

Purge of Panthers accelerates

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"We must save Bobby Seale because we must save the Black Panther Party because we must save the revolutionary spirit in America." This passage by the French Revolutionary philosopher Jean Genet best sums up why the people in Amerika have to save Bobby Seale.

The Federal government is trying to eliminate the Black Panther Party and is using all the means at its disposal, legal or illegal, to destroy the party. Unless the people of this country put a stop to this repression by the government, the government will succeed in its efforts to destroy the Panthers and will then feel free to repress any other progressive movement in this country. If we don't stop the repression, the blood of Bobby Seale and the Black Panther Party will be on the hands of all those "good citizens" who did nothing to stop it.

On May Day of this year, the radical community made its first attempt at combating political repression on a national scale. Twenty-five thousand people, mainly white radicals, gathered in the "model city" of New Haven not to protest the trial of the Conn. 9 or to ask for a new trial, but rather to demand that Bobby Seale and the other eight defendants be set free. Our purpose that day in New Haven was not to protest the trial but to end it.

The American government has always responded to political dissent with political repression. Freedom of speech has never been accompanied with even the slightest freedom of action. Those who hold absolute power in the society — corporate capitalists, industrial heads, and their government representatives, the politicians — congratulate those who speak in favor of and defend the system, tolerate the speech of those who are powerless and unable to change the status quo, and violently repress those who speak to people's needs and move against their powerful rulers.

The International Workers of the World (IWW—Wobblies) between the Spanish American War of 1898 and WW I posed a threat to the capitalist class by their advocacy of Workers Democracy. In the 1920's and '30's the bosses again violently attacked the organizations of workers and unions. In 1920, the Palmer raids, in which thousands of Wobbly members were imprisoned without cause, wiped out the Wobblies and their support. In the late forties and early fifties anyone who advocated an ending of the cold war tensions was persecuted for being "Communist."

The Black Panther Party speaks to the needs of the people — not only black people, but to poor and oppressed people everywhere. They speak of uniting all people against the ruling class. They are a threat to the power structure for just those reasons. If they were racist, if they were cultural nationalists, or if they ignored the white working class, they would be brushed aside and considered irrelevant. They would have no base and no support. Such is not the case, and that is why they are being repressed. Just as the Wobblies represented a threat to the power structure in 1910-1920, the Black Panther Party represents a threat in 1970 to that same power structure.

"From May 2, 1967, to Sept. 28, 1968 — a key date, the day that Huey Newton was condemned to 15 years in prison — there were 55 cases recorded against the Panthers. From Sept. 28, 1968, to Dec. 9, 1969, there were 373 cases. The acceleration of the repression is staggering. It is aimed above all at the Black Panther Party. From March 1, 1968, to August 25, 1968, five Panthers were killed. From Oct. 6, 1968, to Dec. 20, 1969, 15 Panthers were killed. The figures are accurate. Here are some more: from March 2, 1968, to Sept. 28, 1969, 130 Panthers were called in for questioning, as compared with 738 who were summoned from Sept. 9, 1969, to Dec. 9, 1969." Therefore in one year the repression increased in a direct proportion of one to seven." (Ramparts, June, 1970) The case of Black Panther Chairman Bobby Seale, best dramatizes the extent to which the Federal government will go to wipe out the Panthers' lea-

dership in particular, and the Panther Party in general.

Bobby Seale, Chairman of the Black Panther Party, was arrested on August 19, 1969, by 15 plainclothes police and government agents on the phony charge of "flight to avoid prosecution." He was placed in a San Francisco jail and held there until he was arrested for the New Haven Conspiracy Murder, at which time the "flight to avoid prosecution" charge was dropped. Bobby Seale had been kidnapped by the State and was held without bail. He was then taken to Chicago to stand trial with seven other defendants in the Chicago Conspiracy trial. Seale had been indicted for conspiracy to incite a riot and for crossing state lines with the intent to incite a riot at the '68 Democratic Convention. Seale, on his way East, stopped in Chicago for 2 hours to deliver a speech at the demonstration, and then left. At his trial Judge Hoffman refused to allow the state to use Seale's speech. Chicago Daily

recovered from a gall bladder operation, and he then refused to let Seale exercise his Constitutional right of defending himself. Seale sat in the courtroom without a lawyer and demanded his rights. For this he was bound, gagged, shackled and finally removed from the court and given four years of contempt of court charges, more than any of the other defendants.

From the Cook County jail, Bobby Seale was taken to New Haven to stand trial with eight other Panthers on a charge of conspiracy to commit murder and kidnapping. Bobby Seale was implicated in this case by the word of one man, George Sams. There is no other evidence connecting Seale with the murder of Alex Rackley, a Panther in good standing. Sams is a former Panther turned police informer, who had been kicked out of the party for stabbing a fellow Panther. He has a history of mental illness and has already pleaded guilty to the murder of Alex Rackley. This man's word is what is now keeping Bobby Seale in a Conn. jail. Presently Sams is undergoing psychiatric examination; the results may determine if bail will be set for Seale.

The defense has moved that the indictment against the Panthers be quashed because they were not indicted by a jury of their peers. They were indicted by a jury that was chosen by the Sheriff.

The New Haven trial is supposed to be the last stop for Bobby Seale. Seale was kidnapped in San Francisco, railroaded to Chicago, denied his constitutional rights, ordered to jail for demanding his rights. From Chicago he was railroaded to New Haven to stand trial on charges trumped up by

prisoners; 2) Immediate withdrawal of American troops from Southeast Asia; and 3) End university complicity with the war by ending all war-related research, ending all counterinsurgency research, and removing ROTC from all campuses.

Freeing Bobby Seale is the first and primary demand of the strike. It firmly commits the student population to support the Black Liberation struggle. In the weeks that followed the issuance of these demands over 400 colleges and universities around the country went out on strike. As the strike went into its second week the primary demand was relegated to secondary importance. What began to motivate students was not to free Bobby Seale, but rather the invasion of Cambodia and the Kent State "tragedy."

The demand to free Bobby and to end political repression has to re-

main the primary demand. One cannot separate repression at home from the war abroad. The Black Panther Party represents internally the same threat to the capitalist system that the Vietnamese and now the Cambodians represent externally. The capitalist ruling class is fighting an undeclared war abroad against a people fighting for their national liberation. That liberation struggle in Southeast Asia threatens US corporate interests. If the Vietnamese people win, the US will lose the natural resources, cheap labor, markets, and profits of that part of the world. The United States is fighting to defend a system of private property, and it is fighting against a people who reject that system.

The vanguard of the National Liberation struggle in America is the Black Panther Party. The Party directly threatens the economic and political control the capitalist class has over the people. An undeclared war against the Panthers is being waged to defend a system of capitalist exploitation

at home.

Bobby Seale must be set free. Students, workers, third world people, and poor people must see the necessity of working together to free Bobby Seale and to continue the struggle for liberation. The undeclared war against the people of Southeast Asia and against the black people of this country will not end until the system of exploitation and aggression is crushed. Only then will the people be free to determine their own destiny.

the state. Next the State plans to railroad Seale to the electric chair where they hope to "legally" murder him. The government's conspiracy to destroy the Panthers has spread throughout the country. Besides the New Haven case, the government has systematically attacked the Panthers' leadership and their main offices. In the New Haven trial two top Panthers, Emory Douglas and David Hilliard, were given six month sentences for contempt of court. After the strike at Yale began the court released Douglas and Hilliard on the condition that they apologize. Hilliard is presently under Federal indictment for "threatening the life of the President" because he said at a peace rally, "We will kill Richard Nixon."

In New York, 21 Panthers are charged with conspiracy to bomb several buildings. Most of the men and women are being held on 100,000 dollars "bail" apiece and have been in jail over one year awaiting trial. No buildings were ever bombed, no crime occurred, but the Panthers arrested have already served a combined total of over 20 years. This is what Mitchell and all the other government law and order fascists mean when they talk about "preventative detention" or "crime prevention."

On Dec. 4, 1969, the Chicago police attacked the Panthers, murdering in their beds Panther leaders Fred Hampton and Mark Clark. They have arrested seven other Panthers on attempted mur-

der charges when they defended themselves from the police. The black policemen of Chicago called the killings "murder" and called for a complete investigation. A police investigation revealed that one of the pigs that lead the attack is a member of the Chicago area Ku Klux Klan. After several investigations, the seven Panthers were released and their charges dropped. Apparently, there was a deal made by the District Attorney to release the Panthers if no murder charges would be brought against the pigs who killed Hampton and Clark.

Just four days following the

murder of Hampton and Clark, 450 L.A.P.D. attacked three Los Angeles Panther Offices; the police used telephone trucks to hide in, several helicopters, and a tank. These attacks were made as usual without the proper search warrants, and had been approved by the Pentagon (they authorized the use of the tank) and by Governor Reagan. The Panthers defended themselves and were successful in preventing the police from murdering them. However, they were arrested on charges of attempted murder. Most of the 18 men and women arrested are now out of jail, released on bails ranging from 10,000 to 50,000 dollars.

On April 30, 1970, the day before the mass rally in New Haven, the Baltimore office of the Panthers was raided and several Panthers were arrested on charges similar to those in New Ha-

ven. They were charged with the torture murder of an alleged police informer. There were 18 arrest warrants issued and ten had been arrested when all the charges were dropped. The trumped-up nature of the charges was apparently more obvious than the charges made up in New Haven or New York.

Last year Attorney General Mitchel, Nixon's strongman in Washington, declared there would be no Black Panther Party as of Jan. 1, 1970, and J. Edgar Hoover has said that the Panthers are the greatest threat to our nation's internal security. At the beginning of this year, the mayor of Seattle refused to cooperate with the federal government and local police in their plan to raid the Seattle office of the Panthers, and he denounced the government for its "Gestapo like raids." Just recently Mitchel authorized the use of 3,000 marines to stand guard in New Haven at the May Day rally. The Federal government, with the aid of the courts, local police, and the mass media, is setting up the Panther Party for destruction. The government and the media have created an image of the Panthers as criminals and as people to be feared, ignoring the Panthers' Breakfast program. The police have the license to hassle, arrest and kill Panthers; and these actions are upheld by the courts, who seem to ignore the Constitutional rights of Panthers. However, the Panthers have survived and are fighting back.

A National Student Strike was called for after the May Day rally at New Haven and was based on three demands: 1) Free Bobby Seale, end the repression of the Panthers, and free all political

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