

expressed solidarity with the Ethiopian and Eritrean people.
ESUNA attacked the junta for working hand-in-glove with U.S. imperialism and for
engaging in mass repression against the Ethiopian and Eritrean people.

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San Quentin trial recesses

Quentin defense rests

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The defense suddenly rested in the San Quentin Six case last week.

Public defender Frank Cox, who is representing Black inmate David Johnson, decided not to call any witnesses in defense of his client. Johnson was to have been the last of the six Black and Latin prisoners to present his case.

Cox's decision not to call any witnesses was motivated in part by the weakness of the prosecution case against Johnson and the highly effective cross-examination of witnesses who testified against the prisoner. In addition, since all five of his codefendants have already presented their cases, almost any witness called on behalf of Johnson would have been repetitious. In a trial that has already lasted over 14 months, the desire to avoid unnecessary repetition is very strong.

Cox also waged a very strong political case on behalf of Johnson and his codefendants, in a months-long attempt to prove a state conspiracy to assassinate George Jackson was responsible for the events of Aug. 21, 1971 in which Jackson and five others died. Cox attempted to subpoena officials and records of the state attorney general's Criminal Investigation and Identification section (CI&I), the FBI and the Criminal Conspiracy Section (CCS) of the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD). His attempts to show the knowledge and participation of all these agencies in the events of Aug. 21 were generally thwarted by the court or by the agencies' refusal to acknowledge their involvement. But Cox's cross-examination of a number of San Quentin guards and officers who testified as prosecution witnesses often revealed contacts with one or another of these agencies.

POLICE CONSPIRACY

Louis Tackwood, a former paid agent of the LAPD-CCS later testified about the involvement of all three agencies in plans to assassinate Jackson. Tackwood said he was involved in these plans from early 1970 until Jackson's death. He named specific indivi-

duals in all three agencies who he said were his coconspirators or superiors in the assassination plot.

Despite the skillful political and criminal defense conducted by Cox, some courtroom observers were uneasy about his decision not to call any witnesses. This leaves the bulk of his case to be explained to the jury in Cox's closing argument.

The defense and prosecution are expected to begin final arguments in mid- or late-June, following recesses and argument over what instructions the judge should give the jury when they go out to deliberate. In many cases, the type of instructions given is crucial to the outcome of the trial. In a case like this, which relies heavily on circumstantial evidence and entirely on proving conspiracy to commit acts rather than the actual commission of those acts, the instructions may very well mean the difference between verdicts of guilty, not guilty or a hung jury.

A decision is not expected in the case until sometime in July.