

# Woman Spectator Who Disrupted Panther Trial Here Is Given 30 Days in Jail

**By EDITH EVANS ASBURY**  
Mrs. Maryann Weissman, whose remarks last Tuesday at the trial of 13 Black Panthers set off a demonstration that resulted in violence, was sent to jail for 30 days yesterday.

Supreme Court Justice John M. Murtagh pronounced the contempt-of-court sentence within 15 minutes after Mrs. Weissman's appearance in court. He acted despite a plea by two lawyers who accompanied her for an adjournment to Monday.

"This is a matter of summary judgment," Justice Murtagh declared. "I should have proceeded on the spot when it occurred in court. I am prepared to proceed now."

Mrs. Weissman, who is white, rose from her seat in the spectators' section Tuesday to pronounce what she called "injustice" of the trial of the Panthers, who are accused of conspiring to bomb public places and of attempted murder and attempted arson.

Her remark led to a furor in which two defendants, two court officers and a detective were injured.

## Recess Is Called

Yesterday, Justice Murtagh declared a recess when he was informed that, in response to his summons, Mrs. Weissman was about to be brought in fourteen extra court officers then entered and stood guard.

Because of the recess the defendants were not in court when Mrs. Weissman entered. But their friends and relatives filed the spectators' benches, and they applauded Mrs. Weissman and booed Justice Murtagh during the proceeding.

A lawyer who identified him-

self as Daniel Meyers of 152 Court Street, Brooklyna, said he did not represent Mrs. Weissman, but did represent her lawyer, Henry Disilvero, who was in Chicago and will not be able to be present until Monday.

Mr. Meyers was accompanied by Lewis M. Steel, whom he introduced as also a representative of Mr. Disilvero.

"Since I am not represented by counsel, I would like to speak on my own behalf," said Mrs. Weissman, a diminutive woman with short brown hair, clad in a long-sleeved, turtle-necked navy blue sweater and tweed skirt.

Reading from a two-page mimeographed statement that had already been distributed downstairs in the press room, Mrs. Weissman, who is 31 years old, asserted that she came to the trial Tuesday "to express my heartfelt solidarity with the Black Panther party of my organization, Youth Against War and Fascism."

Still reading, Mrs. Weissman said she had also come "to protest this monstrous, totally incredible frame-up of the young Panther Party defendants."

At times shaking her finger at Justice Murtagh, who watched without discernible reaction, Mrs. Weissman declared that she had a constitutional right of dissent against judicial frame-ups.

Spectators applauded and shouted "right on!" and other banner slogans. As the tumult subsided, Mrs. Weissman resumed, saying "I call upon the young people of New York to demonstrate against this frame-up and to stop this trial by mass action."

In conclusion she cried, "If getting justice is contempt then so be it."



The New York Times  
Mrs. Maryann Weissman with reporters yesterday.

Justice Murtagh, referring to the question he had asked and to which she had replied with the speech, said: "I take it you don't have any quarrel with the observations of the court" that she had indeed arisen to criticize the court on Tuesday, and provoked the violent demonstration. He never received a direct answer to this question.

For the most part, the defendants were quiet yesterday, in contrast with their running commentaries and at times loud, scornful remarks on the previous three days of the trial. They had not been brought to the courtroom until noon, because of a slowdown by correction officers in penal institutions in protest over working conditions and shortage of personnel.

As soon as the defendants were seated, Sanford Katz, one of six defense lawyers, renewed their earlier motions asking Justice Murtagh to dismiss the indictments or disqualify himself.

This time the argument was that he has been too critical of the lawyers' manner of proceeding, and "humiliating" in his comments on their competence.

Several times, when defendants joined in outbursts that halted the trial, Justice Murtagh warned the lawyers that they were responsible for their clients' conduct and could be "disciplined" when the trial was over.

Indications of what the lawyers fear that discipline might involve emerged as Mr. Katz said: "We are vulnerable in terms of both contempt of court proceedings and any proceedings by bar associations."

Mr. Katz also disclosed that during a private conference, Justice Murtagh "today suggested we be supervised by some sort of supervisor from the Appellate Division." He demanded that "personal abuse" and "repeated references to our supposed incompetence must cease."

Justice Murtagh denied the motions and the lawyers' request that he apologize.

Shortly afterward, Richard Moore, whose lawyer asked for and was refused permission for him to address the court directly, spoke to Justice Murtagh anyway, shouting: "These lawyers have no control over us except to advise us. If we don't get our rights we are going to turn this raggedy, filthy pig pen out every single day!" Spectators applauded, and called out Panther slogans as

Mr. Moore continued: "My attorney advised me not to speak all six defense lawyers. He and I speak. My constitutional rights are being denied. You are afraid of what I have to say."

The only witness to testify yesterday was Detective William Halboran. He was with a party of four policemen who arrested Michael Tabor, April 2, 1969, at his apartment and allegedly found guns and ammunition there.

Justice Murtagh noted for the record that Detective Halboran was personally known to him, and that Mrs. Halboran was his personal secretary, but he refused to disqualify himself, as the defense requested.

Earlier in the day Justice Murtagh granted a defense motion that daily transcripts of

the proceedings be provided to all six defense lawyers. He made the ruling after an assistant corporation counsel, James Nespole, told him the city would pay for the transcripts.

The trial will continue Monday.