

Philadelphia Panther Offices Raided

Washington Post Staff Writer

PHILADELPHIA, Aug. 31—Three policemen were wounded in predawn raids today on locations described by authorities as headquarters for the Black Panther Party.

One officer suffered a leg wound and two others were hit by shotgun pellets in the hands and stomach. Authorities arrested ten men and five women at the three raided buildings and none were reported injured.

The assaults marked the third successive day of gun battles between blacks and police here. Six policemen have been wounded and one killed.

On Saturday night, a 43-year-old police sergeant was shot to death and another officer critically injured when a small band described as "revolutionaries" attacked a lonely police guardhouse in Cobbs Creek Park. The next night, two highway patrolmen were badly wounded when they stopped with drawn pistols a suspected stolen car.

150 Conduct Raids

Today's raids were conducted by an estimated 150 policemen, wearing bullet-proof vests and armed with rifles, carbines, shotguns and tear gas. At two locations, police said they were met with gunfire as they pounded in doors with axes. At the third place, one man was arrested without incident.

The raids were ordered by Philadelphia's militant police commissioner, Frank L. Rizzo. After the Saturday night killing of Sgt. Frank Von Colla Jr., Rizzo issued this challenge to what he called "black revolutionaries:"

"If they had any guts they would call me and set a show-down, if that is what they want. We'll even give them odds on it. We'll send out fewer people with fewer weapons."

Today, police met their strongest resistance at 2935 W. Columbia Ave., a house with a sign describing it as the "Black Panther Party Community Information Center."

Police first told reporters they had tossed tear gas canisters into the building's windows and were greeted with shotgun and rifle blasts. Later, Rizzo said that police had first knocked on the door and then were fired upon.

Leaders Wounded

The raid leaders, Inspector James J. Curran, 49, and Capt. Robert W. Martin, 45, were struck with shotgun pellets as

they approached the front door, police said. Another officer covering the building, Frank R. Eckman, 41, was hit in the left leg. The wounds were described as minor.

Police, who numbered about 50 at the scene, returned the fire and three men and four women inside came out and surrendered.

In the building's windows were pictures of Bobby Seale and Huey Newton, Black Panther Party leaders. Police said the walls inside were scrawled with slogans, including "Death to the Pigs."

Building Surrounded

The second firefright erupted at a building in West Philadelphia at 3625 Wallace St. There, Charles Montgomery, a reporter for the Philadelphia Bulletin, accompanied the raiders from police headquarters, and gave this account of what he saw.

At 6 a.m., under a light drizzle, about 50 policemen surrounded the three-story brick row house on Wallace St., turning searchlights on it.

Staff Inspector Robert Kipnitz walked up to the front door, struck it repeatedly with an axe, but was unable to break it in.

At this point, an officer called out:

"Police. We have a warrant. Throw your weapons out now."

The order was repeated vainly several times. Then two shots were fired from inside the building. Police fired a return volley of about seven shotgun blasts. Another shot came from the building's second floor.

Capt. Alphonso Giordano distributed gas masks and tear gas and himself ran up to the building's porch.

Heaves Gas Inside

He broke a small pane of glass in the boarded-up window and heaved a gas canister inside. He made four other runs with tear gas. One shot was fired at him but it missed.

Police then fired back, and a voice inside cried:

"We're coming out."

Police ordered the inmates to throw out their weapons first. Six men and a woman emerged. The men were lined up against a nearby wall and stripped naked on the spot as police searched for more weapons.

Iniall, reporter Montgomery counted seven rifles or shotguns and one automatic pistol plus dozens of rounds of ammunition picked up by the po-

lice from the Wallace Street house.

Meeting Scheduled

The raids and assaults came in the week before a scheduled "Revolutionary People's Constitutional Convention" called by the Black Panther Party here.

The gathering is to assemble on Saturday at the sports arena of Temple University. Sunday and Monday, the convention is to move to the auditorium of a nearby church. Both are located in the black ghetto of North Philadelphia, about a dozen blocks from the Wallace Street battle.

Police said that the three places raided at dawn were being used to register convention delegates. Reggie Schell, a local Panther leader among those arrested today, was scheduled to speak at the convention.

Gov. Raymond P. Shafer indicated he was having second thoughts about permitting the state-owned Temple arena to be used as a convention site.

"If this conference is going to lead to mob action or rioting or destruction," he said, "I will certainly reconsider my decision."

Mayor Voices Concern

Mayor James H. J. Tate said he was "very concerned" about the three days of gunfire and urged elected officials "to do something" about giving more support to police.

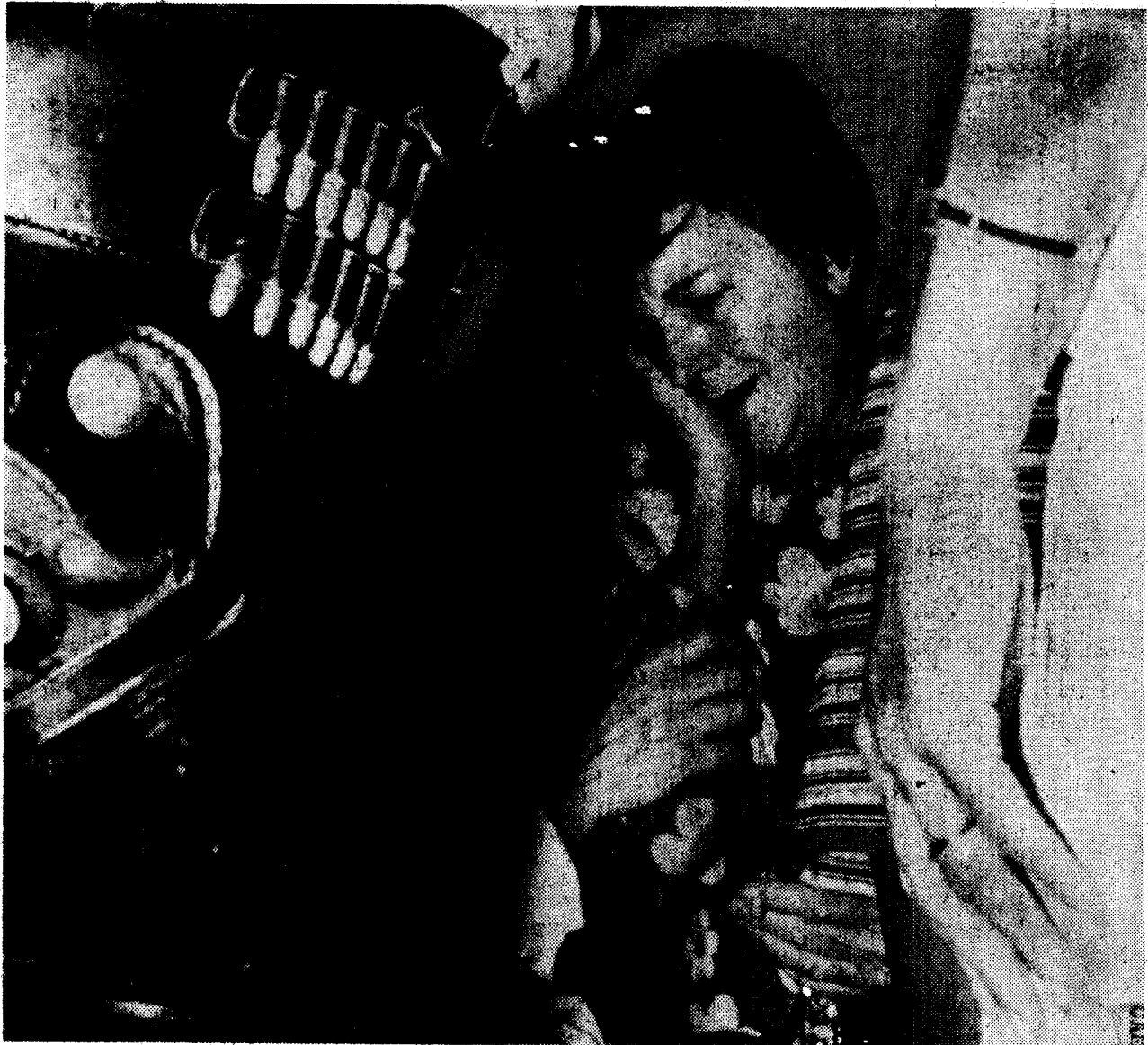
The police sergeant slain on Saturday was said to have been sitting at his desk when he was shot five times and killed instantly. A few minutes earlier, Officer James Harrington, 39, was hit twice in the face by a man who hailed his patrol wagon to the curb.

Police arrested three suspects and are looking for

three others. Commissioner Rizzo said that one of those arrested had described the six members of a "Black Unity Council and Revolutionaries." According to Rizzo, the six are "psychotic lunatics" who set out with guns and hand grenades to kill police in Cobbs Creek Park.

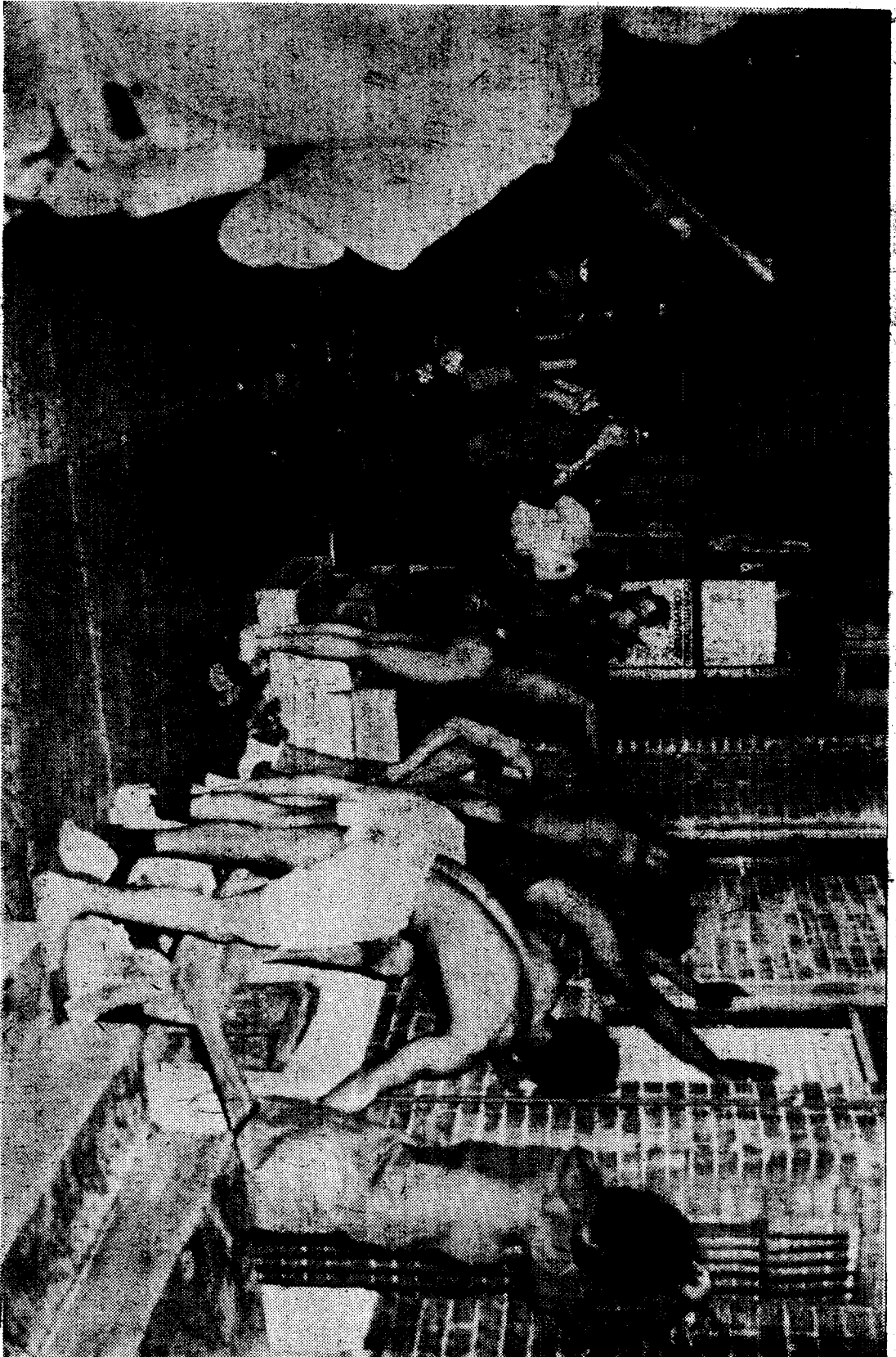
On Sunday, Highway Patrolman Thomas Gibbons Jr., 26, was shot in the back and elbow, and Patrolman John Nolen, 28, in the face. One of the two men in the stolen car who was wounded in the exchange was arrested.

Gibbons, the son of a former Philadelphia police commissioner, is in critical condition. Nolen's condition is fair.



United Press International

Mother of wounded Philadelphia Policeman Thomas Gibbons Jr. is comforted as she awaits news of his condition.



Search

Philadelphia policemen line up occupants of a Black Panther Party headquarters after early morning raid, forcing them to strip for weapons search. Three policemen were

wounded in series of raids; none of ten men and five women arrested were reported injured. Raids followed week-end slaying of policeman and wounding of three, story, A3.

United Press International