. We are asking all black prisoners across the u.s., as a concrete way of being in solidarity with the National Black Human Rights Campaign, as well as protesting their own blatant dehumanizing conditions in prison, to lock in or refuse to work on Black Solidarity Day. The second aspect is one of international solidarity with black people struggling against human rights violations, white minority rule, imperialism, and for black state power, in south africa (Azania). Thus multi-national corporations and big businesses that exploit black people in the u.s. are the same multi-national corporations and big businesses that maintain fascist denial of human rights in south africa (Azania).

A national march and rally at the United Nations and the carrying out of a general strike and boycott against human rights violations of black people in the u.s., must also expose the united states' violations of human rights of black people in Azania. Our struggle is one.

TOWARD A VICTORIOUS MARCH AND
RALLY / GENERAL STRIKE AND BOYCOTT
BLACK SOLIDARITY DAY
NOVEMBER 5, 1979

National Black Human Rights Coalition
National Office
P. O. Box 227
Bronx, NY 10451
(212) 293-8480



IN MEMORIAM OF
COMRADE-BROTHER JONATHAN JACKSON,
Born in this month, 26 years ago

"On August 7, 1970, Jonathan Jackson entered a courtroom in San Rafael, California, and attempted to free three black convicts (William Christmas, James McClain, Ruchell (Cinque) Magee, the only survivor), one of whom was on trial for assaulting a guard. He armed the convicts and took five hostages, including the assistant district attorney and the judge, still dressed in his robes. He died a few minutes later in a hail of bullets inside a rented van that was being used for the getaway.

"'We're taking over,' he said. At seventeen, Jonathan had already come to the conclusion that the only way he could affirm his sense of justice was at the point of a gun. His experience of life in Amerika had convinced him that the only way he could be heard was by an act of suicidal daring. 'You can take

our pictures. We are the revolutionaries.' With these words he announced to the world that he was not a criminal, because he no longer recognized the legitimacy of white law.

"When his sister heard the news of his death, she cried out, 'But he was only a boy.' Her mother corrected her. 'Don't say that. He was a man. They killed his father a long time ago. Jonathan wasn't going to let that happen to him. He was going to live like a man.'" (From the Intro. to BLOOD IN MY EYE)

"These comrades must make the first contribution. They will be the first to fall. We gather up their bodies, clean them, kiss them and smile. Their funerals should be gala affairs, of home-brewed wine and revolutionary music to do the dance of death by. We should be sad only that it's taken us so many generations to produce them." Comrade Brother George Jackson, BLOOD IN MY EYE