

# N.Y. Panther Hearing Ends in Uproar

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NEW YORK, Feb. 9—A pretrial hearing for 13 Black Panthers on bombing conspiracy charges ended in uproar today as the defendants threatened to walk out on their own trial and a spectator was told she faced contempt action for applauding them.

The spectator was Sheila Younge, a 24-year-old black who works as a part-time researcher at Newsweek and who was sitting at the press table when she was seen to applaud by State Supreme Court Justice John M. Murtagh.

## A Contest of Wills

Murtagh accused Miss Younge of breaking out into "determined applause" when the defendants began shouting and jeering directly at the Justice in criticism of his conduct of the hearing. Miss Younge, who had a press badge but who was not covering the case for Newsweek, was ordered to appear in court at 10:15 A.M. Tuesday to face summary contempt charges.

The fifth day of the pretrial

hearing was more than ever a contest of wills between the silver-haired Justice Murtagh, the defense lawyers and the very uninhibited Panthers, most of whom face a lifetime in jail if found guilty on all counts of an indictment alleging a conspiracy to bomb police stations, department stores and the New York Botanical gardens.

Justice Murtagh denied a defense motion that sought to determine whether police had probable cause for issuing the bench warrant on which most of the Panthers were arrested last April 2 in a predawn roundup.

The defense is arguing for a suppression of evidence on the grounds that it was obtained without a search warrant and therefore impaired the rights of the accused under the Fourth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.

Under defense questioning, Inspector William Knapp, who was in charge of the predawn roundup, said the evidence against the Panthers came from "associates of the defendants," the first official in-

formation that the prosecution will be based on testimony of informers. Knapp, head of the Special Services branch of the New York police, said the evidence came from a large number of reports from a small number of informants.

## Outburst in Afternoon

The defendants were comparatively quiet during the morning session but in the afternoon, as Knapp resumed the stand, an angry lava of words poured from the black militants.

Richard Moore, the most outspoken of the Panthers, charged that Assistant District Attorney Joseph Phillips was trying to give facial cues to witness Knapp.

"I wish you'd tell the D.A. to stop rubbing his lips in a provocative manner," cried Moore.

Within minutes, the catcalls became so loud it was impossible to hear cross-examination of the witness. Protesting the justice's denial of the defense motion, one Panther shouted, "You denied us our constitu-

tional rights, according to the Fourth Amendment of the racist U.S. Constitution. You must be insane."

There was a chorus of "oinks" and spectators broke into applause. Justice Murtagh snapped, "My patience is at an end." A defendant called back, "We were in jail for 10 months and you talk to us about patience," a reference to the detention of the defendants for want of bail.

## Threaten Walkout

"You are just afraid of the power of the people, pig," another Panther shouted, and another interjected, "If you keep this up, we are all going to walk out." Though surrounded by armed guards, some of the defendants seemed about to rise and carry out their threat.

Amid the bedlam, Justice Murtagh said, "I trust the reporter is getting these statements," and at this point he summoned Miss Younge to the bench before recessing the hearing an hour before its formal close.