What It's Doing to Us

The [illegible]

By Nicholas Von Hoffman
Times-Post Service

Washington

We Americans are mixed up in so many killings, it's not easy to separate out the routine hits from the important ones.

Anybody with half a brain, however, can see that the offing of Fred Hampton, chairman of the Illinois Black Panther party, by the forces of law and order was the most significant rub-out of 1969, a year that is making a late calendar effort to equal the carnage of 1968.

Until the gunsels gave it to Hampton in his bed, there had been two liberation movements in the black American world. There had been the one we liberal white people called "responsible" and "moderate," and the other which we spoke of as "militant," "radical" and "irresponsible."

That's over.

Once, Roch David Abernathy wouldn't have been caught within miles of a Black Panther. The other day he [illegible] to Fred Hampton's funeral and spoke words of [illegible]tion over the man's [illegible].

Black congressmen of the [illegible] who would fidget when Rap Brown's name came up [illegible] that the great Panther hunt be called off.

PATTERN

This is going to confuse white people who've been told that the Panther is a predatory carnivore in a land of herbivorous ungulates. To us whites, Panthers are gangsters, Communists, murderers and racists; we believe Panthers are very dangerous people who must be disarmed immediately at all costs.

But the situation created

[illegible]

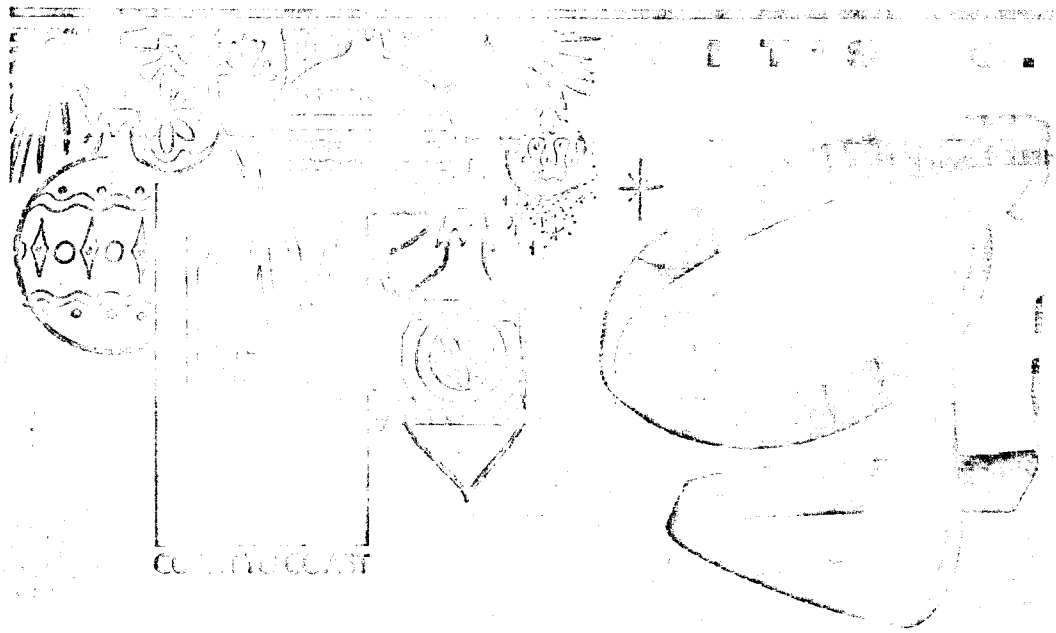
cy for that and if [illegible] getting justice or [illegible] from these white courts [illegible] very iffy proposition.

The white-controlled mechanisms of [illegible] been notably [illegible] keeping [illegible] leaders [illegible].

Dr. [illegible] (murder [illegible] [illegible] or [illegible] Carmichael [illegible] Robert Williams (exiled, returned and now jailed), Bobby Seale (jailed).

These are the big, famous names or the members of relatively large and well-known organizations. [illegible]

[illegible]



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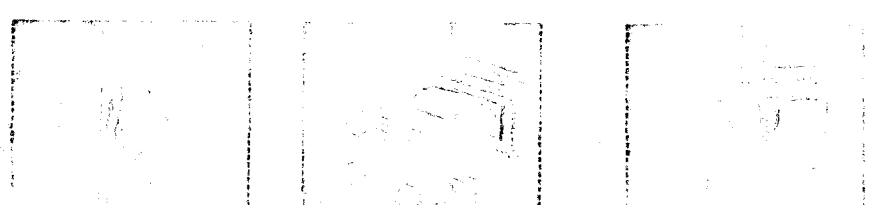

ethnocentrism and try to imagine how a black person might look at what's happening.

We look at each of these police attacks as a unique case, just as we look at Song My as an "isolated incident." It doesn't occur to us that a black man might see a pattern in what's going on.

He will remember the Marcus Garvey liberation movement of the 1920s and the Black Muslim movement of the 1950s, both important and promising efforts at the political organization of the urban black poor by blacks themselves without hidden white financial support and control. Both movements were smashed by the white government.

GUNS

We whites buy the Los Angeles police department's explanation of the attack the other day on the grounds that the Panthers in the apartment had guns and fought back.

A black person might remember the [illegible] attack launched by the LAPD in 1965 against the Honorable Elijah Muhammad's temple there. The assault, also near dawn, included firing nobody knows how many rounds of machine-gun ammunition in the place. When it was over, no guns were found.

You don't have to be a fanatic or a Communist or an irresponsible militant to conclude that, if the police are going to [illegible] you with machine guns [illegible] you're [illegible], you'd do as well to try to defend yourself.

In fact, a non-white person might decide, after comparing [illegible] with Los Angeles, [illegible] the guns that saved [illegible] people's lives.

Some people will read this and [illegible] the writer is encouraging [illegible] to pick up guns and [illegible] policemen. He is not. He is as absolutely against [illegible] murdering [illegible] as he is against [illegible] murdering [illegible]. [illegible] and tragic. What [illegible] here is how [illegible] can [illegible] would [illegible].

We white people, when we're in a serious jam, we get ourselves a lawyer, we go to court and we sue. Black people don't have mon-

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